

# Abstracts

## ■ Max Bloch

*Die Sozialistischen Monatshefte und die Akademikerdebatte in der deutschen Sozialdemokratie vor 1914: Die „Fälle“ Göhre, Schippel, Calwer und Hildebrand*

„The truth is that upon this point, as upon so many others, the intellectuals and the proletarians lack the capacity of mutual understanding.” That is how Robert Michels summarized in 1911 the outcome of the “cases” linked to the names of Paul Göhre, Max Schippel and Robert Calwer on which his “study of the oligarchical tendencies of modern democracy” was based. The facts that Göhre and Schippel gave up their parliamentary seats, that Calwer renounced his party membership in 1909 and that Gerhard Hildebrand, a former member of the National-Social Association, was excluded from the party in 1912, were part of the important ideological disputes within the SPD in Imperial Germany. As members of the staff of the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, the “socialist academics” of the right wing of German Social Democracy saw themselves as pioneers in the fight for scientific freedom, against constraint and uniformity. This essay means to illustrate through the “cases” of Göhre, Schippel, Calwer and Hildebrand the fierce disputes between “radicals” and “revisionists” which signified the open question: revolutionary cadre party on the one, democratic people’s party on the other hand.

## ■ Ottokar Luban

*Spartakusgruppe, revolutionäre Obleute und die politischen Massenstreiks in Deutschland während des Ersten Weltkriegs*

Considering shortfalls in supply and a general dissatisfaction with war that led to greater resentments amongst German workers, this essay focuses on the left-wing activities during the First World War in Germany – and their limits. It examines in particular various strikes such as the Liebknecht strike of June 1916 as well as the practices employed by activists, which ultimately culminated in the November Revolution and paved the way for the Weimar Republic. The contribution shows in how far left-wing supporters regarded political mass strikes as a suitable way of expressing their stance and the struggle for democratic rights. In addition, it reveals the different positions of historians on the state repression measures and the lacking participation of trade unions and social democrats that impeded the Spartacus League and chairmen of the Labour in their intentions for peace and democracy.

■ *Christoph Jünke**Das dritte Leben des Viktor Agartz*

In the context of an increasing catching up of the history of German left socialism in the 1950s Viktor Agartz is also rediscovered. Agartz was the most important economic politician of the Westgerman Workers Movement in the first decade after war and fascism, beside of Kurt Schuhmacher and Hans Böckler. He was the longstanding head of the institute of scientific economy (WWI) of the Confederation of German Trade Unions (DGB) and is regarded as the embodiment of the tradeunion radicalism. Climax as much as turning point of his career was the programmatic speech on the Frankfurt congress of the DGB in October 1954, which made him a person on whom popular hopes are pinnend. This was isolating him inside the leadership of the tradeunion movement and caused his retirement. But in contrast of the historical narratives, he wasn't a political dead man after that. With his dismissal from the WWI at the end of 1955 and the foundation of the biweekly journal "WISO. Korrespondenz für Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften" at the beginning of 1956 the "third life" of Viktor Agartz began. Christoph Jünke portrays these last ten years and shows Agartz as a mentor of the first New Left, which raised in the years 1954/55 and collapsed at the end of the 1950s. He explores the biographical and contemporary context of that episode and clarifies the tragic destiny of the most distinguished left socialist before "1968" – a man who was made "persona non grata".

■ *Fabian Virchow**"Left around turn!" – On the Organisational History of Antimilitaristic Activities of Soldiers in 1970s West Germany*

As in several other European countries with military draft Germany's Federal Armed Forces were confronted with antimilitaristic activities on the part of soldiers in the 1970s. Influenced by student activism and a broader societal climate of emancipation and democratic break-up the German armed forces became the arena of campaigning for free speech in the military, for a significant pay increase for the lower ranks and – more general – for linking the soldiers' struggles with the one organised by workers and trade unions.

In many German cities so called 'Soldiers Committees' sprang up and started to distribute pamphlets calling the conscripts to answer back drill and harassment, to struggle for price cutting in the canteens or for even have them run by the soldiers themselves. In the vast majority of cases the committees were linked to one or another leftist organisation resulting, to a different degree and inspired by the military coup in Chile in 1973 as a negative example and the Revolution of the Carnations in Portugal in 1974 as a positive one, in revolutionary fantasies according to which the armed forces would be turned from an 'instrument of the bourgeoisie' to a peoples militia.

Due to ideological rivalries, dogmatic world views and often authoritarian structures of the soldiers committees (and the leftist organizations behind them) on the one hand and a flexible but at the same time tough reaction by the German Armed Forces on the other hand the antimilitaristic activities on the part of soldiers remained a limited episode confined to the 1970s mainly.