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Review Article

What's New in the History of Social Movements?

Jürgen Schmidt, August Bebel: Kaiser der Arbeiter, Zurich: Rotpunkt, 2013, ISBN 9783858695383, pp. 285.

Axel Weipert, Das Rote Berlin. Eine Geschichte der Berliner Arbeiterbewegung 1830–1934, Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2013, ISBN 9783830532422, pp. 251.

Matthew Johnson, Militarism and the British Left, 1902–1914, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013, ISBN 9781137274120, pp. xi+247.

Christopher Read, War and Revolution in Russia, 1914–1922: the Collapse of Tsarism and the Establishment of Soviet Power, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013, ISBN 9780230239869, xiv+247.

Domink Rigoll, Staatsschutz in Westdeutschland. Von der Entnazifizierung zur Extremistenabwehr, Göttingen: Wallstein, 2013, ISBN 9783835310766, pp. 524.

Arne Hordt, Von Scargill zu Blair? Der britische Bergarbeiterstreik 1984–85 als Problem einer europäischen Zeitgeschichtsschreibung, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2013, ISBN 9783631625118, pp. 124.

Andrea Hajek, Negotiating Memories of Protest in Western Europe. The Case of Italy, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013, ISBN 9781137263773, pp. xi+220.

Cristina Flesher Fominaya and Laurence Cox (eds.), Understanding European Movements: New Social Movements, Global Justice Struggles, Anti-Austerity Protest, London: Routledge, 2013, ISBN 9780415638791, pp. xix+263.

Colin Barker, Laurence Cox, John Krinsky and Alf Gunvald Nilsen (eds.), Marxism and Social Movements, Leiden: Brill, 2013, ISBN 9789004211759, pp. vii+473.

2013 saw the 150th anniversary of Social Democracy in Germany.¹ One of the oldest and most history-conscious Social Democratic parties in the world celebrated this event with great aplomb, and therefore it is not surprising that 2013 was also a good year for publications on the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) and its long history. Among those many books was also a brief popular and elegantly written biography of one of the most revered and admired leaders of the SPD, nicknamed “emperor of the German workers”, August Bebel.² When the General German Workers’ Association (ADAV), the pre-cursor organisation of the SPD, was founded in 1863, Bebel was just 24 years old. A master turner from Leipzig, he struggled, like many artisans, to avoid sinking into the proletariat. In Bebel’s case this personal struggle was successful, as he managed to build up a thriving company and became an entrepreneur. His individual success, however, did not make him forget his fellow artisans and workers suffering under the nascent capitalist regime in the German lands. He used his energy to build networks for a powerful social movement intent on solving the “social question” that accompanied the formation and development of capitalism in the nineteenth century.

Bebel was a master organiser – someone equally at home in thinking about investments and organising election campaigns as he was in planning party congresses and holding speeches. However, he was sceptical of the teachings of Ferdinand Lassalle and therefore kept his distance from the earliest socialist organisation in Germany, the General German Workingmen’s Association (*Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiter-Verein*, ADAV). Together with his close personal friend Wilhelm Liebknecht, and in alliance with his intellectual mentors, Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx, Bebel founded a rival organisation, the Saxon People’s Party, in 1866. Only three years later, however, in 1869, he master-minded the unity of parts of the ADAV with his own party to form the Social Democratic Workers Party (SDAP), which, following the lifting of the Anti-Socialist Laws, became the SPD in 1890.³

It was the period of the 1880s, under the Anti-Socialist Laws, when Bebel and Liebknecht became the undisputed leaders of German Social Democracy. As members of the diet of the North-German Confederation, they had opposed the Franco-German war of 1870/71 and the subsequent annexation of Alsace and Lorraine. They were accused of high treason and sentenced to two years’ imprisonment, which guaranteed them their

1 Anja Kruke/Meik Woyke (eds.): *Deutsche Sozialdemokratie in Bewegung, 1848–1863 – 2013*, Bonn 2013.

2 There is now also a kindle edition of Bebel’s worthwhile autobiography: *Aus meinem Leben*, 3 vols., e-artnow, 2014. For a good biography in English see also William H. Maehl: *August Bebel: Shadow Emperor of the German Workers*, Lawrence/Kansa 1980.

3 The early history of Social Democracy is analysed in great detail by Thomas Welskopp: *Das Banner der Brüderlichkeit: Die deutsche Sozialdemokratie vom Vormärz bis zum Sozialistengesetz*, Bonn 2000.

status as martyrs for the movement. After 1890 Bebel also played a major role in organising the rise of German Social Democracy to one of the most powerful Social Democratic parties in the world, with more than one million individual members and more than 30 per cent of the vote in German Reichstag elections before the outbreak of the First World War. The German SPD was more than a political party – it was a milieu that cared for its supporters from cradle to grave – from socialist *kindergartens* to socialist funeral associations. Social Democrats lived and breathed socialism – at work they were members of socialist trade unions and they spent their leisure time in socialist leisure and sport associations.⁴ Unsurprisingly many European socialists looked to Germany as the one highly developed capitalist country, where the forces of socialism would be victorious in their struggle for an alternative to capitalism.⁵ And yet, this party and its leader were highly ambiguous in its strategy *vis-à-vis* capitalism.

On the one hand, Bebel did not tire to declare the revolutionary intentions of the party. Radicalised by the persecution under the Anti-Socialist Laws, the SPD had officially adopted Marxism in its Erfurt party programme of 1891. Nothing short of the transformation of the capitalist system was its aim. Yet, the Erfurt programme had two parts, one brimming with revolutionary fervour and one describing very practical reform measures on the road to socialism. Hence the party had two faces – next to the revolutionary grimace, it also had a respectable face of a parliamentary party, actively engaging with Wilhelmine German society and politics at many levels and working towards reform rather than revolution. This Janus-faced character of pre-war German Social Democracy produced many internal tensions and also disquiet among fellow socialists in Europe. Whilst more outspoken reformists, such as the French socialist leader Jean Jaurès, called the SPD a toothless tiger, preaching revolution but doing nothing practical to bring it about, revolutionaries such as Lenin castigated the SPD for deviating in its reformism from the true path of Marxism. Bebel himself, as this biography demonstrates, hovered uneasily in the middle, trying to keep increasingly divergent wings of Social Democracy together and bridging an ever-widening gap in the party – a gap which was to become a major rift and division in the context of war and revolution between 1914 and 1919.⁶

One of the bulwarks of German Social Democracy before 1914 and of the combined labour movement after 1918 was “red Berlin” – the topic of a new book by Axel Weipert, who traces the origins and the development of a strong socialist movement in the Prussian and German capital from 1830 to 1934. The emphasis of the narrative is on what can

4 Franz Walter: Milieus und Parteien in der deutschen Gesellschaft, in: Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht 46 (1995), pp. 479–493.

5 Peter Nettl: The German Social Democratic Party, 1890–1914 as a Political Model, in: Past and Present 30 (1965), pp. 65–95.

6 Carl Schorske: German Social Democracy, 1905–1917: The Development of the Great Schism, Cambridge, Mass. 1955.

be described as the highpoint of socialist influence in Berlin between the 1890s and the 1920s. During that period Bebel's saying "Berlin is ours" described the pride felt by many German Social Democrats in the strength of the movement in the very heart of Hohenzollern power and reactionary German politics. Weipert's book tells many tales about the diversity and breadth of that movement and its milieu over the span of a century, thereby underlining that this movement had many different facets and consisted of many layers not all of which always went together harmoniously. There were, for example, few places, inside or outside of Europe, where the forces of Social Democracy and the forces of Communism were so at loggerheads than in Berlin. The bitter fighting between them in 1919 settled a pattern of relationships that were characterised by antagonism rather than cooperation – even in the face of the major threat posed by National Socialism.⁷ There is, of course, no shortage of books summarising the development of the German labour movement in its 150 year history.⁸ Hence it can hardly be said that the book fills a gap in the literature. If it is still worth reading, it is because of the many telling examples it collects. They do throw a many-shaded light onto the phenomenon of Berlin socialism.

One of those facets of the socialist movement in Germany and in the wider Europe before 1914 was its commitment to peace and its activism against war. Social Democracy was widely seen as a bulwark against militarism before the outbreak of the First World War.⁹ In British labour history it has also traditionally been argued that there was an inverse relationship between militarism and the left. Such an interpretation is challenged by Matthew Johnson's thought-provoking book that examines the relationship of the British left to the values and norms of militarism between 1902 and 1914. Instead he puts forward an interpretation which sees militarism as a powerful political force that cut across the different political milieus in pre-war Britain.

As the author realises, there are several problematic concepts already in the title of his book. First of all, "the left" is a notoriously vague concept, which needs further definition. Johnson describes it in terms of a Free Trade coalition that was dominated by the Liberal Party but also supported by a nascent Labour Party and that was opposed by Unionism which had become the tool of those political forces calling for Tariff Reform. Such a definition of the left, is, of course, one which puts considerable emphasis on Liberals as primary agents of a progressive British politics in the pre-war era. Whilst this is not incorrect, it fails to differentiate sufficiently between liberalism and socialism as dis-

7 Klaus-Michael Mallmann: *Milieu, Radikalismus und lokale Gesellschaft. Zur Sozialgeschichte des Kommunismus in der Weimarer Republik*, in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 21 (1995), pp. 5–31.

8 This reviewer tried his hand at this particular genre. See Stefan Berger: *Social Democracy and the Working Class in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Germany*, London 2000.

9 For Germany see Nick Stargardt: *The German Idea of Militarism, 1866–1914*, Cambridge 1994.

tinct political forces in the pre-war political world of Europe.¹⁰ And if the emphasis is on liberalism, then it should also not be so surprising to find a strong relationship between militarism and liberalism, for many liberals across Europe were fervent imperialists and therefore also in favour of a strong military and a society that was highly militarised.¹¹ In less liberal societies on the European continent, this strong relationship between liberalism, nationalism, imperialism and militarism has long been recognised. Perhaps it has indeed been the assumption of a liberal state dominated for long by a Liberal Party which has blinded many British historians to the strong relationship between liberalism and some very illiberal political ideologies.

However, Johnson also examines the Labour Party, the Fabians, the Social Democratic Federation and a motley collection of socialist groups on the fringes of British politics before 1914. Here again, it has long been known that individuals such as Henry Mayers Hyndman and Robert Blatchford were strong imperialists and militarists. A commitment to English nationalism was part and parcel of an important stream of the British labour movement, as it was an important stream of almost any European labour movement well before the outbreak of the First World War. Labour movements everywhere in Europe had, after all, been thoroughly nationalised well before 1914.¹² Yet this does not mean that there were not also important anti-militarist and anti-nationalist forces assembled both in the labour movement and among left Liberals in Britain. Hence, overall, Johnson's very broad definition of "the left" makes his book far less "revisionist" than it pretends to be, as the strong relationship between parts of Liberalism and parts of the labour movement to militarism, imperialism and nationalism has long been well-known.

A second conceptual problem already inherent in the title of the book is a definition of militarism. It has been defined very differently in different contexts, and it has perhaps most frequently been used as a political weapon with which to tar one's political opponents. Johnson distinguishes between a "militarisation of the state" and a "militarisation of society" recognising that both were, of course, always closely interrelated. Reviewing the conceptual literature on militarism in his introduction Johnson observes that militarism in Britain had been widely associated with Prussianism and Prussian values before 1914, although this reviewer would add that such a perception became

10 Whilst Liberalism and socialism did enter into a close political alliance in Britain before 1914, the languages of class did increasingly undermine that alliance. See on the one hand Eugenio Biagini/Alastair Reid (eds.): *Currents of Radicalism: Popular Radicalism, Organised Labour and Party Politics in Britain, 1850–1914*, Cambridge 1991, and on the other Ross McKibbin: *The Evolution of the Labour Party 1910–1924*, Oxford 1974.

11 Matthew P. Fitzpatrick: *Liberal Imperialism in Europe*, Basingstoke 2012.

12 Stefan Berger: *British and German Socialists Between Class and National Solidarity*, in: Stefan Berger/Angel Smith (eds.): *Nationalism, Labour and Ethnicity*, Manchester 1999, pp. 31–63.

dominant in Britain only in the context of the First World War propaganda.¹³ By contrast, self-perceptions of Britain were dominated by ideas that its liberal political system and liberal society was the counter-opposite of militarism. However, as Johnson himself rightly argues, there have also been different voices pointing out the stronger and more unpalatable connections between Britishness and militarism. Hence the author can build on this body of literature and examine militarism as one important part of British political culture in Edwardian politics.¹⁴

He starts off by reviewing the ambiguities of left-wing attitudes towards war, soldierly values and the army, pointing out the left's commitment against war but at the same time the existence of a range of left-wing political heroes, from Oliver Cromwell to Giuseppe Garibaldi, who were also admired for the military virtues. Many representatives of the labour movement, Johnson argues, were hesitant to criticise the army too much, as they foregrounded the strong working-class element present among ordinary soldiers in the army. The sons of the British proletariat in the army were a constituency that the labour movement sought to represent rather than to alienate.

Next, Johnson demonstrates convincingly the presence of high-ranking soldiers in important political positions – at the heart of Whitehall, the Colonial Office and even in Government. Civilians in government were very reluctant to condemn British military atrocities in the colonies. Instead they were forever willing to defer to the better expertise of the military experts on the ground. Many Liberal MPs had served in the army as officers and brought military values and norms into the party.

Both in terms of values and in terms of institutional power, Johnson therefore concludes that both the British state and British society were more heavily militarised before 1914 than has hitherto been acknowledged. The strong navalism in Britain and the prominence of diverse navalist leagues highlighted the popularity of militarist values also among Liberals and explains the considerable economic and material resources lavished on the military in Edwardian Britain. Johnson can indeed show that many Liberals were part and parcel of the navalist lobby in pre-war Britain. Their support far outstripped the official pronouncements of the Liberal Party on the navy and the British military overall. However, the proximity of parts of liberalism with imperialism and their support of navalism as the most important means of upholding a strong empire, is really not that surprising.¹⁵

13 Friedrich Weckerlein: *Streitfall Deutschland. Die britische Linke und die "Demokratisierung" des Deutschen Reichs, 1900–1918*, Göttingen 1994.

14 Influential for the ongoing rethinking the role of the British state in the twentieth century and for introducing the concept of the "warfare state" was David Edgerton: *Liberal Militarism and the British State*, in: *New Left Review* 185 (1991), pp. 138–169.

15 See also Ann Summers: *Militarism in Britain Before the Great War*, in: *History Workshop Journal* 2 (1976), pp. 104–123.

Interestingly the next topic dealt with by Johnson, the debate surrounding the introduction of conscription, is one that underlines the hesitancy of the Liberal Party to endorse conscription precisely because there were fears about an undue militarisation of British society. Nevertheless Johnson can show how the National Service League as main promoter of the idea of conscription in pre-war Britain also lobbied Liberals and even socialists and sought to make them an important part of their political campaign. Parts of the left in Britain did indeed promote conscription as the most democratic form of national defence and one that would work towards a new sense of democratic citizenship. Notions of a "citizens' army" were indeed prominent, but such an army was widely seen on the left as a defence against the militarism of small cliques of elites and officers able to manipulate professional soldiers much more easily than citizens. To that extent it is questionable whether ideas of a "citizens' army" are expressions of militarism or if they are not rather anti-militarist in sentiment. On the far left, among the activists of the Social Democratic Federation, conscription was also sometimes associated with the idea of the working class acquiring the military skills that would be necessary for a successful revolution. So again, the author is surely right in pointing out a number of ambiguities of the left towards conscription, but ultimately it stopped short of endorsing conscription.

In the last substantive chapter of the book the Liberal war secretary in the pre-war years, Richard Burdon Haldane, a notorious liberal imperialist, moves centre stage.¹⁶ Haldane's promotion of the idea of a "nation-in-arms", according to Johnson, led to a significant militarisation of British society that found an expression in the introduction of rifle shooting into state-aided schools and the promotion of militaristic youth movements by the war office. Whether and to what extent Haldane's vision of a "nation-in-arms" really captured the political imagination of wider parts of the British left, remains, however, questionable.

In the concluding chapter Johnson takes the story forward to the outbreak of war and the introduction of conscription in the course of that war, discussing the impact of the First World War on the values and cultures of militarism in Britain. The war, he argues, led to an unprecedented militarisation of civilian life in Britain and renegotiated the relationship between the left and militarism along lines already recognisable and visible long before 1914. The danger here lies in finding precedents to events that owed their occurrence more to the immediate context of the war than to long-term developments. After all, British propaganda during the First World War emphasised time and again that the big enemy was Prussian militarism who had revealed its ugly face in Belgium, in submarine warfare and the bombing of British cities. Hence militarism remained in ideological terms the counter-opposite of Britishness and military compulsion was more often presented as an exceptionalism in exceptional circumstances than a value in

16 Stephen E. Koss: *Lord Haldane: Scapegoat for Liberalism*, New York 1969.

line with self-perceptions of Britishness.¹⁷ Overall then, this book makes an important contribution to the examination of the ambiguous relationship of British liberalism and socialism to the military and to military values before 1914 but is in danger of overstating its case in the search for a revisionist contribution to the literature on the character of Edwardian Britain before the foundational catastrophe of the twentieth century.

This foundational catastrophe led to the first successful socialist revolution. It rather unexpectedly occurred in Russia in 1917, that is in a country widely perceived as backward, with a small and largely illegal socialist party before 1914. One of the best experts on the history of the Russian revolution, Christopher Read, has presented us with an extremely readable and insightful volume on the reasons for the success of that revolution and its subsequent decline into terror and dictatorship. He starts off with a masterful depiction of Russia's social, economic, political and cultural situation at the beginning of the twentieth century, describing the Romanov empire as a doomed one, incapable and unwilling to reform.¹⁸ If Russian autocracy had to change and if a revolution was likely, the nature of that revolution and its outcome was decisively shaped by the First World War, and in particular the downward economic spiral after 1914.¹⁹ Wartime collapse exacerbated the crisis in Russia and prolonged it into the revolutionary years. As chaos descended in 1917, the February revolution unleashed a powerful popular movement that organised itself in a multitude of highly localised committees and soviets. Throughout the volume Read pays close attention to what he calls the "multiple revolutions" in Russia – the revolution having different faces in different parts of the vast empire, and the revolution also having different meanings in different spheres of life, for example in culture, in the economy, in politics and in gender relations. Read locates the decisive revolutionary forces in 1917 in the soldiers and sailors, not the least because they were armed. The provisional government under Kerensky was undermined by the Kornilov affair which was the beginning of the rise of the Bolsheviks. Their rallying cry of "All Power to the Soviets" mixed with their promises of a rapid end to the war and land redistribution as well as promises of a better life for the workers hit a chord.

Read argues compellingly that the Bolsheviks hijacked the revolutionary fervour and through their propaganda stole the fire of the Social Revolutionaries (SR) who represented the desires of the revolutionary masses much more closely than the Bolsheviks. Hence Read portrays the central tragedy of the revolution as an ultimate mismatch between the revolutionary rank-and-file and the Bolshevik leadership. When the Bolsheviks were in power, in the midst of a bloody civil war, they immediately set up dictatorial structures in

17 Adrian Gregory: *The Last Great War: British Society and the First World War*, Cambridge 2008.

18 A wonderful read on the cultural worlds of the Romanov empire is still Orlando Figes: *Natasha's Dance: A Cultural History of Russia*, London 2003.

19 Peter Gatrell: *Russia's First World War: a Social and Economic History*, London 2005.

order to facilitate what they saw as transition to socialism. Lenin is portrayed as a centraliser, a disciplinarian and as obsessed with control. His instincts were anything but democratic. And under his leadership the Bolsheviks extinguished the small flame of popular democracy that had arisen in the autumn of 1917. According to Read the civil war itself helped the Bolsheviks to cling to power, as it united all anti-White forces behind them. The book does a marvellous job in disentangling the extremely complex and diverse webs that make up the Russian revolution. Overall, it brings to life in a great narrative the immense impact of the revolution on Russia – its Tsarist elites were crushed, religion significantly curtailed in its importance, capitalism disappeared and social institutions such as the family were transformed. The great transformation of the countryside had to wait until the end of the 1920s but even here the Russian revolution ultimately had a massive effect. After the end of the Second World War that transformation was exported through the Red Army and the Soviet Union to Eastern Europe and many parts of the globe.

It is, as Read reminds us, not just a Russian story but a global story, as the Russian revolution of 1917 was a defining moment for the history of the twentieth century with huge consequences even for the contemporary world. During the Cold War roughly half of the globe was painted red, and the other half was frantically concerned with keeping the Communists down. To this effect the secret services of the western world established enormous networks seeking to defeat those political forces classed as “extremists”. Dominik Rigoll’s book on West Germany looks at the development of the West German notions of the protection of the state (*Staatsschutz*) and West German attempts to defeat the “extremists” up until the 1970s.

It has indeed been documented for many areas of the West German state how the Christian Democratic government of Konrad Adenauer went about integrating former National Socialists into all areas of the civil service.²⁰ According to Rigoll, the former Nazis re-entering state service, whom he classifies as the “49ers”, pitted themselves against the “45ers”, that is those more democratic personnel who had entered the state service often under protection from the Allies after the end of the Second World War. According to Rigoll the “49ers” ultimately won that battle against the “45ers” ensuring that the latter were marginalised within all spheres of state service in the early Federal Republic. Whilst former National Socialists had to recant almost every aspect of their previous beliefs in the new state, the one area where they felt vindicated even after 1945 was the stark anti-Communism that had been a hallmark both of National Socialism and of the liberal-capitalist Western world after 1945. Hence the “49ers” were ruthless in persecuting Communists in the 1950s and 1960s, which made the Federal Republic a prominent case of officially prescribed anti-Communism in the Western world, perhaps

20 Norbert Frei: *Adenauer’s Germany and the Nazi Past: the Politics of Amnesty and Integration*, New York 2002.

on a par with the McCarthyism of the United States.²¹ However, as Rigoll argues, former National Socialists in the West German civil service had an added interest in persecuting Communists, as the latter were the most outspoken critics of the continuities in the careers of former National Socialists bridging the divide of 1945.

The discursive power of such concepts as “antitotalitarian consensus” and “a democracy capable of defending itself” (*wehrhafte Demokratie*) ensured that former National Socialists were capable of forming an alliance with representatives of the Hitler Youth generation (born around 1930) in order to ensure the continuation of rabid anti-Communism in the West German civil service well into the 1970s.²² Such anti-Communism culminated in the *Radikalenerlass* of 1972, which sought to prevent entry of Communists into the state service. It allowed the internal secret service to screen 1.3 million applicants to the civil service between 1973 and 1978. Only about 1000 applicants were rejected for political reasons during the same period, but the public resonance (inside and outside of Germany) of the screening and the *Erlas*s went far beyond its actual effect. According to Rigoll it put a serious question mark behind the liberalisation of the Federal Republic during the first three decades of its existence. The constitutional court, for example, ruled in favour of individual basic rights and put them above any obligation to loyalty to the state, as long as it involved former National Socialists, but it reversed this practice when it was more and more concerned with Communists in the 1970s. Whether and to what extent all this amounts to a West German special path (*Sonderweg*) and if it can be seen as proof of a deficient liberalisation of West German society can only be properly established in comparative perspective.²³ Hence it would be extremely valuable to have other studies of the impact of anti-Communism on Western liberal societies during the early decades of the Cold War. But for West Germany Rigoll’s book provides a compelling argument about the strength of anti-Communism in public discourse impacting strongly on the reformation of the civil service after National Socialism. This situation was, of course, very different in different West European nation states: occupation by fascist Germany, the resistance against such occupation, the existence of mass Communist parties (for example in Italy and France), continuity of extreme right-wing regimes (for example in Spain and Portugal), neutrality in the war (for example in Switzerland and Sweden) and the successful armed struggle against National Socialism, as in Britain, all provided widely differing backgrounds for the emergence and the character of anti-Communism in Western Europe’s Cold War.

21 Patrick Major: *The Death of the KPD: Communism and Anti-Communism in West Germany 1945–1956*, Oxford 1998; Till Kössler: *Abschied von der Revolution: Kommunisten und Gesellschaft in Westdeutschland 1945–1968*, Düsseldorf 2004.

22 Konrad H. Jarausch: *After Hitler. Recivilizing Germans, 1945–1995*, Oxford 2006.

23 Anselm Doering-Manteuffel: *Wie westlich sind die Deutschen? Amerikanisierung und Westernisierung im 20. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen 1999.

In Britain, for example, a variety of factors combined to make anti-Communism relatively weak. For a start Britain had a long liberal tradition of protecting individual rights against the state. It also had a small and politically insignificant Communist Party, which did not appear as much of a threat to the British state. However, one area where Communists did have an important influence was in British trade unionism. During the Cold War, several important union leaders were either members of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB), for example the South Wales miners' leader, Arthur Horner,²⁴ or had significant sympathies for Communism, for example the later leader of the Nation Union of Mineworkers, Arthur Scargill. Scargill led the British miners to one of their worst defeats in a strike that lasted over a year. It badly divided Britain and moved the country to levels of civil strife rarely witnessed before. Arne Hordt's published version of his Masters' thesis examines the British miners' strike of 1984/1985 as a problem of European contemporary history writing. It is an ambitious attempt to historicise the miners' strike by delineating three main narratives about the strike that allegedly emerged since the mid-1980s. Hordt identifies a dominant strand of what he calls a "new realism" that he identifies with New Labour: historians close to this interpretation allegedly emphasise that the miners' strike was the last hurrah of Old Labour which had to fail, because the societal model that Old Labour stood for had no future. A second strand of interpretation is located with those researchers who have been sympathetic to the miners and supported the strike. They, Hordt argues, have often been influenced by neo-Marxism and represent the interpretation associated with the losers of the historical process. The third and final interpretation, according to Hordt, is associated with a politically neutral scholarly *ductus* that he finds best represented in the multi-volume official *History of the British Coal Industry*. Hordt, in my view correctly, sees historical interpretation and political-normative horizons as closely interrelated. However, there are also factors at work in historical writing which have to do with the inner workings of history as a profession, and they should receive at least some attention.

Hordt's ultimate aim is to historicise the miners' strike in a way that would overcome the shortcomings of each of the three interpretations and make it possible to write its history in line with the conceptualisations of contemporary history recently put forward by Jost Dülffer.²⁵ According to Dülffer, it is the task of contemporary history to decode the national bias of historiographies and thereby help to overcome the established master narratives of European contemporary history. The end result would be a more European history writing. Hordt aims to take the history of the miners' strike as a case study for such a new form of contemporary history writing and he draws much inspiration from a wider body of historical thought that has recently attempted to move history writing

24 Nina Fishman: Arthur Horner, 1894–1968, 2 vols., London 2010.

25 Jost Dülffer: Europäische Zeitgeschichte – narrative und historiographische Perspektiven, in: Zeithistorische Forschungen/Studies in Contemporary History 1 (2004), pp. 51–71.

beyond methodological nationalism. Furthermore he incorporates new approaches in the history of social protest, opting for a merger of cultural and social history along the lines championed by, among others, Thomas Welskopp and Dietmar Süß in Germany.²⁶ In his attempt to historicise the 1980s in Britain, Hordt challenges what he sees as the predominant narrative of ‘decline’ in the historiography of Britain, for example the notion that the British economy in particular had been on a downwards trajectory in the long period of the Cold War. Hordt sees in this interpretation an ideological construct at work which does not capture the full complexity of the historical process. Whilst few historians will have anything against complexity, it strikes me that Hordt in his attempt to correct the story of decline does not succeed completely in correcting two rather essential things: first, Britain did decline both relative to its position before the Second World War and relative to other economies in North-Western Europe, even if the decline was nowhere near as steep as argued in some of the “doom and gloom” literature on “British economic decline”, and secondly; the industrial relations structure of Britain made for rather idiosyncratic conflictual industrial relations between management and unions at the shopfloor level which was detrimental to British productivity and the economic performance of the country overall.²⁷

The bulk of his short study is taken up with describing the three narratives that he has identified. Whilst he has assembled a huge amount of material here, he struggles to fit everything neatly in his typology, as the political-normative way of dividing the historiography is ultimately incapable of sorting literature that cannot be exclusively identified with such political-normative horizon. There is a tendency to put this into his third, scholarly type. However ultimately such a typology underestimates to what extent scholarliness is always bound up with political-normative horizons. If he is in danger to underestimate the autonomy of scholarship before, here he is in danger of underestimating the politicisation of scholarship as scholarship. There is then, I would argue, much more of a mixture of positions than can be portrayed in the typology suggested here.

26 See also the review of some such approaches in the pages of this journal: Manfred Gailus: Was macht eigentlich die historische Protestforschung? Rückblicke, Resümee, Perspektiven, in: *Mitteilungsblatt des Instituts für soziale Bewegungen* 34 (2005), pp. 127–154; Dietmar Süß: A scheene Leich? Stand und Perspektiven der westdeutschen Arbeitergeschichte nach 1945, in: *Mitteilungsblatt des Instituts für soziale Bewegungen* 34 (2005), pp. 51–76.

27 Even a “revisionist” economic historian, such as Jim Tomlinson, who is writing against “declinism”, has to admit that there was some decline and restrict his argument to the fact that it might not have been as catastrophic as other authors have claimed. See Jim Tomlinson: Economic “Decline” in Postwar Britain, in: Paul Addison/Harriet Jones (eds.): *A Companion to Contemporary Britain, 1939–2000*, Oxford 2005, pp. 164–179; on the detrimental effect on conflictual industrial relations see Hugh Pemberton: *The Transformation of the Economy*, in: Addison/Jones (eds.): *Companion*, p. 192 f., who cites much of the relevant literature.

In his conclusion Hordt attempts to compare the miners' strike in Britain with the social protests accompanying the closure of the Rheinhausen steel plant in the Ruhr in 1987 and 1988. He chooses this comparison because of the intensity of the conflict and sees a lot of similarities in the way in which in both conflicts workers defended what they perceived as a major threat to their communities and way of life.²⁸ Hence he highlights the "moral economy" aspects of both forms of social protest. The question that emerges here is whether it would not have made more sense to compare conflicts in the mining industries of Britain and Germany. Here the contrasts between the industrial relations cultures of both countries would have been rather striking. Undoubtedly Hordt is right in his calls to take seriously the plurality of opinions within the trade unions in Britain and not see individuals as Arthur Scargill as representative of all miners' leaders. And surely he is also correct in his call to take seriously the many regional differences in the political culture of social conflict. And, one may add: within individual regions there existed a plurality of such traditions, as the examples of the steel and the coal industries in the Ruhr clearly demonstrate.

A particular European region, namely Italy's former "red belt", and more specifically Bologna, nicknamed *la rossa e la grassa* (the red and the fat, the latter more thanks to its gorgeous cuisine; today only the latter remains) are also at the heart of the next study on social movement history to be reviewed here. Andrea Hajek takes as her starting point the diverse memorialisations of the death of Francesco Lorusso during student protests in Bologna at the hands of a police officer in 1977. From an in-depth investigation of this one event and its memorialisation until the present, she asks very interesting questions concerning the impact of contentious memory cultures on social protest, an area of research that has indeed been neglected by social movement research.²⁹ Hence her book is a rallying call to seek out the productive synergies between memory studies and social movement studies. She explores the role of diverse memory agents in negotiating and renegotiating the meaning of past events for present struggles. Reviewing the recent memory boom, she uses the concepts of "traumatic memory" and "counter-memory" to investigate the memory of the student protests in Italy and compares them with memory of student protests in Great Britain, France and West Germany. Her argument relating

28 Ingrid Schumacher: *Sozialer Protest. Konfliktkommunikation, kollektive Deutungsmuster und die kulturelle Selbsterzeugung von sozialem Protest: Duisburg-Rheinhausen 1987/88 und Berlin-Kreuzberg 1987, Osnabrück 2001; the Rheinhausen plant was part of the Krupp empire; see also the eminently informative and readable history of that empire by Harold James: Krupp: A History of the Legendary German Firm, New Jersey 2012.*

29 An exception is the memory of Communism after the end of Communism, where we have quite a lot of studies. See Attila Pok: *On the Memory of Communism in Eastern and Central Europe*, in: Stefan Berger/Bill Niven (eds.): *Writing the History of Memory*, London 2013, pp. 173–198.

to such protests is that it is precisely the lack of public consensus which kept the memory fresh over so many years and led to an ongoing renegotiation of that memory. She very usefully deploys ideas of “vernacular” and “official memory” to discuss the manifold ways in which memory is put to use in continuous presents. Hajek’s theoretical angle on her subject is as fascinating as her source base, for she uses a very wide range of sources from newspaper articles to letters (both public and private), press releases, official documents and a vast amount of “grey literature” produced by the student movement and subsequent social movements acting as memory agents for the student protests.

In the first substantive chapter of her engaging book, Hajek examines the public memories of the student protests of the late 1960s and early 1970s, finding their impact to be much bigger in Italy and West Germany in comparison to France and Great Britain.³⁰ She examines in particular the politically loaded term of the “years of lead” in Italy and traces the way in which this concept frames the official memory culture in Italy and also in Germany. Subsequently, in her second chapter, she changes the focus from the public memory to the memory of the activists that has ranged from nostalgia to diverse forms of myth-making.³¹ In both the public and the activist memory, Hajek finds important omissions and silences, but in the activist memory there is also an idealisation of the student protest which is frequently used to legitimate the actions of social movements in the present. After contextualising the wider field of the relationship between diverse memory agents and their memorialisations of the student protests of the late 1960s and early 1970s, Hajek, in her third chapter moves Bologna centre-stage and asks what characteristics of the movement of ’77 produced the kind of memory traumas that social movements subsequently had to negotiate. The next three chapters stay with Bologna and provide a very detailed and thick description of three local groups and their memorialisation of the events in March 1977. At first Hajek deals with the family memory and its negotiation of Lorusso’s person with diverse forms of public memory. This already shows that the public and the private, the vernacular and the official cannot be neatly separated and that they indeed interlink in a multitude of different ways. Secondly Hajek turns to the official memory in Bologna, Local politicians and political parties, in particular the PCI, move centre-stage here in their continuous attempts to interpret events in a way that would positively influence their political fortunes in the city. Finally, there is the memory of the activists of the student movement, that is Lorusso’s companions and comrades, who uphold a counter-memory to the fragmented official memory and

30 On the comparative history of ’68 see also the engaging Gerd-Rainer Horn: *The Spirit of ’68. Rebellion in Western Europe and North America, 1956–1976*, Oxford 2007.

31 On the relationship between myth and history, more generally, see also Chris Lorenz: *Drawing the Line: “Scientific History” Between Myth-Making and Myth-Breaking*, in: Stefan Berger/Linas Eriksonas/Andrew Mycock (eds.): *Narrating the Nation: Representations in History, Media and the Arts*, Oxford 2008, pp. 35–55.

time and again try to relate the death of Lorusso to other traumatic clashes between the authorities and social movements, such as the death of Carlo Giuliani during the Group of Eight (G8) summit in Genoa in 2001.

Lorusso in that memory becomes an iconic model for other generations of social movement activists to follow. In the conclusion to this insightful book on the mechanisms of commemoration in and around social movements, Hajek discusses two specific attempts that were made in the 1980s and 1990s to memorialise Lorusso and the student protests of the late 1960s and early 1970s: a commemorative plaque placed at the site of his death by his comrades and his family, and a public garden named after him by the local government. Ultimately, the situation in Bologna points to the lack of a political language with which to describe the events and memorialise them in a way that would satisfy all existing memory agents or at least contribute to genuine reconciliation.

Memory agents and their promotion of particular memory cultures clearly have an important role to play in constructing both continuities and ruptures in a long spatial and non-spatial continuum of social movements. Yet social movement research that has drawn overwhelmingly from the social sciences (rather than history) since the 1970s has frequently ignored those longer-term continuities at their peril, as Cristina Flesher Fominaya and Laurence Cox highlight in their excellent edited collection on *Understanding European Movements*. The two editors also publish an innovative and highly interesting online journal on social movements, entitled *Interface*,³² which has a bent towards the present but is careful not to ignore the past. It is an interface in the best sense of the word between different disciplines and traditions in social movement research. And indeed, as this volume powerfully underlines, the anti-globalisation movement of the present is often difficult to understand without analysing a whole range of post-1968 (and I would perhaps even say, post 1950s, in order to include the British first New Left and related developments on the continent) social movements. In fact the anti-globalisation movement is described here as genuine “movement of movements”³³ that share a strong anti-capitalist impetus that was also behind the formation of the “New Left” in many European countries during the 1950s and 1960s.³⁴ Thus Michal Osterweil points out for the Italian case the importance of the various Italian auto-

32 See *Interface: a Journal for and about Social Movements*, <http://www.interfacejournal.net/> (accessed on 31 October 2014)

33 For an understanding of social movement as “movement of movements” and an attempt to provide some order to the diverse conceptualisations of social movements, see Dieter Rucht: *Studying Social Movements: some Conceptual Challenges*, in: Stefan Berger/Holger Nehring (eds.): *Social Movements and their History – an Introduction*, Basingstoke 2015, forthcoming.

34 Stuart Hall: *Life and Times of the First New Left*, in: *New Left Review* 61 (2010), pp. 177–196.

mous movements of the 1960s and 1970s for the form and strength of the Global Justice Movement (GJM). In France, as Isabelle Sommier and Olivier Fillieulle underline, the ideological and organisational diversity of the GJM was larger than in Italy, but again, it would have been unthinkable without drawing from established organisational forms and traditions. Emmanuel Rivat picks out one of the many predecessors in the form of the anti-nuclear movement and shows how its activists also directly contributed to the growth of the GJM, albeit in highly nationally inflected ways and in direct tension to some of the older social movements, in particular the union movement. Andrea Membretti and Pierpaolo Mudu choose the example of the Italian social centres to show how their energy and organisational vigour also influenced the GJM. The same is true for the French *Confédération Paysanne*, as shown by Edouard Morena. Finally Flesher Fominaya herself chooses the example of the British anti-roads movement to signal important continuities between this single-issue movement and the GJM.

If the book is excellent in highlighting that many contemporary social movements are unthinkable without a longer trajectory of social movements on which they often build, it is also very good in introducing to Anglo-Saxon research on social movements (which is often, sadly, missing the linguistic competence to read other languages than English) a host of European theories on social movements. European social theory, as the first chapter in the volume, co-penned by Cox and Flesher Fominaya underlines, has both a long and powerful tradition of thinking about social movements. They rightly point to the importance of a range of engaged intellectuals, including Rosa Luxemburg, James Connolly, Vladimir Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Georg Lukács, Antonio Gramsci and others more who paved the way in thinking about social movements from the 1890s onwards. The antifascist struggle in the interwar period saw another burst of theorising about social movements, and after 1945, during the Cold War, intellectuals such as Herbert Marcuse, Michel Foucault, Raymond Williams, Claus Offe, Pierre Bourdieu, Edward Palmer Thompson, Mary Kaldor, Immanuel Wallerstein, Ulrich Beck and Manuel Castells all added to the rich literature on social movement theory. The editors provide good introductions to the thought of Simone de Beauvoir, Herbert Marcuse, Alberto Melucci and Alain Touraine. Their call to avoid self-referentiality and open social movement studies to a richer tradition of thinking about social engagement, surely points the way forward for future research on social movements.³⁵

The fruitfulness of understanding social movements as “networks of networks” is highlighted by a range of contributions to this volume that show the character of the

35 This should not deflect from the fact that there are some excellent introductions to social movement theories, including Stephen M. Buechler: *Understanding Social Movements: Theories from the Classical Era to the Present*, London 2011; Gerald F. Davis/Doug McAdam/W. Richard Scott/Mayer N. Zald (eds.), *Social Movements and Organization Theory*, Cambridge 2005.

GJM as a broad alliance. Christian Scholl, in discussing both the GJM and Euro May Day, in this context puts forward the idea of Europe as a “contagious space” in which processes of political transfer are ubiquitous. Agnes Gagyi’s article supports Scholl’s argument by showing how concepts of autonomy travelled from the West to the East, namely to Hungary and Romania and were received and adapted there to specific local contexts. Indeed, as Priska Daphi argues in relation to Italian and German GJM activists, collective identity formation now happens across and in between national spaces that are more porous than ever before. Frequent travelling of social movement activists within Europe facilitates exchanges and dialogues, as is shown by Linus Ownes, Ask Katzeff, Elisabeth Lorenzi and Baptiste Colin in their discussion of the European squatting movement, where Europe often becomes an everyday reality in the living together of Europeans from different nationalities in the various squats.³⁶ The evidence presented in these chapters leads the editors to argue that one can talk about “Europe as an internally-differentiated movement space”. Whilst there have undoubtedly been many advances in the Europeanisation of social movement protest, one should perhaps also urge caution not to overemphasise those trends. After all, Europe is still lacking or is at least very deficient in an overarching European public sphere, as reflected by the absence of any kind of mass media that is truly European in character.³⁷

The third strength of the book lies in introducing to the reader much new material on recent anti-austerity protests in countries such as Spain, Greece and Iceland. Kerman Calvo makes good use of empirical survey data to shed light on the recent anti-austerity protests in Spain. Interestingly he goes against the grain of many chapters in the book by arguing that this was a genuinely new movement with precious few links to other social movements in the past. His argument is intriguingly contrasted by the article of Eduardo Romanos which also looks at the Spanish movement but finds many continuities to previous social movements, which seems to indicate that the survey data that Calvo uses, simply fail to pick up such continuities. Vittorio Sergi and Markos Vogiatzoglou provide us with a fascinating comparison of the Tunisian and Greek protests and in particular focus on the importance of mobilising national symbolic memory to activate diverse repertoires of contention. Their emphasis on the importance of cultural memory

36 On squatting and youth protest movements in the 1980s see also Knut Andresen/Bart van der Steen (eds.): *A European Youth Revolt 1980/81: European Perspectives on Youth Protest and Social Movements*, Basingstoke 2015, forthcoming.

37 Although there is definitely evidence that nationally constituted societies in Europe have been moving close together in the post-1945 period. See Hartmut Kaelble (ed.): *The European Way: European Societies in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Oxford 2004; European-wide networks have also become increasingly important for regional integration in Europe – see Wolfram Kaiser: Brigitte Leucht/Michael Gehler (eds.): *Transnational Networks in Regional Integration: Governing Europe 1945–1983*, Basingstoke 2010.

points in the same direction as the argument by Hajek in her book. Finally, Árni Daníel Júlíusson and Magnús Sveinn Helgason provide us with very interesting insights into the workings of the Icelandic protest movements against austerity in 2008 – one of the earliest and most influential as well as successful European cases.³⁸ If the fascinating empirical material in this collection points to the importance of processes of cultural transfer between different national traditions in Europe, it at the same time highlights the many national and indeed often highly regional and local specificities that determine the success or failure of social movements in Europe. As the editors therefore rightly stress, social movement research in Europe ignores these specificities at its peril. Only careful historical contextualisation of the emergence and character of social protest will succeed in a deeper understanding of contemporary social movements in Europe. The editors call on the community of researchers to develop new theoretical models which are more attentive to those historically informed specificities. Such an emphasis on the importance of history is very pleasing, as it is, after all, precisely the rationale of the journal, in which this review is printed. Hence the reviewer could not agree more with Flesher Fominaya and Cox. Let us hope that other social movement researcher will also hear their voices loud and clear in future years.

If *Understanding European Movements* aims to introduce European continental social movement theories to social movement scholarship in Anglo-Saxon countries, it is very noticeable that many of the theorists that are discussed here are either Marxists, have been influenced by diverse strands of Marxism or are engaging with those strands. Hence it is indeed timely that another edited collection examines in detail the relationship between Marxism and social movement research. It has its origins in the annual Alternative Futures and Popular Protest (AFPP) conferences that were run by Colin Barker and Mike Tynesley in Manchester for a number of years, bringing together a wide range of broadly Marxist scholars. Out of these meetings emerged a desire to produce a volume that would entail different disciplinary and diverse spatial perspectives on the relationship between Marxism and social movement studies. In their lucid introduction to this fascinating collection of articles, the editors remind the reader that Marxism as a theory developed in close contact with social movements right from its very beginnings.³⁹ Yet, paradoxically, Marxism did not develop its own “theory of movements”. What is more, as much social movement theory developed its analyses focusing on the “new social movements” from the 1970s onwards, social movement theory often ignored Marxism as a theoretical source of inspiration, as it ignored the economic context of capitalism

38 See also Richard Seymour: *Against Austerity: How We Can Fix the Crisis They Made*, London 2014; and Donatella della Porta: *Social Movements in Times of Austerity: Bringing Capitalism Back into Protest Analysis*, Cambridge 2015, forthcoming.

39 On the importance of Marxism for the left, see also Geoff Eley: *Forging Democracy: The History of the Left in Europe, 1850–2000*, Oxford 2002.

in which these “new social movements” developed. They prematurely, the editors argue, buried “class politics” in favour of an “identity politics” that seemed to chime more with many of the “new social movements”.⁴⁰ Such a focus compartmentalised the study of individual ‘new’ movements and meant that researchers often lost or simply were not interested in the bigger picture of how the multitude of those movements related to global economic and political developments.

Foucauldian and cultural studies approaches were, according to the editors, responsible for such concentration on disconnected archipelagos of resistance.⁴¹ And yet, the editors maintain, in the contemporary world, which witnesses one of the largest and truly global challenges to capitalism in the form of world-wide protests in which anti-capitalist sentiment often is to the fore in genuinely popular struggles, it is a painful lacuna that researchers dealing with such protests often pay little or no attention to Marxism, which, as theory, provides them with a global view of economic, social and political development that could connect the dots that unite the diverse protest movements around the world. In fact, the editors are adamant that the contemporary social protests are the contemporary incarnation of what they describe as a very long history of social protest from below (“socialism from below”) that was directed not only against capitalism but also against “socialism from above”, including Social Democratic movements that had made their peace with capitalism and state Communist movements. Not every reader will share the Marxism of the editors and the authors of this volume and many might therefore be a little more sceptical as to the revelatory impact of Marxist social theory on the analysis and practice of social movements. The proposition put forward by the editors that capitalism is still the core problem facing social movements for emancipation today, is one that should, however, at least be part of the debate. Therefore, this reviewer agrees that a more forthright engagement with Marxism might well open up interesting perspectives for social movement research.

The Marxist social theory that is to the fore in this volume has still at its heart an economic theory about the social relations of production, but it is far from mechanistic or deterministic. At every corner, the authors of this volume are willing to accept the importance of agency of ordinary people and political actors and the importance of class alliances.⁴² Political situations are always open towards the future – within certain constraints of the capitalist system. If there is an emphasis on the processes of production

40 For a good discussion of class and identity politics see Stanley Aronowitz: *The Politics of Identity: Class, Culture, Social Movements*, London 1992.

41 On the importance of “culture” for a thorough understanding of social movements, see James M. Jasper: *Protest: A Cultural Introduction to Social Movements*, Cambridge 2014.

42 Roger S. Gottlieb: *An Anthology of Western Marxism. From Lukacs and Gramsci to Socialist-Feminism*, Oxford 1989; see also *Western Marxism: A Critical Reader*, edited by the *New Left Review* in 1978.

in Marxism, there is here a recognition that such processes go well beyond materialism and include the construction of social selves as well as social relations through complex systems of symbols, metaphors and languages of the social. Linguistic analyses and praxeological approaches are explicitly endorsed by this Marxism that takes inspiration from a very wide body of left-wing political thought, including autonomism, anarchism, radical Christian, ecologist, feminist and radical democratic ideas. Such a Marxist tradition, in contrast to the rigid dogmatism of the official Marxist/Leninist/Stalinist/Maoist dogmatism that characterised the regimes of “really existing socialism” during the Cold War, is indeed well worth engaging with, a conclusion powerfully underlined by the contributions to this volume.

They do not amount to a unified theory of social movements (that would indeed be expecting a little much from an edited collection like this one), but they provide many different shards or puzzle pieces on which such a theory might in future be built. In the first section of the book theoretical frameworks are to the fore, as authors ask how Marxism might better inform research on social movements. Colin Barker, for example, suggests the translatability of Marxist languages of “class struggle” to the non-Marxist languages of “social movement”. Alf Nielsen and Laurence Cox subsequently seek to formulate a Marxist theory of social movements, at the heart of which they put the dynamic interplay between “movements from above” and “movements from below”. It is that processual interaction, they argue, which explains the making and unmaking of social structures. John Krinsky identifies five aspects of Marxist theory, totality, contradiction, immanence, coherence and practice, which together, can provide a fuller understanding of contemporary social movements, which, on the face of it, have little to do with each other. Krinsky is indeed trying to connect the dots on a highly disparate global landscape of social protest. Gabriel Hetland and Jeff Goodwin subsequently take the specific movement of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) activism to show how LGBT has been shaped to a large extent by capitalist developments. LGBT, they argue, is therefore an excellent example underlining how an alleged identity politics ignores wider economic and social processes, including the persistence of class politics, at its peril.⁴³

In the second part of this volume the reader is presented with a mixture of historical and contemporary case studies, spanning three continents, seeking to shed more light on how Marxist perspectives can provide convincing analyses of social movements. Laurence Cox examines a wide range of contemporary self-help organisations in Ireland by drawing on E. P. Thompson’s iconic *Making of the English Working Class* and showing how historically, in the nineteenth century, social movements were widely regarded as institutions for the political self-organisation of societal groups. Both a deeper understanding of history and of Marxist social theory, according to Cox, helps us to understand the

43 See also Mark Blasius (ed.): *Sexual Identities, Queer Politics: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Politics*, New Jersey 2001.

forms of contemporary social movements. The importance of a deeper historical view is underlined by Marc Blecher who argues that the interplay between workplace and community relations is key to understanding workplace struggles in China from the early twentieth century to today. There are equally intriguing chapters on the opposition to the Narmada dam project in contemporary India (by Alf Gunvald Nilsen), the Mexican uprising in Oaxaca in 2006 (by Chris Hesketh) and on the failure of the institutionalised left in South Africa to lead protests against neo-liberal policies implemented partially by that very left (in particular the leadership of the African National Congress). Patrick Bond, Ashwin Desai and Trevor Ngwane employ a Trotskyite framework to understand the co-optation of parts of the South African left to a neo-liberal project. Ralph Darlington reviews the role of bureaucratisation in trade union organisations, arguing against a Michelsian view of the inexorability of bureaucratisation and pointing to the need for specific historical analyses of the relationship between officials and rank-and-file union members.⁴⁴

The third part of the book reinforces the importance of a historical look onto social movements. Paul Blackledge investigates “cultures of resistance” over the *longue durée* arguing that it is possible to understand a wide variety of social movements spanning the modern period as reacting against capitalist alienation. Neil Davidson studies a wide variety of right-wing social movements, still often neglected by mainstream social movements research, to come to the conclusion that they should be taken seriously as mobilisations “from below”.⁴⁵ In Leninist language, the author argues that these movements, which are often class conscious and directed against hegemonic elites, need direction from committed socialists in order to steer them away from reactionary politics. Furthermore this section contains a defence of a class analysis of nineteenth-century India by Hira Singh which is critical both of Marx and of postcolonial approaches, and a fascinating article by Christian Høgsbjerg on the importance of a variety of black movements for the shaping of modernity ranging widely over the Haitian revolution, the United States, anti-colonial liberation movements and millennial black religions. Racialised hierarchies

44 Robert Michels' 1911 study entitled *Political Parties. A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy* argued that in particular socialist parties could not be truly democratic because they necessarily developed into bureaucracies seeking to maintain their power base. Michels, like the even better known Max Weber belong to a whole phalanx of early sociologists engaging with and seeking to refute Marxism.

45 The Ku Klux Klan, for example, has been studied very fruitfully from the angle of social movement studies. See Rory McVeigh: *Rise of the Ku Klux Klan: Right-wing movements and National Politics*, Minneapolis 2009.

of domination emerge in this chapter as closely aligned to the political economy of a globalising capitalism.⁴⁶

The final section of the book introduces contemporary struggles against neo-liberalism – with chapters on the poor in Scotland (Chik Collins), the Australian GJM (Elizabeth Humphrys), the 2001 uprising in Argentina (Heike Schaumberg) and a brilliant comparison of the alliances between *campesino* and indigenous resistance with workers' resistance in Bolivia, Mexico, Tunisia and Egypt (David McNally). Like the other sections in this book, these articles combine in-depth analysis of empirical material with a decidedly Marxist interpretation, drawing on Gramsci, on linguistic theories of Bakhtin and Vološinov and on cultural approaches originating with E. P. Thompson. Overall, this is also what gives this volume cohesion and makes it of interest – it showcases how Marxism can innovatively engage with social movement research to arrive at a deeper understanding of social movements. It also highlights a prominent tradition of Marxist historical thinking in the capitalist West that thrived in the Cold War and underpinned a wide variety of very different social movements. The influence of those Western Marxist historical cultures on social movements during the Cold War still needs to be researched and examined in greater depth. Whilst different readers will no doubt find different Marxist approaches more or less convincingly employed, no one except the worst ideologues will put this volume down still thinking that Marxism as a theory has little to contribute to social movement research.

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46 See also many of the essays in Catherine Hall/Keith McClelland (eds.): *Race, Nation and Empire: Making Histories 1750 to the Present*, Manchester 2010, which clearly demonstrate the strong links between racism, capitalism and the British empire.