Stefan Berger

What's New in the History of Social Movements?

A Review Article

Louise Miskell, ed., *New Perspective on Welsh Industrial History* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2020).

Wilfried Reininghaus, *Der Arbeiteraufstand im Ruhrgebiet 1920. Quellenkritik und Edition der zeitgenössischen Darstellungen von Carl Brenner, Josef Ernst, Arthur Zickler, Gerhard Colm, Willi Cuno und Siegfried Schulz* (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2020).

Uwe Fuhrmann, *‚Frau Berlin'. Paula Thiede (1870–1919). Vom Arbeiterkind zur Gewerkschaftsvorsitzenden* (Konstanz: UVK, 2019).

Guntram Müller-Schellenberg, *Die Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Buchdruckergehilfen 1440–1933. Mit Blick auf die Wiesbadener Verhältnisse* (Taunusstein: Schellenberg'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 2020).

Steve J. Shone, *Women of Liberty* (Leiden: Brill, 2020).

Sebastian Haunss and Moritz Sommer, *Fridays for Future—Die Jugend gegen den Klimawandel. Konturen der weltweiten Protestbewegung* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2020).

Julian Schenke, *Student und Demokratie. Das politische Potenzial deutscher Studierender in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2020).

Martin Wilk, *Fragile kollektive Identitäten. Wie sich soziale Bewegungen radikalisieren* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2020).

Christian Jansen, Henning Borggräfe, *Nation, Nationalität, Nationalismus,* second edition (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2020).

Florian Finkbeier, *Nationale Hoffung und konservative Enttäuschung. Zum Wandel des konservativen Nationenverständnisses nach der deutschen Vereinigung* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2020).

DOI: 10.46586/mts.68.2022.115-133 Moving the Social · 68 (2022) · p. 115–133

Detlef Pollack, *Das unzufriedene Volk. Protest und Ressentiment in Ostdeutschland von der friedlichen Revolution bis heute* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2020).

Klaus Dörre, *In der Warteschlange. Arbeiter:innen und die radikale Rechte* (Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot, 2020).

Gabriele Dietze and Julia Roth, eds., *Right-Wing Populism and Gender. European Perspectives and Beyond* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2020).

Visiting Welsh industrial museums, one is often struck by the claims of Wales being the "first industrial nation" in the world. This nationalist message is one taken over from the much earlier claim of Britain being the "first industrial nation."[1] As Britain is progressively dissolving into its constituent three or four nations, visitors to the small island on the margins of Europe are now being confronted with several "first industrial nations," England, Scotland, Wales, and, to a much lesser extent, Northern Ireland. Focusing on Wales, the research in economic history has been dominated to a large extent by the coal industry of South Wales (plus the much smaller North-Wales coalfield), as Louise Miskell points out in the introduction to her insightful collection of articles. Her volume sets out to correct this view, and it makes huge strides in surveying a much broader field of industrial activity, including the Welsh steel industry (older research has focused predominantly on the earlier iron industry). Thus, the editor herself contributes a fascinating article on iron ore mining in Mauritania undertaken by the Steel Company of Wales between 1952 and 1960. Chris Evans puts the Welsh copper industry into its proper transnational context—demonstrating its many links with the British empire, in particular with transatlantic slavery. His path-breaking article follows his pioneering work in the transnational history of Welsh iron.[2] Carys Howells provides an intriguing insight into employment in the domestic services industry in Wales between 1871 and 1921. Of course, there remain many areas of the Welsh economy that could also have been included, e. g. the Welsh woollen industries, the slate industry, lead mining and the retail industry, but this volume is surely opening the door to further studies that will underline the diversity of the Welsh economy and move increasingly away from its previous focus on coal and iron. It is testimony of that strength of a research tradition that we also find in the volume a

1 Peter Mathias, *The First Industrial Nation: The Economic History of Britain, 1700–1914* (London: Methuen, 1969).

2 Chris Evans and Göran Rydén, eds., *The Industrial Revolution in Iron: The Impact of British Coal Technology in Nineteenth Century Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

brilliant essay by Trevor Boyns on the importance of the coal trade between Wales and France in the nineteenth century.

In the past, the history of the Welsh labour movement, in particular the history of the South Wales Miners, has been explored in considerable depth by Welsh historians.[3] It is another virtue of this volume that it makes a successful plea to the historians of Wales to make use of business archives more than they have done in the past. Thus, Steven Thompson provides a spell-binding analysis of employee welfare provided by Welsh employers between 1840 and 1939. And Bleddyn Penny underlines that Welsh industrial relations were not always about the oppressive force of Welsh employers. The industrial disputes she examines in the Port Talbot steelworks between 1945 and 1979 convincingly show that the steelworkers successfully used the three decades of relative prosperity after the end of the Second World War in order to gain major advances in terms of pay, leisure time and working conditions. Their solidarity was not necessarily directed against capitalism as such, but more at gaining a fairer share of its spoils.

Other important articles in the collection highlight the importance of state action in promoting Welsh industries. This is a strong theme in Leon Gooberman's and Ben Curtis's article on the rise and fall of manufacturing in South Wales' between 1945 and 1985, and it is even more at the fore in yet another strong piece by Leon Gooberman and Trevor Boyns on the role of the Welsh Development Agency in attracting industrial investments into South Wales between 1976 and 2006. The focus of these two articles on South Wales is replicated in the volume in other articles as well, and even if industrialization was undoubtedly most prominent in South Wales, it would merit the future attention of economic historians to look at the development of industries in other parts of Wales as well. Such a focus would further decentre the attention lavished on South Walian coal and iron in the past. For the time being, anyone interested in the economic history of Wales will be extremely glad to have Louise Miskell's wonderful introduction to this volume which lucidly sets out the themes in economic history as they developed in the historiography of Wales over time, showing different approaches and highlighting diverse trends. The book overall will be a milestone in Welsh industrial history for many years to come.

The history of South Wales and the history of the Ruhr mark important periods in the reviewer's life, which is only one reason why it is timely to follow up the review of Louise Miskell's volume with a review of the incredibly productive Wilfried Reininghaus who has provided us with an impeccable edition of some of the most important

3 Dai Smith and Hywel Francis, *The Fed: A History of the South Wales Miners in the Twentieth Century* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1980); Chris Williams, *Capitalism, Community and Conflict: The South Wales Coalfield, 1898–1947* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998); Ben Curtis, *The South Wales Miners, 1964–1985* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013).

witness accounts of the workers' rising in the Ruhr in 1920. There is no agreement in the existing literature on how to call this event: "March revolution," "Ruhr rising," "Ruhr struggle" are among the most popular, indicating quite distinct perspectives on the formation of a Red Ruhr Army in the wake of the right-wing Kapp-Lüttwitz putsch on 13 March 1920, which aimed to destroy the parliamentary democracy of the Weimar Republic. The trade unions declared a general strike as a response to the putsch which quickly collapsed within a four-day period. However, in the Ruhr considerable numbers of armed workers refused to be disarmed and demanded more social and economic reforms. What exactly their aims were, and how to interpret events in the Ruhr in March and April of 1920 has been the subject of heated controversies among contemporaries and historians alike. Reininghaus points out that the newspapers were full of reports and opinion pieces during the events and immediately after. Furthermore, during the Weimar Republic, a whole host of reports were written by those directly involved in the events and by observers. They were mostly written to justify one or the other side in the conflict. In the wake of this literature two contrasting views emerged on the events in the Ruhr in the spring of 1920. On the one hand, there were those who justified the military defeat of the Red Ruhr army as maintenance of law and order on behalf of a legitimate government against a rising aimed at destroying the republic. On the other hand, there were those who saw in the event a communist-led attempt at a socialist transformation that continued the 1918 November revolution that allegedly had been betrayed by the Social Democrats. In the German Democratic Republic Communist historians sought to underpin the latter position with scholarly arguments after 1949,[4] but they could only do this by ignoring considerable evidence that pointed in different directions. In the Federal Republic, historians began to examine the rising in the 1960s and 1970s, often emphasizing the aim of the armed workers to push the social and economic reforms that some had demanded in the context of the 1918/9 revolution further.[5]

Reininghaus provides the reader with a lucid historiographical account of the most important publications on the Ruhr struggle until the present before turning to seventeen selected texts that provide different perspectives on the events from different political positions. After carefully positioning the author, he asks about the reasons for authoring the texts and the sources on which the authors could rely. Subsequently he gives a brief summary of the texts before proceedings to apply a source-critical analysis to them. Finally, he analyses the reception of the texts. The many perspectives that are presented here and the historians' attempts to provide a historical contextualization of

4 Erwin Könnemann, Brigitte Berthold, Gerhard Schulze, eds., *Arbeiterklasse siegt über Kapp und Lüttwitz* (Berlin-Ost: Akademie-Verlag, 1971).

5 The classic account is Erhard Lucas, *Märzrevolution 1920*, 2 vols (Frankfurt/Main: Verlag Roter Stern, 1973/4).

these perspectives underlines the futility of any scholarly attempt to arrive at a definitive version of the events. Instead Reininghaus concludes that it is impossible for the historian to avoid taking a perspective on the events, and interpreting them in a way that can always be contested by other interpretations. However, he also points out that it is possible for the historian to highlight contradictions in particular perspectives on the basis of a thorough knowledge of all available sources. He also usefully formulates a number of research questions that future historians of the Ruhr struggle could address. They include greater attention to the question of the regional reach of the Ruhr struggle, an attempt to locate the events in a wider history of political violence in the early years of the Weimar Republic,[6] greater recognition of the importance of the positioning of the political parties that were not on the left of the political spectrum, in particular the Centre Party which was very influential in the Ruhr area both before and after the First World War,[7] and the search for sources that would allow a better view on the viewpoints of ordinary soldiers and members of the Freikorps.

Three-fourths of the book are subsequently taken up by the seven selected texts on the Ruhr struggle. The emphasis here is on texts that have never been published before or that were published before but are no longer available and easily accessible. This means that some of the best-known texts that are still readily available are not included here, e. g. the books by Carl Severing and Hans Spethmann.[8] Reading those texts that Reininghaus selected confirms the readers' impression of the possibility of a wide variety of different perspectives on the Ruhr rising, depending on where the authors stood politically and how they experienced the events either first-hand or through the extensive reporting on the events in the media. An exhaustive bibliography and a chronology of important events during the Ruhr rising in the Rhineland, Westfalia and Berlin concludes the volume, which will be required reading for anyone interested in the Ruhr struggle of 1920.

The Red Ruhr army was comprised only of men, but women who shared the political ideals of those fighting in this army organized medial units in which they served as medical personnel, thereby, in their view, contributing to the struggle for a more socially just society. An outstanding example of a woman striving for greater social justice and liberty is the subject of Uwe Fuhrmann's excellent biography of Paula Thiede. Born to working-class parents in 1870 in Berlin, she began working in the printing

6 Locating the history of the German revolution in a broader history of political violence has been the aim of Mark Jones, *Founding Weimar. Violence and the German Revolution of 1918/9* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

7 Thomas Mathias Bredohl, *Class and Religious Identity: The Rhenish Centre Party in Wilhelmine Germany* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2000).

8 Carl Severing, *1919/20 im Wetter- und Watterwinkel. Aufzeichnungen und Erinnerungen*, Bielefeld 1927; Hans Spethmann, *Die rote Armee and Rhein und Ruhr: aus den Kapp Tagen 1920* (Berlin: R. Hobbing, 1930).

trade and was married at 19, having two children by the age of 21. When her husband died prematurely she had to fend for herself, losing her younger child to illness when she was still a baby. Like many poor working-class families in Berlin around 1900 she was forced to move to a cheap flat which was still wet. The owners of these buildings moved people into such flats unfit for living for profit but also so that they dried out more quickly and could then be rented out to other tenants for a higher price, while the previous ones often moved to the next wet flat.[9] As Fuhrmann emphasizes in his engaging book, both the workplace and the neighbourhood were vital in politicizing Thiede, whose maiden name ironically was Berlin. She lived through the infamous printworkers' strike of 1891/2, in which workers demanded a nine-hour day. It failed, but also mobilized many, including Thiede. She joined the union as the result of the failed strike. But she also lived in a block of flats and a neighbourhood where many working-class activists lived and shared an everyday life space which again led to her politicization. Fuhrmann lucidly contextualizes Thiede's political positioning between a commitment to gender equality and class justice. Confronted with a deeply patriarchal society she was intrigued by the debates around a "birth strike,"[10] and she became active herself as a trade union organizer who was to rise to become the first female chairwoman of the Association of Print Workers which organized both men and women. She was a Social Democrat and an internationalist taking part in congresses of the Socialist International. She managed to hold the union together amidst many internal quarrels, and she was capable of giving the union a strong voice and direction, not the least through a union newspaper that she helped to set up. Under her leadership, the union fought successfully for improved working conditions and higher wages, for both men and women, and she even managed to forge the first wage agreements between workers and industrialists in the printing trades. Her leadership style, Fuhrmann emphasizes, was characterized by conciliation and fairness paired with clear principles and ideals. She often had a strong position on issues at hand but was willing to accept other opinions and compromise if necessary. Her energy as an organizer, her rhetorical talent and her solidarity with her fellow workers allowed her to emerge as one of the leading trade unionists of her age. After her premature death in 1919 she remained a well-known figure in labour movement circles well into the 1920s, but the National Socialist dictatorship tried everything to erase the memory of figures like Paula Thiede, and her legacy and memory were also not revived in the post-war Germanies. Hence, she literally had to be rediscovered by Fuhrmann whose biography can be described as a labour of love. He could not draw on a body of per-

9 Lutz Niehammer and Franz-Josef Brüggemeier, "Wie wohnten die Arbeiter im Kaiserreich?," in: *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 16 (1976), pp. 61–134.

10 Edward Ross Dickinson, *Sex, Freedom and Power in Imperial Germany 1880–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

sonal papers and much of the information presented in just over 150 pages of text had to be pieced together from snippets of information derived from many different archives and libraries. This biography is thus a truly pioneering work which highlights the importance of women in the early German labour movement.

Thiede's occupational life was lived among printworkers. It is thanks to Guntram Müller-Schellenberg that we now have a social history of German print workers' assistants, with special focus on their situation in the German city of Wiesbaden between the 1830s and 1933. Their profession was a highly organized one. In Imperial Germany their union managed at times to organize up to 95% of the print workers' assistants. They always remained at a slight distance from the Social Democratic milieu and prided themselves of their party-political neutrality. Instead they very much thought in artisanal and estates-based values and ideals. Women members were not allowed in this trade union for a long time, which remained characterized by a rather conservative outlook.[11] Müller-Schellenberg provides a good introduction to the beginnings of the labour movement in Wiesbaden into which he situates the emergence of the print workers' assistants union. The search for better working conditions and better pay stood at the centre of the activities of the union. The author pays much attention to the internal organization of the union, its attempts to support its members, as well as its strike history and the history of industrial bargaining, as well as its educational activities. Yet he also situates the history of the union in the wider political history reflecting, for example, on the impact of the Anti-Socialist Laws on the organization, the situation of the union during the war, or the impact of the revolution of 1918/9. He describes comprehensively the working conditions in the printing profession, as well as their housing, clothing and food and the specific occupational illnesses they suffered under. Much attention is paid to the increasing mechanization of the industry. The book is impeccably researched throughout (there are more than 330 pages of endnotes) and also richly illustrated. There is a fantastic index for anyone who is searching for a specific topic, place or person. It provides insightful reading to everyone interested in the history of German trade unionism in the printing profession.

Returning to the importance of women in social movements, we move to Steve Shone's volume under review here. What he is attempting is to draw attention to what in social movement studies would be called "cross-movement mobilization" through ten biographical portraits of American women who were connected to each other by their beliefs in anarchism, libertarianism, feminism, free love and anti-Federalism. Their lives range from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries and they were always

11 Uwe Fuhrmann, *Feminismus in der frühen Gewerkschaftsbewegung (1890–1914): die Strategien der BuchdruckereiHilfsarbeiterInnen um Paula Thiede* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2021), 105, 143.

both notable writers and campaigners. Amongst them are the first two women to run for Congress in the United States, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Tennie C. Claflin, the first woman to run for American president, Victoria Claflin Woodhull, sister to Tennie, and a range of others all notable for their activism and their literary achievements. Mercy Otis Warren, famous for her anti-Federalism, is depicted by Shone as more of a libertarian than a Republican. Louise Michel, of Paris Commune fame, Lois Waisbrooker, the anarchist promoter of free love, Itō, Noe, the Japanese anarchist, Margaret Sanger, the ardent advocate of birth control who, Shone argues convincingly, has been wrongly accused of racism in some of the literature about her, Mollie Steimer and Rose Pesotta, both immigrants to the US with strong anarchist leanings are all united by the striving for different forms of liberty that intersected and intermingled during their life-times. There was, first and foremost, the liberty of women who had to be freed from centuries of patriarchal oppression. Connected to this was the liberty that came with education, not only for women. Marriage was often seen by these women as a form of oppression against which they posited free love. Free speech was vitally important to them as was the liberty to participate in politics. As women they were often painfully aware of restrictions to gainful employment which is why many of them campaigned for the right to work. Furthermore, true liberty only came with the absence of wont, which is why they were also engaged in a variety of campaigns to end poverty and to allow poor people to become truly free. Between the eighteenth and the twentieth centuries the world population grew rapidly and many of the women portrayed here saw in this unchecked growth a major threat to the liberty of people which is why they favoured different schemes of birth control.[12] Champions of a diverse set of liberties, the women portrayed here by Shone in a very engaging way, have a clear message for the friends of liberty today—their struggles are far from complete, and their past activism and writings can serve as inspiration for all those who are still carrying on this cross-movement struggle on behalf of liberty.

In our contemporary world, this struggle has been taken up by the young generation in particular with regard to the environmental challenges awaiting mankind. Over the last decade a world-wide protest culture has taken shape under the slogan "Fridays for Future." This global protest movement is the subject of a book edited by Sebastian Haunss and Moritz Sommer. The sub-title of this volume which references the global contours of this movement is a little misleading, as this is primarily a book about the German movement with some references to European comparisons. Indeed, a more global look would immediately highlight that "Fridays for Future" was overwhelmingly, albeit by no means exclusively, a phenomenon of the global north which correlates with the findings of this book that the majority of the protesters were

12 Peter C. Engelman, *The History of the Birth Control Movement in America* (Santa Barbara, CA: Edward Praeger, 2011).

motivated by post-materialist values and came from highly educated and economically well-off backgrounds. Most of the protesters that were surveyed in Germany between the summer of 2018 and the spring of 2020 initially came from very young age groups (14–17). Young women were overrepresented as were those in top educational institutions (*Gymnasien* in Germany). For this age group "Fridays for Future" was often the first mobilizing experience and the first protest movement they participated in. Towards the end of the period under examination, participants in the demonstration had become slightly older (many more now were university students) and more male, but they were still overwhelmingly coming from privileged backgrounds with migrant groups virtually absent from the protesters. Although poorer and poorly educated groups were also largely absent from the protests, the movement itself combined an interest in "climate justice" with a concern for "social justice" indicating the potential of the movement for the kinds of cross-movements mobilization that characterized the activism of American women discussed by Shone.[13]

The sophisticated statistical analyses on the Fridays for Future movement provided in this book can rarely claim to be representative but are instead based on a random sample that can still yield important results. Many of the well-written and lucid contributions to this extremely insightful volume deal with the development of the movement over time and its profile. Who are the protesters, what are their motivations for protest and how did they get involved? What are their political interests and engagements? Whoever looks for answers to these questions will find a lot of intriguing answers in this book. Thus, for example, the book highlights how the school strikes were vitally important in forging a collective identity for the protesters which subsequently became a major strength for mobilization efforts. The movement also carries on long-standing debates surrounding the legitimacy and values of civil disobedience as a means of highlighting political concerns. The "Fridays for Future" movement has sought actively to build alliances with other environmental activists in a range of NGOs and other movements concerned with climate change. Particularly engaging is the attention of the volume to how the movement has used the media, both traditional and new social media in order to further its aims and objectives. Their often clever and strategic use of media has led to very high acceptance levels in society, with well over half of the population being broadly sympathetic to the movement—a figure which is much higher among younger age cohorts. There is, overall, much evidence in this volume for the existence of a "generation Greta," with Greta Thunberg occupying an iconic position within the movement. From her comes the firm belief of the movement in science and scientific knowledge, which is its rallying cry. The Europe-

13 See also the special issue of Moving the Social entitled: *Cross-Movement Mobilization—Perspectives from the Global North and South*, ed. by Sabrina Zajak, Jenny Jansson, Ilse Lenz and Geoffrey Pleyers 63 (2020).

an comparisons of the volume mainly highlight similarities—in political profile and social background of the protesters; country-specific characteristics, such as the very young age of the protesters in Poland, are highlighted and explained (in Poland's case with the absence of large-scale environmental concerns before the Fridays for Future movement) but it emerges clearly from the volume that there is still a wide-open field for more in-depth comparisons. One can only hope that this excellent volume serves as encouragement for such wider comparisons.

The young have long had a huge potential for democratizing movements, and Julian Schenke's book draws attention to the political potential of German students in past and present. In the first part of the book, using mainly secondary sources, he surveys student oppositional movements from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the end of the twentieth century focusing in particular on the revolutionary years of 1848/9 and 1968 but also highlighting the crisis years of the interwar period which resulted, above all, in right-wing mobilizations of students.[14] In a nutshell, Schenke argues that the political mobilization of students was particularly successful where they could find a language that criticized the social basis of society. Such a language allowed them to mobilize powerful networks and develop utopian ideas that in turn re-enforced political mobilizations. Those who are familiar with the historical literature on the political mobilization of students will find little that is really new here although providing a historical long-term perspective is in itself an interesting and insightful undertaking.

The second part of the book is based on a focus-group study which looks at contemporary student cohorts. The author finds here a strong belief in a society in which chances of success are distributed fairly and in which principles of reason and rationality govern selection criteria. The mental world of contemporary cohorts of students, the reader learns, is heavily dominated by quite traditional ideals of neo-humanistic forms of *Bildung*, i. e. education that is character- and personality-forming rather than merely functional. This leads to a widespread antipathy towards those social classes who do not have access to university education. In other words, it re-enforces the social cleavage in society between the educated and the uneducated which is a cleavage between the privileged and those at the bottom end of the social ladder. The student body in Germany was traditionally characterized by a strong social homogeneity, i. e. they overwhelmingly came from the middle and upper classes who were reproducing their own social milieux through university education. Although working-class children managed to access university in greater numbers from the 1960s to the 1980s, this window has been steadily closing again from the 1990s onwards. Schenke argues

14 On the illiberal traditions of German students see also Konrad H. Jarausch, *Students, Society, and Politics in Imperial Germany. The Rise of Academic Illiberalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).

that the contemporary student body is characterized more by a desire of self-optimization rather than a willingness to embark on conflictual political conflicts. While they do not any longer understand themselves as a separate corporate body, they lack a collective will to challenge fundamentally the foundations of society in the way in which the 1848/9 and 1968 generations of students had done. There is a notable absence of widespread socialist or anti-capitalist sentiments. In his concluding chapter the author asks whether this might change if the chances of the students on the labour market will become worse in years to come. Overall, this reviewer would have wished this book to have a clearer focus and clearer red lines that structure the argument of the book. In large parts it resembles a meandering reflection on the political potential of German students over more than two centuries. Even in the conclusion the author fails to say clearly what the reader may be able to learn from such a long-term analysis.

When students became a formidable political force, they rarely did so out of a consciousness of having a strong collective identity as students. Rather, they identified with collectives that incorporated other social strata. In 1848/9, the collective was the nation or the people (Volk), and in 1968 the collective was again the people imagined as united by a socialist utopia. In one way or the other, however, collective identity played an important role in mobilizing student movements or wider social movements, in which students participated. In social movement research, the role of collective identity as a vital resource of mobilization that strengthens the internal cohesion and overall strength of social movements is well established.[15] Martin Wilk in his study on the importance of constructions of collective identity for the radicalization of social movements draws on that tradition. Thus, many social movement researchers have discussed collective identity as consisting of narratives that appeal to the collective on a cognitive, relational and emotional level.[16] Wilk provides the reader with a detailed discourse analysis of the internal debates surrounding collective identity of one particular social movement, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) that was part and parcel of the American civil rights movement of the 1960s. It is a particularly striking example of an organization that underwent a dynamic of radicalization from pacifist origins in the 1960s to the advocacy of violence by a paramilitary organization. The author traces the development of the SNCC through early peaceful protests, mainly in the southern states of the United States, to the registration campaigns for black voters and the adoption of militant and violent strategies—largely under the influence of black nationalism. An increasingly exclusive

15 Hatem M. Hassan and Suzanne Staggenborg, "Movements as Communities," in: Donatella Della Porta and Marco Diani , eds.,, *The Oxford Handbook of Social Movements* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 340–354.

16 See the literature review by Priska Daphi in her book entitled Becoming a Movement: *Identity, Narrative and Memory in the European Global Justice Movement* (London: Rowman and Littefield, 2017), chapter 1.

identity politics led to a step-by-step isolation of the group which finally dissolved in 1969. Although Wilk does not explicitly draw that conclusion, one can say that the turn of the group to identity politics and violence was hardly a success as it ultimately led to its marginalization within the broader civil rights movement and to its end. Recording the history of the SNCC is therefore also a warning to social movements today not to adopt an exclusive identity politics which is rarely successful in building strong societal alliances.

The conclusion that Wilk does draw from his study is that collective identity constructions are far more important in explaining the radicalization of social movements than other factors, including political opportunity structures or access to resources. The civil rights movement, he argues, did have increasing opportunities to influence politics and gained significantly more resources during the 1960s, but the SNCC still radicalized which, for Wilk, is almost the exclusive result of its turn to a radical identity politics. I have to admit that I find this argument rather questionable: after all, wide sections of the civil rights movement did not radicalize themselves and were, in some respects, so successful because they remained nonviolent. Furthermore, the brutal and murderous racism against blacks in the 1960s (and beyond) is surely a major factor why sections of the civil rights movement despaired of the peaceful struggle for equal rights and turned to violence. It is understandable that progress on the road to true liberty for black people seemed incredibly slow and incremental to many black activists. They did not have the impression that the political opportunities were increasing and that they suddenly had a wealth of resources at their disposal. Hence, I would find it far more convincing to say that a turn to exclusive identity politics and to essentialized forms of identity tends to construct a strong positive "us" against a vilified "them," which becomes not an adversary but an enemy that has to be physically destroyed. That is historically true both for left and right wing identity politics (both Communism and Fascism operated with those ideas).

Ultimately Wilk's book cannot answer the question how social movements radicalize themselves because it is essentially based on only one case study. What is needed is a far more comparative approach ranging more broadly over many social movements who have radicalized themselves in the past. Having said this, where the book is extremely useful is in highlighting how problematic such a turn to essentialized forms of collective identity is. Stuart Hall's concept of identification is so useful for social movements because it allows them to use narratives of identification to build strong collective identities that remain, however, aware of their own constructedness.[17] Ac-

17 Stuart Hall, "Introduction: Who Needs Identity?," in: Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay, eds., *Questions of Cultural Identity* (London: Sage, 1996), 1–17; Stuart Hall, "The Question of Cultural Identity," in: Stuart Hall, David Held, and Anthony McGrew, eds., *Modernity and its Futures* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 274–316.

tivists have an awareness of their own choice—of choosing to construct a collective identity that is also reversible and changeable, hence non-essentialized. Identification rather than identity can forge powerful alliances for social and political change while averting the radicalization that leads to the construction of enemies that have to be destroyed through violence. In this way social movements can stay clear of collective identity discourses and still have a powerful way of forging internal cohesion that together with other factors decide on their success or failure in achieving their objectives.

Whether within black nationalism or other forms of nationalism, the problem of essentialized nationalist collective identities is an acute one. The study of nationalism, national identity and national(ist) movements has had a formidable renaissance since the 1980s, and there is no sign of it abating, as nationalist movements have raised their heads again across the globe and form a formidable force in many parts of the world. As a consequence there are now many primers and textbooks on these subjects, and the one reviewed here in its second edition by Christian Jansen and Hennig Borggräfe belongs to the best succinct ones in the German language. In the first substantive chapter the leading terms, i. e. nation, nationality, nationalism, nation-building and nation-state are introduced. The second chapter deals exclusively with German nationalism starting from the discovery the *Volk* and its ethnic definition around 1800 and moving to the beginnings of organized nationalism in the 1820s to the radicalization and differentiation of nationalist movements until the revolution of 1848/9. Then the authors deal with the oppression of nationalist movements after the revolution and the developments leading up to the formation of a unified German nation-state in 1871 after which they discuss changes to nationalism in Imperial Germany and nationalism as a mass movement. In the third chapter they review a variety of different theories of nationalism, including those of Karl W. Deutsch, Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson, and Anthony D. Smith before reviewing contemporary themes and controversies. Their selection can be questioned—Miroslav Hroch, John Breuilly and Eric Hobsbawm are all absent here as are Homi Bhaba, Partha Chatterjee and postcolonial writers more generally.[18] In the final substantive chapter we learn about European developmental path of nationalism and nation-building looking at three other nations—France, Switzerland and Macedonia. There is too little attempt here to move away from the national frame and provide genuinely European and comparative perspectives. The final twelve pages of the book not only attempt a summary but also an outlook onto the twentieth century, because everything before related more or less to the period before the outbreak of the First World War. Indeed, one of the central arguments of the book is that nationalism had ultimately found its ultimate form by 1914

18 Recent interdisciplinary perspectives on the relationship between nationalism and the postcolonial condition are provided by Sandra Dinter and Johanna Marquardt, eds., *Nationalism and the Postcolonial* (Leiden: Brill, 2021).

and that everything that came after did not change its character substantially. One can certainly disagree with this view and find good arguments why the hyper-nationalism of fascism in the interwar period, Communist nationalism in the Soviet Union after 1917 and in Eastern Europe during the Cold War, or postcolonial nationalism in the wake of decolonization after the Second World War are substantially different from nineteenth-century forms of nationalism. However, as an introduction to nation, nationality and nationalism spanning less than 200 pages, the book still works well, even if those drawn into the topic will want to pick up a whole host of other books after reading Jansen and Borggräfe.

The revival of nationalism in the 1990s was intimately connected to the fall of communism in East Central and Eastern Europe. It also affected the reunited Germany, where, in the wake of the 1990s significant public debate about the need to adopt a new understanding of the nation emerged. Florian Finkbeiner's study seeks to analyse how reunification affected the conservative understanding of nation. He focusses in particular on a group of writers, historians, and journalists including in particular Karl Heinz Weißmann, Rainer Zitelmann, Heimo Schwilk and Günter Rohrmoser who are introduced as representative of a new conservatism seeking to win the right-wing centre in German politics for a new nationalism that would renounce Westernization and its anchor in a coming to terms with the National Socialist past, in particular the holocaust. While in the early 1990s it seemed unclear for a while whether this self-declared conservative avantgarde would succeed in forging alliances with the centre-right, in particular the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), by the mid-1990s it was clear that their thinking was increasingly marginalized to a radical right fringe represented by journals such as *Criticón* and newspapers like *Junge Freiheit*. There are undoubtedly links of their thinking to the ideas propagated today by right-wing populism, including Pegida and the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), but the centre-right, including the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Free Democrats (FDP) have, in their majority kept their distance, even if there is an increasingly vociferous right wing, especially in the CDU, where there are overlaps with this more national-conservative thinking, especially in some of the new Bundesländer in the east, like Saxony.[19]

However, such an overlap between a national-conservative thinking and the centre-right was already characteristic of the old Federal Republic, as the rise and decline of the party Die Republikaner demonstrates. In that respect it is surprising that Finkbeiner sees a sharp departure point between the 1980s and the 1990s. Attempts in the 1980s to move to postnational positions were, by and large restricted to the centre left, in particular the Greens and the Social Democrats (SPD). Intellectually they were

19 Anna-Sophie Heinze, *Strategien gegen Rechtspopulismus? Der Umgang mit der AfD in Landesparlamenten* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2020).

inspired by the writings of Jürgen Habermas. While it is true that also conservatives like Dolf Sternberger championed notions of postnationalism, they were quite distinct from those on the left and, more importantly, they were quite exceptional within the wider conservative milieu. After all, the CDU vociferously opposed all attempts to recognize the independent statehood of the GDR in the 1980s—something that the left would have been willing to consider. Demonstrating its commitment to a unified nation-state the centre-right underlined that the idea of nation and nationality still played a major role in their worldview. Finkbeiner himself, in his wide-ranging survey of the development of conservatism in the twentieth century, underlines the importance of nation and nationalism to the thinking of conservatives. Of course, he also struggles with the question how to define conservatism in Germany over the course of the twentieth century. In particular the major political party on the centre-right of German post-Second World War politics, the CDU, is not easily classified as a conservative party as it contains significant left-Catholic elements. Nevertheless, the CDU, throughout the history of the old Federal Republic, championed ideas of Heimat, nation and fatherland, both before and after reunification. Hence, I would argue that what we witnessed between 1990 and 1995 was an intellectual attempt to move the intellectual foundations of the old Federal Republic significantly to the right by championing a new idea of nation that significantly different from the key anchoring points of the nation before 1990.[20] However, by 1995, these attempts failed and a new consensus of the centre began to emerge that comprised all major political parties in Germany, from the Greens of the left to the FDP on the right. It was based on a historical understanding of the development of the German nation as formulated by Heinrich August Winkler "The Long Road West," which can be views as new historical master narrative of the reunified Germany.[21] It comprised the old anchor points of Western orientation and of an identity rooted in the coming to terms with National Socialism and the holocaust, but it also championed a new "normality" of the nation-state, which was to include not only flag-waving at international football matches but also military deployments of the German army outside of the borders of Germany and a new desire to play a more leading role in European and international politics.

A more conservative nationalism became the hallmark of a more extreme right which was eventually to find expression in right-wing populist movements. They in turn were particularly strong in eastern Germany, the territory of the old Communist German Democratic Republic. The people here were, as Detlef Pollack formulates

20 Stefan Berger, *The Search for Normality. National Identity and Historical Consciousness in Germany since 1800* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2nd edn, 1998).

21 Stefan Berger, "Rising Like a Phoenix … The Renaissance of National History Writing in Germany and Britain since the 1980s," in: Stefan Berger and Chris Lorenz, eds., *Nationalizing the Past. Historians as Nation Builders in Modern Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 426–451.

it in his title, "the unsatisfied people," disappointed with the results of the peaceful revolution of 1989 for themselves. Such dissatisfaction bred protest and resentment which has characterized East Germany from the 1990s to today. While some observers of reunification have talked about reunification as a process of colonization of the east and portrayed East Germans as victims of a West German land grab,[22] Pollack, himself born and raised in the east, emphasizes the agency of East Germans. The first two chapters of his book deal with the East German revolution of 1989 and the reunification process, where he is focusing on events in a few well-known East German cities and towns like Leipzig, Dresden, Plauen, Berlin and Arnstadt. Analyzing how the flight from East Germany turned to protest on East German streets, he underlines how that protest was never led by the motley group of East German dissidents who formed during the 1980s. Those civil rights groups were always different in their objectives and motivations from the masses who poured onto the East German streets in ever-growing numbers in 1989. The differences became obvious in 1990 when the masses wanted quick reunification while the civil rights groups debated a dialogue with East German communists and a "third way" between capitalism and "really existing socialism." Subsequently, Pollack argues, it was the East Germans who enforced an early economic and currency union which is why, according to him, it was they who actively handed their country to the west with high hopes of material improvement of their situation. Those hopes were nurtured in the west by the political rhetoric of chancellor Helmut Kohl who promised the East Germans "blossoming landscapes" in his televised speech on the occasion of the currency union between both Germanies on 1 July 1990. While that ensured him the votes of the East Germans in subsequent elections, what happened in the early 1990s was the destruction of wide areas of East German industry and high unemployment figures across East Germany. Such disappointment of East Germans, Pollack argues, led to the emergence of a separate East German identity, complete with ostalgia and a sharp distrust in markets and in democracy.[23] Once again, the author argues, the East Germans demonstrated their resilience in the face of crisis by turning into the infamous *Jammer-Ossis*, the constantly complaining easterners who had been wronged in the most terrible way—a very effective way of ensuring that millions of Deutschmarks were poured into the infrastructure of East Germany, making its cities look much better than many cities in the run-down deindustrialized areas of West Germany. The positioning of East Germans as nonconformist underdogs had, however, also a more sinister side, as it led to massive support for the populist right, for Pegida and for the AfD. Voting for

22 Wolfgang Dümke and Fritz Vilmar, eds., *Kolonialisierung der DDR: kritische Analysen und Alternativen des Einigungsprozesses* (Münster: Agenda, 1996).

23 On the impact of memory on East German identities see the insightful book by Jonathan Bach, *What Remains: Everyday Encounters with the Socialist Past in Germany* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).

them was a way of voting against the western elites and positioning themselves again as "the people" against the elites. The AfD cunningly responded to such sentiments by a poster campaign in East Germany which alleged that the peaceful revolution in 1989/90 was similar to voting the AfD in 2021—a message that no doubt spoke to many East Germans.

Pollack's thought-provoking book is cogently and convincingly argued and provides much food for thought. The high levels of support for right-wing populism in East Germany is particularly strong among workers, and we have also observed that in the old Federal Republic white German workers seem particularly attracted to the messages of right-wing populism which has led Klaus Dörre to argue that the AfD is on the way of becoming potentially the new working-class party in Germany. In several of the German Länder working-class support is strongest for the AfD, i. e. more workers vote for the AfD than for any other party. Inversely, no party in Germany is less popular among workers than Die Linke, despite the fact that it has been campaigning stridently for more social rights and welfare and better protection of jobs and working-class interests. What are we to make of this? First of all, the trend is not entirely new. Dörre himself has been analyzing the links between the working-class milieu and the political right for a long time. Indeed, apart from the introduction and conclusion to this book, the other chapters are reprints of earlier articles ranging back to 1994. Many workers, Dörre argues, feel that they are not participating any longer in the spoils of capitalism. While companies make enormous profits and pay their CEOs millions of Euros a year, the workers' income is stagnating, and there is a widespread fear of social and economic decline. Furthermore, the political right provides the workers with a ready scapegoat—the immigrants who come to the country and take things away from workers: benefits, housing, welfare and, in the case of male workers, women. Hence, to the dismay of Dörre and others on the left, it is not capitalism that becomes the enemy but migrants. Workers fighting precarious jobs, unemployment, higher workloads, more pressure on the factory floor and lower wages in what is already one of Europe's low-wage economies, find their salvation in a mixture of xenophobia and nationalism that is espoused by the political right. Dörre also shows that trade unionists are as vulnerable to right-wing overtures as non-unionized workers and calls on the trade unions to develop anti-right wing strategies—something that many of the leading unions have been doing very successfully over the recent decades.[24] While his analysis for Germany is confirmed by an intriguing article in the book on Austria authored by Livia Schubert, the remedy he holds up in front of his readers is a dedicated class politics that indicts a globalized finance capitalism for

24 Stefan Berger, "The Alternative for Deutschland (AfD) and its Appeal to Workers—with Special Reference to the Ruhr Region of Germany," in: *Totalitarismus und Demokratie* 19 (2022), 45–68.

the worsening situation of workers over recent decades and that advocates class politics seeking to transcend capitalism. However, this has been pretty much what Die Linke has been doing in Germany and it has led them nowhere with workers (and anyone else). They look increasingly marginal in Germany's contemporary political spectrum. If we take a long-enough historical view, reaching back to the nineteenth century, we can see that working-class solidarity transcending boundaries of nation, ethnicity, race, and religion were always exceptional and had to be constructed convincingly in concrete situations of struggle.[25] Such solidarities are not impossible but they need to be worked for incessantly in the neighbourhoods and on the factory floors. They need engaged activists who share a vision of a socially just society. They also need a memory politics that can serve as resource for mobilizations towards more solidaristic structures in society.[26] Luckily there are still many people in Germany, active in social movements, left-of-centre political parties and trade unions who work towards such a vision of solidarity and against the xenophobic nationalism promoted by the right.

The xenophobia and nationalism of the populist right is often underpinned by anti-feminist perspectives. Gabriele Dietze and Julia Roth have assembled a range of contributions on Germany, Austria, France, Hungary, Slovenia and the US which demonstrate the importance of various campaigns against an alleged gender police by a motley alliance of right-wing extremists, religious fundamentalists and a bourgeois centre-right that has been radicalized through its opposition to calls for greater gender justice. Throughout this eminently readable book, the contributions provide fascinating insights into diverse facets of the right's obsession with gender. They invariably connect the progress of neoliberal economic policies with an undermining of traditional male identities—as breadwinners, heads of families and generally the stronger sex. This in turn provoked the rise of a masculine identity politics which has been propagating a return to traditional gender roles and what is often referred to by the right as the "natural order," i. e. heterosexuality with clearly defined roles for women (motherhood and traditional femininity) and men. In the US, Donald Trump's appeal to white male workers was not only based on economic protectionism and anti-immigrant rhetoric, but equally on his promotion of traditional gender roles. By juxtaposing feminism with an idealized American way of life, Trumpism managed to convert many who had long felt threatened by an alleged forward march of women. Alt-right

25 Lex Heerma van Voss and Marcel van der Linden, eds., *Class and Other Identities. Gender, Religion and Ethnicity in the Writing of European Labour History* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2002).

26 The German trade union confederation, DGB, has recently set up a commission to investigate how the trade unions can mobilize memory more effectively as a resource. The results of the commission have been published in Stefan Berger, Wolfgang Jäger, and Ulf Teichmann, eds., *Gewerkschaften im Gedächtnis der Demokratie. Welche Rolle spielen soziale Kämpfe in der Erinnerungskultur*? (Bielefeld: transcript, 2022).

bloggers and their followers, largely young white males, have made anti-feminism one of their most popular rallying cries across many countries. After the collapse of communism in East Central and Eastern Europe, the post-socialist political elites often combined authoritarianism with the promotion of anti-feminism. They portrayed feminism as a western import that was colonizing East Central and Eastern Europe. Such resistances to demands for greater gender equality could build on the impeccable track record of paternalism and male dominance under really existing socialism which had stood in stark contrast to the emancipatory rhetoric of the very same socialist regimes.[27]

Some of the most interesting passages of the book are, however, about bridges that the populist right has been trying to build to those calling for a more just gender order. It is by no means the case that all right-wing populists are straightforward anti-feminists. Thus, for example, there are calls for equal pay and for the protection of women against sexual exploitation and violence coming from the right. And we can even find an acceptance of homosexuality among sections of the populist right, especially where such homosexual identities are fixed and essentialized, rather than fluid and situational. This is in line with the identitarian essentialism that is often at the heart of right-wing populism. As long as the people have an essentialized identity, even if it may be a homosexual one, they can resist the alleged attempt of western liberalism to destroy such essentialized identities. The book is thus also a warning not to underestimate the potential of the populist right to build alliances outside of the heterosexual normativity that it is often promoting. As it has been capable of winning the hearts and minds of many workers, it might also prove to be capable of winning over not only those who desire a return to traditional gender roles but also those who challenge them and are promoting gender justice, of a racialized, nationalist and xenophobic kind. Intersectional alliances are by no means the preserve of the left, even if the volume under review also highlights the efficiency of feminist intersectional populism as a strategy of resistance against populist right-wing gender discourses.

Stefan Berger is Professor of Social History and Director of the Institute for Social Movements at Ruhr University Bochum. He is also Executive Chair of the Foundation History of the Ruhr and an Honorary Professor at Cardiff University in the United Kingdom. He has published widely on the comparative history of labour movements, deindustrialization, heritage studies, the history of historiography, historical theory, nationalism studies, memory studies and British-German relations. His most recent monograph is *History and Identity: How Historical Theory Shapes Historical Practice* (Cambridge University Press, 2022).

27 Anna Artwińska and Agnieszka Mrozik, eds., *Gender, Generations and Communism in Central and Eastern Europe and Beyond* (London: Routledge, 2021).