

## BOOK REVIEWS

CHOJNACKA, MONICA. *Working Women of Early Modern Venice*. [The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, 118th Series (2000), vol. 3.] The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore [etc.] 2001. xxiii, 188 pp. Ill. \$25.00.

In examining women's history, the traditional structure has been along the stages of their life cycles. In studies on the history of women's lives in the early modern period, the phases of spinsterhood, married life, and widowhood frequently form the organizing principle. However, in her study, Monica Chojnacka breaks with this tradition and explicitly opts for an alternative structure. She focuses instead on the series of expanding social communities in which women moved: the household, the neighbourhood, the city, and beyond. In doing so, she argues that, although their stage of life influenced women's actions and the opportunities open to women in the early modern period, a woman's marital status was not always the decisive factor determining those opportunities. Moreover, a woman's identity was not determined simply by her marital status. In addition to the roles they fulfilled as daughters, wives, and widows, women were also friends, neighbours, partners, clients, and employers. The diversity of female identities in a variety of spaces is a central theme in Chojnacka's study. Based on the *status animarum* (parish registers), financial and notarial records, tax registers, the archives of charitable institutions, the records of the S. Ufficio (Holy Office), and testimonies given during witchcraft trials, the various chapters focus on these different female identities.

In the first chapter, on the residential patterns of Venetian women in the sixteenth century, Chojnacka emphasizes the variety of household structures. As in other European cities, most Venetian households were headed by a couple. More surprising is the conclusion that the majority of these couples lived independently. On marriage, women did not always move from the parental home to the home of their parents-in-law, replacing the authority of the father by that of the father-in-law – as historians have often supposed. Instead, when they married (usually in their late teens or early twenties), most women from the *popolani* (the popular classes) set up a household of their own. (*Popolane* married later than their elite counterparts, because they first had to accumulate a dowry. But it remains unclear how these Venetian women were able to set up independent households at a younger age than women in countries characterized by the Western Europe marriage pattern.) Both married children and unmarried adult children tended to leave the parental house. This made the nuclear family a much more common household structure in Venice than one might have assumed for a southern European city. However, this does not mean that Venetians broke completely with their natal families. Many couples offered shelter to relatives, and unmarried brothers, sisters, and sisters-in-law were particularly likely to live with married kin. A considerable proportion of spinsters, and an even larger proportion of widows, were registered as household heads. But only a small percentage of them lived alone. Spinsters, as well as widows, shared their homes with others more often than men did. Pooling income with family or friends must have been an attractive option for women whose earning capacity was probably much lower than that of men.

Despite the book's title, the occupational activities of women are not studied in depth.

However, in the second chapter – on women of means – Chojnacka argues that Venetian women certainly did have economic power. Spinsters, married women, and widows of almost all social strata owned and managed property. Inheritance was the most important source of their wealth. Not only did property represent wealth, it gave women an opportunity to exercise social power and to create and influence social relationships by bequeathing their property in wills.

Most women bequeathed their personal property to daughters and sisters, making the transmission of goods and the social power derived from them a primarily female affair. The same held true for the neighbourhood social networks. The neighbourhood was the locus of female economic activity, at least for working-class women. Whereas customs and codes of honour prevented women from the elite from leaving the house and entering the neighbourhood, for women from more humble ranks the boundary between the home and the street or the neighbourhood was porous: women met each other in the streets, at work, at the market; they came together to socialize, and visited one another at home. Although the neighbourhood networks and economics were primarily female, women were by no means confined to their own neighbourhood. Venice not only housed a lot of immigrant women, its indigenous female population frequently left the parish or the city to work, to visit family or friends, or, indeed, to move to another parish.

Familial, social, and occupational networks exceeded the boundaries of the neighbourhood and the city. The mobility of these women broadened their horizons. In this respect humble women had far more opportunities than the more privileged. But the two groups converged at the charitable institutions built in Venice in the sixteenth century. Offering help to poor women and making the most of the talents and energies of wealthy women, these *case di carità* cannot be seen simply as disciplinary institutions. They also functioned as part of an “expansive female society” (p. 135), offering the opportunity to women from different social strata to extend their networks.

With colourful examples drawn from the archives, Chojnacka paints a vivid picture of everyday practice in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Venice and shows how women moved beyond the boundaries of the household, that they were part of female networks and participated in city life. Chojnacka shows successfully that the city belonged to women as well as to men. Women from the *popolani* had “the ability to make independent decisions as well as influence the actions of the other people” (p. xvi). This finding does not seem very surprising, and Chojnacka’s description undoubtedly sounds familiar to those who have read the literature on women in early modern cities. Yet Chojnacka’s merit is that she convincingly shows that Venetian women exercised social power as well. The position of women in this Italian city resembled that of women in the cities of northern Europe. She corrects the stereotype of a society strongly dominated by patriarchal relations, in which women were confined to the household – at least as far as Venice is concerned. This makes Chojnacka’s study on women in this southern European city an important contribution and a welcome counterbalance to the social history of women in northern European cities in the early modern period.

It is a pity then that the author leaves some important questions unanswered. Chojnacka argues that Venetian women could exercise more social power than has traditionally been recognized. However, she does not discuss the historiography on which the assumptions about the position of women in Italian cities are based. She challenges the traditional view, but it remains unclear on what this view is based. *Working Women of Early Modern Venice* would certainly have benefited from an overview of the historical debate on the subject.

Another important and related question that Chojnacka fails to answer is whether the Venetian case is representative of other Italian cities. The author touches upon this briefly in her introduction, where she challenges “historiographical assumptions about residential patterns in early modern Europe, which have divided the continent into two dichotomous models: the North and the South” (p. xx) by pointing out the variety of living patterns of women. The author concludes that Venice might have been an anomaly, or that such living patterns were more typical of Venice “than has previously been thought” (p. 25). A discussion of the available literature on women in other southern European cities might have thrown more light on the question of whether Venice was the exception to the rule, or whether it is necessary to revise our general assumptions about women in the cities of southern Europe, in which women are traditionally said to have been more confined by the patriarchal context than their counterparts in the north.

*Ariadne Schmidt*

HARVEY, DAVID ALLEN. *Constructing Class and Nationality in Alsace 1830–1945*. Northern Illinois University Press, DeKalb 2001. xii, 249 pp. \$40.00.

In *Constructing Class and Nationality in Alsace, 1830–1945*, David Harvey traces and seeks to explain the emergence of competing forms of class and national identity in one of Europe’s most fascinating regions. Situated along the Rhine river, the fortunes of Alsace were powerfully shaped for centuries by the state-building efforts of various French and Germanic states and the wars between them. Alsace was one of the few durable territorial conquests of Louis XIV’s incessant wars, becoming part of the French state in 1681. Annexed to Germany following the defeat of the French Second Empire in 1870, it reverted to France after World War I, was annexed again by Germany in 1940, and reunited with France in 1945. For much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, local sentiments oscillated between identification with the political and cultural entities on both sides of the border. Remarkably, very little sustained historical research has been devoted to Alsace in recent years, and little of that has taken up the question of the region’s complex layering of social, national, and political identities. This book goes a long way in filling these historical lacunae. Based on both German and French published sources, including material gleaned from departmental archives in the Bas-Rhin (Strasbourg) and the Haut-Rhin (Colmar), it is an ambitious book that goes beyond the national question to include the ways in which working-class identity not only competed with, but was intertwined with national identity.

Harvey presents a theoretical framework for understanding the nature of local identities. Resting on the authority of postmodern theorists like Michel Foucault, he considers identities to be “discursive creations” (p. 5). In recent years, such stances in labor history have often been expressed as part of the “linguistic turn” away from materialist explanations of social identity. But Harvey seems to offer a more ambivalent argument. Although he does not specify the origin of Alsatian discourses of identity, he interprets his own evidence as suggesting that the rise and fall of various identities is shaped by concrete social experiences, a position that seems to undermine postmodern accounts, and support materialist analyses of social identity. In any event, the book as a whole is a coherent and largely persuasive study that advances our understanding of the dynamics and interconnections between these identities and how they were played out in this fascinating region.

At the time of the annexation of Alsace to the German Reich in 1870, a lively debate broke out between two eminent historians, the Frenchman, Fustel de Coulanges and the German, Hans Mommsen, on the nature of national identity. Mommsen held that Alsatians were fundamentally German due to their Germanic dialectic and racial make-up. Coulanges countered that the pro-French sentiment and support for the political values associated with the French republic which were widespread in the region, made its inhabitants French “in their hearts”. Coulanges’s views were far closer to the actual sentiments within the region for much of the period. With few exceptions, *Völkische* appeals to Alsatians as members of the Germanic race, failed to an echo. Efforts to replace the local dialect with French during the Revolution were neither successful nor a source of local resentment. Clearly, identification with France was not contingent upon the adoption of the French language. But at several junctures in the period under consideration here, pro-French sentiment was challenged from the east, and in the 1920s a lively “autonomist” movement appeared demanding independence from both France and Germany. Harvey convincingly shows how the two states each alternated between political regimes that were perceived as either friendly or hostile to Alsatians. He shows how certain political contexts favored either pro-French or pro-German identities which in turn either obscured independent working-class organization and identity or favored its emergence.

In the eyes of working-class Alsatians, the French state was a Janus-faced entity. The progressive political ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity associated with the French republic in the 1790s were enthusiastically received in the region. However, by the 1830s, the image of the French republic suffered in the eyes of the largely non-French-speaking population, represented as it was locally by a Francophone Calvinist *patronat* political elite which aggressively embraced an economic liberalism viewed as harmful to popular interests. But the revolution of 1848 once again refurbished the image of the French republic as a progressive political and social entity. During the four years of the Second Republic, Alsace was a stronghold of the “Reds”, and the Alsatian city, Mulhouse, was one of only five communes in all of France to vote against Bonaparte’s plebiscite in 1851.

For the first twenty years after the annexation of the province by Germany in 1870, Alsatians of all classes were resolutely pro-French and anti-German. The German authorities assured this through their brutal treatment of the local population and disregard for its culture. A broad anti-annexation movement, the *protestation*, arose. The domination of the movement by the Francophone industrial bourgeois elite and clergy effectively precluded the development of a distinctly independent working-class anti-annexation movement. During the Second Empire, the paternalist policies of the liberal industrial bourgeoisie had greatly narrowed the space for independent working-class organization and identity. Repressive German administration, added to repressive French legislation, further handicapped independent working-class organization.

Beginning in 1890, the plot thickens considerably. Political and socio-economic dynamics combine to weaken pro-French sentiment, lessen popular hostility to all things German, and perhaps most significantly, give rise to an independent working-class movement and identity. On the one hand, the image of the French republic is undermined by its association with antiworking-class repression. At the same time, the advent of sickness and other forms of social insurance throughout the Reich was the very type of measure that workers in Alsace, and throughout France, had long expected from the French republic. These measures weakened the attachment of workers to the liberal Alsatian industrial bourgeoisie, who for their part opposed public welfare. The expiration

of Bismarck's antisocialist laws made the German authorities look less repressive, while permitting political space for the implantation of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD). In Alsace, as elsewhere in the Reich, the SPD took the lead in establishing trade unions and working-class leisure associations. At the same time, industrial development sponsored by the German government furthered the development of a wage-earning industrial proletariat. Skilled industrial workers became the most anti-annexationist layer of the population.

Harvey considers the wide working-class support for the SPD after 1890 as representing "the primacy of class interests over national allegiances among Alsatian workers around the turn of the century" (p. 100). But he also shows how the role played by the SPD in shaping working-class consciousness underscore the interconnections between class and national identity in Alsace. The SPD found working-class support in the region, not only through its championing of the economic interests of local workers, but through the support it gave to the regional and national aspirations of Alsatians of all classes. At the time of the annexation in 1870, party leaders, August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht, had courageously opposed the move and served time in prison as a result. In 1890 Mulhouse elected an SPD candidate to the German *Reichstag*. Harvey interprets this electoral victory to "less of a protest vote than to the political conversion of thousands of Alsatian workers, who came to see the values and aspirations that had once led them to embrace French revolutionary republicanism now embodied in the German Social Democratic Party" (p. 103).

But repressive German administration of the region during World War I largely eliminated any sympathy for the Reich that had developed since 1890, and French troops were welcomed as liberators at the end of the war. But the 1920s saw the pendulum of national identity vis-a-vis France change once again. French policy and the tone taken by French administrators who arrived in the region after the war alienated broad layers of the population from the French state. It was in this context that local *autonomist* sentiment opposed to both the French and German states arose. There were in fact, four different autonomist movements: Catholic, Lutheran, *Völkische* pro-German groupings, and the French Communist Party (PCF). Local French communists bitterly attacked "French imperialist" policy in the region. Since the Socialist Party (PS) continued to identify with the French republican tradition and state, and the PS and PCF commanded the allegiances of many Alsatian workers, the working class was now split on the national question. The pro-autonomy position eventually taken by Alsatian communists was opposed by the national PCF. It would be interesting to know more about this question. What was the relationship for example, between local Alsatian calls for autonomy and the Third International's agitation for self-determination? How did the Stalinist third period impact this question?

The autonomist movement was short-lived. With the coming to power of Hitler in 1933 and the beginning of the Popular Front, the French state once again became associated with the progressive French republican tradition. Harvey considers the social and economic program of the resistance embodied in the social welfare system and the nationalization of banking and key industries as the realization of the 1848 vision of the "democratic and social republic". This last point seems to be somewhat of an exaggeration. Strike waves in 1947 and 1968 and working-class opposition to French imperialist adventures in Vietnam and Algeria demonstrate that postwar French republics had not fully integrated workers.

All in all, this is an important book, which sheds light on regional and national identities not only in Alsace, but in other parts of Europe and beyond. It will surely take its place alongside other high-quality treatments of European regional identities that have appeared recently.<sup>1</sup>

Keith Mann

WINTLE, MICHAEL. *An Economic and Social History of the Netherlands, 1800–1920. Demographic, Economic and Social Transition*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 2000. xv, 399 pp. Ill. Maps. £45.00; \$69.95.

“Is this the book I needed?”, I thought when I agreed to review it. Let me explain. On occasion, the editor of a non-Dutch journal, to whom I have submitted an article, has asked me to put in a note to a work of reference in English on Dutch economic and social history from the Napoleonic Wars to World War II. Quite a reasonable request, but one that posed a problem. There was no such work. There is the fine book by Bax,<sup>1</sup> a sociological study written from the specific perspective of modernization. And there are, of course, books in Dutch. But no English works of reference.

As Wintle points out in his introduction, after the passing of the Golden Age, Dutch history sank into oblivion, only to surface in the minds of non-Dutch historians in the period after 1945, when the waves of its economic success and normative permissiveness made this small country renowned once again. Is it more than a coincidence that these two factors are often seen as essential features of Dutch history in the Golden Age as well? What were the institutions and customs that caused these heroic epochs? Did they slumber in between? Had they been dismantled and need to be reinvented? Or was a different set of institutions and customs at work in each epoch?

To begin with the first question, “Is this the general work of reference we have so far lacked?”, it is instructive to know how the book has been structured. It consists of three parts: demography, economy, and the social fabric. The demographic part deals with population increase and its determinants – mortality, nuptiality, and fertility, and migration – as well as what could be called the determinants of those determinants: public health, causes of death, food supply, and working conditions. The second part of Wintle’s book is devoted to a discussion of the Dutch economy. The chapters discuss the growth in GDP, the sectoral distribution of the labour force, the three traditional factor inputs (land, labour, and capital), as well as the other factor often cited – the willingness to take entrepreneurial risks. They discuss each of the economic sectors and consider the issue of domestic demand for industrial and other products. The final part of the book is labelled “Social transition: State, Society, Individual and Nation”, and deals with aspects of traditional social history, with a touch of political and cultural life as well.

The second and third parts of the book are perhaps its most essential. The second part, on the Dutch economy, summarizes both older and current research, including that of Van

1. See in particular, Peter Sahlins, *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees* (Berkeley, CA, 1989); Caroline Ford, *Creating the Nation in Provincial France: Religion and Political Identity in Brittany* (Princeton, NJ, 1993); Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley, CA, 1990).

1. E.H. Bax, *Modernization and Cleavage in Dutch Society: A Study of Long Term Economic and Social Change* (Aldershot, 1990).

Zanden's national accounts project, in as far as these results were available when Wintle wrote his book.<sup>2</sup> By and large, Wintle claims that the Dutch economy did not lag behind those of industrializing Belgium, Germany, or Britain, and, indeed continued to occupy a position in the top league which it had initially earned in the Golden Age, keeping up with the frantic growth of those other countries. Dutch growth was balanced, in the sense that the agricultural and especially the service sector were its main engines, while growth in the industrial sector remained modest – although industry expanded after the middle of the nineteenth century. Wintle follows current historical thought when he claims that this was not a sign of weakness – due for instance to a lack of entrepreneurial spirit – but made sense given the country's comparative advantage in services and the lack of coal: "The Dutch employment of new devices, methods and machinery was one not of wholesale takeover of whatever the British or the Belgians were doing (which would often have been entirely impractical), but rather a highly rational and precise response to current local circumstances in terms of supply, culture and market: in that respect Dutch entrepreneurs made the optimum use of the available technology." (p. 165) He seems to think that, on the whole, Dutch economic policy was not particularly influential on the course of economic growth: "Much of the Dutch state's 'economic policy' was ineffective or counter-productive, especially under Willem I", although Wintle acknowledges that the liberalization of the economy after the middle of the century "probably cleared out some cobwebs" (p. 240). Nor could state policy at that time have been very influential, he writes, given the lack of state apparatus. Here, he seems to differ from Van Zanden and Van Riel, who stress the role of economic policy and economic institutions more than Wintle does. It is in this respect a pity that their book appeared only a short while after Wintle's. It would have been interesting to read what Van Zanden and Van Riel think about Wintle's view.

What then, if anything, did distinguish the Dutch economy? As far as I can see, Wintle mentions four factors: the heritage of the Golden Age, in terms of an advanced service sector and the existence of social institutions tying the populace to the country without democracy or repression; its geographical location, and the existence of a colonial empire. The first factor is discussed, not in the part of the book devoted to the economy but in the section dealing with society. The second and third factors are discussed, but perhaps not so fully as one would have expected given that Wintle regards them as having been essential – though he does spend several pages on the colonial economy, which by the early twentieth century accounted for 15 per cent of the mother country's GDP. This short list of factors almost makes one feel a little sad. Did the Dutch really have so little influence over their own economic destiny? The Netherlands rose to power in the Golden Age due to its location in the economic geography of Europe, lost its centrality in the eighteenth century (there was not much the Dutch could do about that), and had to wait until the middle of the nineteenth century before it could profit from its location between Germany, which was unifying and expanding at the time, and the industrialized British and other markets, which were also growing – some, indeed, blossoming. Although his phrasing is much more careful, Wintle at one point (p. 243) comes close to according prime importance to location as the externally fuelled engine of the Dutch economy. Here, I was reminded of Lesger's recent study on the rise of the Dutch economy during the Golden Age. Lesger uses theories – notably gateway theory – from economic geography, drawn from Pred and

2. Since then a key publication co-written by Van Zanden has appeared: J.L. van Zanden and A. van Riel, *Nederland 1780–1914. Staat, Instituties en economische ontwikkeling* (Amsterdam, 2000).

others to explain this rise, which he sees, in large measure, as a reaction to changes in the geographical structure of European trade.<sup>3</sup> Lesger, however, also draws attention to social institutions as explanations, in particular those facilitating the free flow of information in Amsterdam, to the extent that this city became the staple market of knowledge (but not of goods, as he claims – in contrast to received wisdom). Taking stock of the various studies by Lesger, Wintle, Van Zanden, and Van Riel, it seems that the historical economic debate on the factors determining the economic success and decline of the Dutch – and given their important position in the world economy, perhaps not just of them – will see another round of exchanges between proponents of geographical location and changes in the spatial European economy as key factors, and those stressing internal institutional factors, following North.<sup>4</sup>

The last part of Wintle's book deals with social issues. One chapter investigates whether the currently much reputed Dutch tolerance existed in the nineteenth century. It was not a very democratic country by the standards of the day – if the percentage of the population with direct voting rights is a yardstick – although the franchise was extended greatly over the years. But the minority rights of religious groups were respected through the system of *verzuiling*, or “pillarization”, a notion that most Dutch historians and social scientists find indispensable but which they find problematic as well, as Wintle duly reports. He then goes on to discuss education and welfare, before moving on to state formation, traditional social history (social stratification) and concluding with sections devoted to women, ethnic groups, and attitudes to sex. As before, Wintle presents his case calmly, while weighing the evidence carefully and citing the relevant literature. He takes pride in not forcing this complicated story into a theoretical straitjacket, even if this inevitably means some loss of sense of unity. While I, personally, would not have minded a little less historical detail and more in the way of an overarching statement, his choice seems defensible for a work of reference.

Wintle's book is lucidly written. It supplies the reader with the relevant information and references in a succinct manner. And Wintle aptly demonstrates his mastery of the literature and the published statistics. Yes, this is the book I needed.

*Marco H.D. van Leeuwen*

MANSFIELD, NICHOLAS. *English Farmworkers and Local Patriotism, 1900–1930*. [Studies in Labour History.] Ashgate, Aldershot [etc.] 2001. xiii, 227 pp. Ill. Maps. £40.00.

“The tenacity of the Countryside Alliance, despite its confused aims, is living evidence of how an unconscious perception of the superiority of established rural society remains a potent political and symbolic force at the start of the twenty-first century” (p. 205). This concluding sentence, with its almost throw-away attempt to highlight forms of contemporary popular rural culture in Britain which still focus upon assumed patriotic and conservative agendas, highlights the over-arching thesis of this study. It offers, in a

3. C. Lesger, *Handel in Amsterdam ten tijde van de Opstand. Kooplieden, commerciële expansie en verandering in de ruimtelijke economie van de Nederlanden ca. 1550–ca. 1630* (Hilversum, 2001).

4. D.C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (Cambridge, 1990).



very interesting fashion, a set of interrelated questions about the nature and significance of the rural labour movement in the early decades of the twentieth century. In the main, it is a case study of the area of England known as the Marches, bordering on to Wales, although some comparisons are provided through briefer reflections upon the situation in Norfolk. The book is structured around an introductory chapter on the broad literature and approaches to the study of farmworkers and rural life, on the particular nature of Shropshire rural society, on the rise of agricultural trade unionism, the impact of the First World War, and the shifts within rural culture and society in the post-1918 years. In conclusion, there are some briefer reflections upon the nature of Englishness within the locality.

The initial thrust of the work is based upon the concerns within labour history about the existence of conservative elements within the working class and the difficulties Mansfield encountered in trying to understand the commitment of active rural trade unionists in volunteering for the First World War. In order to make sense of this phenomenon, he examines the rise of agricultural unionism in the late nineteenth century and offers a study of the Shropshire phenomenon which follows the work of Alun Howkins in a number of ways. It offers a more sympathetic and rounded account, identifying not merely the inhibiting factors in the construction and development of trade unionism in the agricultural sector, but also the dimensions of radicalism, which were often present in its early years and which provided the potential for more militant activity in and around the period of the First World War. However, in the case of the Shropshire workers, this pattern was always somewhat tenuous. The nature of the Shropshire rural economy, with its preponderance of large estates and often absentee landowners, helped to create a particular form of deference generally within the region. There was also an absence of a strong nonconformist religious culture, and a Liberal tradition which might have contributed to a more assertive alternative political culture. Communication between villages was marginal in the period before 1914, and there was an absence of the kinds of supportive networks provided by cooperatives and other forms of early socialist networks. Whilst these existed in certain locations, and the agricultural unions were strongest where there were other groups of workers, such as railwaymen or miners, to provide moral and physical support, overall there was little challenge to the hegemony of Conservative landowners and their representatives.

Perhaps what marks out Mansfield's account from a more conventional analysis is the desire to move away from economistic and mechanical explanations for the ways in which the Shropshire rural labour movement was always under siege. Whilst due weight is given to the nature of work, patterns of landholding, and the deleterious effects of inter-union rivalry (particularly the competition between the Workers' Union and the National Union of Agricultural Workers), the concern is also to identify the importance of cultural forces in any understanding of the situation. As already suggested, it was, in part, the strength and the adaptability of a landowner-led political conservatism (and sometimes Conservatism) which inhibited the growth of a more militant farmworkers' organization. It is the identification of this "local patriotism", and its ability both to carry on old traditions and, after the War, to adopt a more-inclusive but equally dominant form of social control, which is the key for Mansfield. "This provides the most convincing explanation for the apparent overall lack of impact of agricultural trades unionism in the Marches between 1900 and 1930" (p. 74).

It is the flexibility of this "local patriotism" that enables it to challenge the more radical

activity and consciousness of farmworkers during the latter years of the war and into the early 1920s. Bargaining over wages and conditions was sometimes accompanied by strikes and other political confrontation. Brief flourishes of the unions, of a Labour Party recognizing the potential of rural votes and of ex-servicemen's organizations, however, were extinguished by the onset of agricultural depression in 1922, but also by the ways in which a more assertive dominant culture incorporated or excluded these glimpses of radicalism. For example, some of the initial militancy of ex-servicemen was subsumed into the British Legion, which constructed patterns of remembrance in less hostile ways. Equally, other forms of popular culture in the 1920s helped to draw working-class men and women away from potential commitment to labour organizations and to encompass them in a sense of rural identity which offered little opposition to the comfortable rural imagery made famous in those years by the Conservative Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin. His broad notions of Englishness, resting on unquestioning assumptions about landscape and national identity, make rather more historical sense when seen at work in the Shropshire countryside in the 1920s. The relevance of Baldwin's romantic imagery can be detected in more obviously politicized context here.

The arguments themselves are fascinating and remind historians of the need to unpack assumptions about dominant conservative cultures as well as the analysis of more radical patterns of behaviour. This latest volume in the Studies in Labour History series, compiled by the British Society for the Study of Labour History, certainly reminds us of the ability of labour history to adapt to changing times. The book might not convince all its readers – evidence is sometimes thin on the ground and particular points would benefit from other examples or closer textual analysis. At times, it reads rather too much like the Ph.D. thesis from which it originated. However, its real strength, and one which makes the above quibbles insignificant, is that it opens up a whole series of questions about political culture in Britain and about the values of Englishness and rural society. Despite some earlier pioneering work, these remain neglected themes and Mansfield has done an excellent job in using his work on Shropshire to confront these larger questions and to reopen the way for future debate.

*Kenneth Lunn*

NELLES, DIETER. *Widerstand und internationale Solidarität. Die Internationale Transportarbeiter-Föderation (ITF) im Widerstand gegen den Nationalsozialismus.* [Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für soziale Bewegungen. Schriftenreihe A: Darstellungen, Band 18.] Klartext, Essen 2001. 457 pp. Ill. € 45.00.

This comprehensive study reveals the existence of a resistance movement among German transport workers (in particular seafarers and bargemen, as well as railway workers) during the entire Nazi era. After the war it should have received a great deal of attention, but because postwar German trade unions were not prepared to discuss their dubious role in 1933 and thereafter, this heroic story remained unpublicized until the end of the 1990s, by which time almost all the survivors of these resistance groups had died. This author is a German social scientist and historian, Dieter Nelles, who was born in 1956 and educated at the University of Wuppertal. Nelles has been interested in the history of German resistance for many years and been involved in discussions about the passiveness (or worse)

of Germans during the Third Reich. He went to great lengths to collect and analyse the scattered evidence relating to his topic before defending his Ph.D. thesis at the University of Kassel in 2000. His primary sources were gathered from a great number of archives in Austria, Denmark, western and eastern Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, the UK, and the USA, as well as from a relatively small number of interviews. Nelles showed persistence in obtaining written information from memoirs, contemporary publications, and literature published after the war both inside and outside Germany.

Nelles argues that this particular resistance movement emerged as the result of an interplay between a militant minority of German workers and an international trade-union organization that had committed itself to the struggle against fascism and Nazism (p. 31). The militant minority was to be found among German seafarers, who had played a central role during the revolutionary period at the end of World War I and, almost as important, had subsequently gained oppositional experience within a hierarchical framework and strict navy regulations. Their radicalism had been part of a revolutionary syndicalist tradition in German trade unionism and of left-wing political activism during the interwar period. This radicalism was consistent with the social-revolutionary tradition of the International Transportworkers' Federation (ITF), led by Edo Fimmen (1881–1942). Fimmen made the ITF, with its two million members, the largest and most influential International Trade Secretariat of the interwar period. As a trade unionist, Fimmen was not afraid to speak out politically, and he understood the necessity of fighting fascism and Nazism early on. As early as 1933, the ITF had supported an illegal network in Nazi Germany, and during World War II it succeeded in maintaining its international contacts all over Europe and the rest of the world, in particular through its cooperation with the Allied nations. That “his” German transport workers kept fighting Hitler, as the author shows, inspired Fimmen to persevere with his part of the mission by providing them with practical, political, and emotional support wherever he could.

There are six chapters in the book, in addition to an introduction and conclusion. Chapter 2 contains various statistics on the labour market and working conditions of German seafarers, as well as data on the social composition of the workforce and the mentality of seafarers. These data are crucial in demonstrating that, unlike other groups of workers, German seafarers were indeed able to resist the Nazi regime. Beginning with Timothy Mason's ideas on working-class opposition, Nelles shows that hardly any elements existed favouring consensus with or integration into the new regime, since in general the shipping industry was not impressed by Hitler, seafarers did not profit from the new social regime, they were rather independent from their relatives, cherished hardly any patriotic feelings, and, when in foreign ports, encountered alternative views (p. 99). Hence, unlike many other German workers, the seafarers still had some room for manoeuvre (this was also understood by the Nazis). Chapter 3 explains the other side of this coin, showing traditions of resistance among German seafarers dating back to the 1917 and 1918 marine revolts, and among the international seafarers' unions both within and outside the ITF. Nelles describes how, under Fimmen's leadership, the ITF immediately offered support to union members suppressed under Mussolini during the 1920s, and since 1933 under Hitler, by building up networks of contacts among reliable members in Germany. The combination of these domestic and international opportunities created the resistance movement dealt with in the remaining chapters.

Chapter 4 is the emotional heart of the book: Fimmen's “boys” in the Antwerp harbour were led by Herman Knüfken, a person who certainly impressed Nelles. Resistance to the

Nazis by seafarers and bargemen in the first few years after 1933 was almost solely the work of the communists. Since so many German ships docked there, the port of Antwerp was especially important for distributing illegal publications to Germany, organizing courier services, and smuggling people out of Germany. The Antwerp groups were soon to experience fierce conflicts with the leadership of the Communist Party regarding the methods of resistance to be employed. Following a meeting with Fimmen in early 1936, these groups decided to join forces with the ITF because they regarded its methods as more effective and it offered them better organizational support. With regard to the individual participants, Fimmen trusted his personal judgement. He had a strong preference for independent left-wing socialists, and demanded that no-one have party connections. The Knüfken groups and other left-wing participants undertook to sever all ties to political parties and agreed to coordinate publishing materials with Fimmen, who gave financial support and ensured that the Belgian transport workers' union and the mayor of Antwerp, Camille Huysmans, helped them to secure residence permits. Despite many troubles and losses, this illegal network was systematically expanded in the following years. The information obtained through this network enabled the ITF's journal, *Fascism*, published between 1933 and 1945, to become one of the best sources of information about what was happening inside Germany. The strength of this chapter is the result of Nelles's use of the rarely investigated Gestapo and Wehrmacht archives, and of his biographical sketches combined with statistical information about the network's activities. The sketches and statistics enable him to explain why and how members of the Antwerp groups succeeded in resisting the regime at an individual level, and they also enable him to assess the scale of their activities.

In chapter 5, Nelles discusses ITF activities among seafarers and bargemen in European countries neighbouring Germany (the Netherlands, Scandinavia, France, Switzerland), and in the USA, which show that the Antwerp-based German resistance was part of a larger network, and that the ITF was to become a serious partner to the Allied nations, thanks to its German and international connections. Relevant aspects of these connections are discussed in more detail in chapter 6. These include the separate ITF network among German railway workers (led by Hans Jahn from Luxembourg), Fimmen's political leadership, the distance he kept from the social-democratic and communist groups in exile (which he considered a danger to illegal activities), and his willingness to cooperate with the French and British intelligence services (based on an exchange of information for travel facilities). Chapter 7 discusses resistance activities inside and outside Germany during the war years, when the ITF established connections with railway workers in Germany (this was relevant because it helped in sabotage operations), and through seafarers from Sweden. Fimmen's successor, Jacobus Oldenbroek, had established relationships with the American Office of Strategic Services, which permitted the ITF to coordinate its activities in areas under Allied military control, to play a role during the Allied advance on the continent, and to prepare for postwar trade-union organizations.

In his book, Nelles provides proof of the existence of organized resistance to Nazism among German transport workers as part of a wider international network that, with all its limitations, contributed to the end of the regime. Tragically enough, as can be read in the final chapter, this achievement also embodies the two elements that postwar Germans tended to avoid discussing: the resistance by "good" Germans, and, perhaps even worse, the foreign support they received. This added to the bitter disappointment of the few survivors, who had already suffered so much distress, fear, and loss during the War, a

suffering vividly portrayed in various chapters. Nelles's dissertation is an important contribution to discussions about the attitude of Germans during Hitler's regime, discussions initiated by Daniel Goldhagen and others.

The book is well documented. Having studied the history of the ITF during this period myself, I found his account sound and balanced. There are a few minor details one might want to take issue with, but Nelles's methodology is convincing and adds to the book's strength. The one major drawback is that the book is in German (there is no summary in English). This is reasonable enough for Germany, where this particular form of resistance remained unpublicized for so long. However, I do hope that Nelles will succeed in bringing out a more concise version of his book in English in order to contribute to the international and Goldhagen-related debates.

*Bob Reinalda*

LEAR, JOHN. *Workers, Neighbors, and Citizens. The Revolution in Mexico City*. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln [etc.] 2001. xiv, 441 pp. Ill. Maps. \$60.00; £45.00.

Anyone interested in learning about the 1910 Mexican Revolution and the crucial role workers exercised in that event should read this study of Mexico City's working class. Through an exhaustive examination of the secondary literature supplemented by archival material, John Lear explores how organized labor, in spite of its limited military role in one of the greatest social upheavals of the twentieth century, managed to emerge as a key player within the postrevolutionary political order.

Lear analyzes how turn-of-the-century Mexico City industrialization and urbanization transformed not only work and community, but also how the process served to weaken the legitimacy of the "old regime". In so doing, the cultural transformations that changed the character of working-class organization, both before and during the revolution, are closely examined. Lear then integrates these developments into his analysis of relations that evolved between urban workers and the state-building revolutionaries from the disintegration of the "old regime" to the initial period of consolidating the post-revolutionary regime.

This work falls within interpretations of the Mexican Revolution that attempt to portray the revolution as nationalist and populist. But it does more than just look at workers primarily within the brief period in 1915 when the radical Casa del Obrero Mundial joined the armed struggle. Lear argues that working people in Mexico City participated in many other defining moments of the revolution. Acknowledging that a shift away from Mexico City to rural areas and the north occurred during the years of greatest revolutionary conflict, Lear strongly suggests that the perennial centralization of Mexican political life made events there national in importance. It is here, Lear asserts, where relations between Mexican workers, their organizations and the Mexican revolutionary elite are shaped for the post-revolutionary period.

Lear begins with discussion of mid-nineteenth-century Mexico City, which became a destination point for many rural migrants seeking opportunities. Rapid industrialization, much of it under the aegis of foreign investors, transformed the physical dynamics of Mexico City and distinctly stratified economic classes along geographical lines. Working-class neighborhoods insulated the living, working, consuming, and socializing of the

popular classes from the wealthy elite. A working-class identity developed, different from the multiclass community of the past. It provided the means for assertiveness and a form of independence, which eventually translated into new organizational modes for Mexico City's popular classes.

In spite of the creation of social space for Mexico City's workers, Lear identifies the capital's working class as heterogeneous, a factor that could either impede or advance workers' organizational development. Although craft workers remained an important occupational category, in most of the manufacturing sector their numbers and share of production had been drastically reduced. Lear notes that the need for unskilled, "sweated", and casual labor expanded, and that these occupational categories constituted the majority of the city's population.

But Lear also explains that the introduction of modern urban infrastructure generated skilled and semiskilled occupations. But these foreign-owned enterprises sought English-speaking workers to fill many of the technical, managerial and skilled positions. Those high-wage jobs almost always went to foreigners, creating a fierce nationalism among unskilled Mexicans, who made up a sizable minority of the workforce in these strategically important industries, which numbered in the thousands. Lear is apt at explaining that displacement often combined with nationalism, especially in large-scale settings, to provide the impetus for organizational unity and set the stage for direct confrontation between labor and capital.

The overabundance of the underemployed also reflected Mexico City's labor heterogeneity, which led to constant downward pressure on wages. For women, children, the unskilled and casual laborers, employment was irregular, and during periods of economic downturn, such as in 1907–1908, this segment of the labor market expanded. Yet, as Lear points out, broader issues, such as growing inequality coupled with a shared resentment of the presence of foreigners, often bridged the economic dichotomies between skilled and unskilled and male and female in Mexico City. Although organizational leadership during these crises generally came from skilled workers, mass participation from the underemployed and the unskilled tended to form the direction of working-class mobilization.

The process by which Mexico City's working class carried out effective mass mobilization is perhaps the strongest component of Lear's work. Integral to that story is analysis of how Mexico City working-class organization moved from class collaborationist mutualism to more combative and independent organizational modes, highlighted by the emergence of the anarchist-led Casa in 1912. Because the 1857 Constitution legally restrained labor organization in the workplace, working-class mobilization began in the political arena, with Francisco Madero's electoral challenge to Porfirio Díaz in 1910, and continued during the 1912 congressional elections.

But lack of strong organization in the workplace blunted this political expression. Political participation did not necessarily translate into economic gains. After massive strikes in the textile industry triggered unprecedented government intervention and produced wage gains for workers, strategy shifted to building strong organizations in the workplace. Worker organizations adopted the language of class and organized formal unions that exercised more leverage against employers and politicians than their mutualist predecessors.

Once again, the omnipresence of foreign-owned enterprises in the industrial system loomed large and contributed to Mexican working-class solidarity. In the process, workers

followed radical leaders' calls for direct action to address the worst abuses of industry. Nationalism welded with anarchism and socialism and provided an important ideological catalyst in directing the building of new working-class organization. Moreover, as Lear writes, those organizations united workers who had long been divided by skill, gender, and cultural traditions.

Despite the fact that workers joined and followed labor organizations like the Casa, Lear strongly asserts that their increasing militancy was not connected to any effort to overthrow capitalism. Lear is correct when he writes that strikes were aimed at correcting the worst abuses of industry, especially those that were foreign-owned or managed. Because the Casa mobilized workers around the demands for better wages and control in the workplace, by 1914 labor conflicts had spread to every employment sector in the city. And, while mobilizing to end abuses, Lear writes that workers simultaneously believed they were exercising citizenship rights. By examining the evolution of working-class organization from the late nineteenth century up through the revolution, Lear identifies a longstanding Mexican worker demand: a prominent role in Mexican economic development as citizens.

In defining their role in the revolution, which included participation in the armed struggle through the Red Battalions and in the nation's future economic development through greater worker control over production, were workers not advocating a labor-centered economic development for Mexico? Were these demands compatible with capitalist development? Lear never poses this question. Yet, he clearly documents repression of radical-led actions, especially the Casa-led Mexico City general strike of August 1916. Certainly, the victorious state-building elite believed those demands were incongruent with its vision of a post-revolutionary, capitalist Mexico.

This becomes more evident when considering that on the heels of that repression, and the forced disarmament of the Red Battalions, the 1917 Constitution recognized the legitimacy of some labor's demands. The document guaranteed the right to organize, strike, bargain, and share profits with employers, while outlining a general legal framework for workers' rights and the limits of those rights in a capitalist economy. The granting of these rights, which provided workers a vehicle to address the worst abuses of industry, is proof that the upheavals in Mexico City between 1914 and 1916 entailed larger objectives: working-class control over the nation's industry and economic infrastructure. The state-building elite's harsh reaction to those demands reflects their incompatibility with capitalism. A growing chasm over which path postrevolutionary Mexico would take characterized the relationship between the state-building elite and the dominant working-class organizations. While analyzing that development, Lear presents evidence that labor-centered economic development became subordinated to development within the capitalist framework.

Lear details the evolution of this process with discussion of the state's backing of a labor alternative to radical unionism. Despite the establishment of the state-supported Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana (CROM) in 1918, that advocated a moderate form of trade unionism, radicals remained entrenched in strategic industries. In the early 1920s, fierce battles for the allegiance of rank-and-file workers raged among the anarchist dominated Confederación General de Trabajadores (CGT) and the CROM. As in the pre-CROM era, Lear identifies state repression as a key factor in the defeat of the radicals. And, although Lear does address the issue of American Federation of Labor involvement in this process, his discussion of these events is cursory. Consequently, he minimizes its importance in aiding the deradicalization of Mexican labor.

Overall, this volume is well written, engaging, and an important contribution to international working-class history. Moreover, Lear successfully demonstrates that, in spite of its subordinate role, organized labor, especially because many of its struggles occurred in the epicenter of national political power, Mexico City, emerged from the revolution as a key player in national political life.

*Norman Caulfield*

OSOKINA, ELENA. *Our Daily Bread. Socialist Distribution and the Art of Survival in Stalin's Russia, 1927–1941*. Ed. by Kate Transchel. Transl. by Kate Transchel and Greta Bucher. [The New Russian History.] M.E. Sharpe, Armonk (New York) [etc.] 2001. xv, 255 pp. Ill. £51.95.

This masterful, deeply researched book centers on subjects essential to an understanding of Stalinism: the role of the market, capital accumulation, and popular consumption in the 1930s. Although economists and historians have devoted much attention to industrialization, they have largely neglected the effects of rapid capital accumulation on the population. Osokina carefully describes how the state took control of the country's resources, extracted and invested capital, and provisioned the population. Focusing on Soviet trade, state distribution, rationing, commercial stores, and various black and "free" market activities, Osokina examines the interplay between market forces and state control during the First, Second, and Third Five-Year Plans (1929–1941). She concentrates not only on policy, but also on popular protest, the experiences of various social groups with the system of distribution, and the dynamic relationship between state and society. She skillfully employs a wealth of new sources, including OGPU and NKVD documents from the Central Archive of the FSB (a repository still closed to foreign scholars), to evoke the daily lives of peasants, workers, and other social groups. This is the first book not simply to describe, but to analyze the human costs of "primitive socialist accumulation".

Osokina begins her study at the end of NEP (New Economic Policy), "a little island of well being between the devastation of the Civil War and the hunger of the First Five Year Plan" (p. 3). She shows how grain shortfalls, rising prices, and working-class discontent in the late 1920s pushed the Politburo into the precipitous decision to collectivize agriculture and to eliminate private trade, despite previous resolutions to move slowly and cautiously. Although historians have interpreted the Party's decision to break with NEP in different ways, Osokina's research irrefutably demonstrates the contingent nature of a decision-making process shaped by escalating hostility between Politburo and peasantry. As the peasants hoarded grain to sell at higher prices, the Party frantically tried to meet procurement targets. The first large campaign against private traders began at the end of 1927. Osokina notes, "In the end, private traders diverted money, raw materials, resources and consumer goods from the state. The more successful the private traders became, the stronger the desire to finish them off" (p. 22). By 1928, there were severe bread shortages. Local authorities established rationing, without approval from Moscow, in response to an angry, hungry urban population. The Politburo tried to induce the peasants to sell grain by sending consumer goods to rural areas in July, but it approved higher targets for industrialization in November and began applying punitive measures to ensure procurements. By 1929, there was hunger in the countryside, and severe social tensions between workers and peasants. In February 1929, the Politburo introduced nationwide bread



rationing. This was the first step in what Osokina calls “a hierarchy of state distribution” (p. 36). That fall, Party activists began collectivizing peasant holdings, thus “cutting the Gordian knot of grain procurement” (p. 43). The peasants in turn slaughtered their animals and an initial glut of meat was succeeded by severe shortages that lasted through the 1930s. The Politburo initiated meat rationing in July 1930, and soon placed all essential foods and commodities under a centralized system of distribution and rationing.

Osokina is the first historian to research and analyze the elaborate “hierarchy of distribution” established by the state. The distribution of food and goods favored industrial workers and engineers first, followed by non-industrial workers, administrative workers, and dependents in that order. It disregarded the rural population entirely. Moscow, which contained 2 per cent of the population and received 15 to 20 per cent of the state’s stock of consumer goods, was favored above all other cities (p. 77). Distribution lists were divided into subgroups, positioned according to their importance to industrialization, with heavy industry receiving the greatest priority. Yet Osokina argues that the complex stratification was “a hierarchy of poverty” (p. 82). A wealthy elite did not emerge in the 1930s. Even top Party leaders, administrative personnel, and enterprise managers lived simply. Moreover, privilege was tied to position. If a high official lost his job, he lost the privileges that accompanied it.

Osokina also provides important new material on the state’s relationship to the peasantry. Unlike many historians, who see little social differentiation in the countryside either before or after collectivization, Osokina contends that state policy intensified tensions between rich, middle, and poor peasants. She notes that poor peasants supported expropriations of their richer neighbors during collectivization and often benefited directly. After collectivization, the peasants produced grain and food for the state but were expected to feed themselves from their private plots. Peasants, anxious to sow as little as possible for the *kolkhoz*, quietly expanded their plots at the expense of *kolkhoz* lands. Food marketed from these plots constituted a surprisingly large percentage of workers’ daily diets, especially in the years of rationing (p. 112). Rationing was abolished after the good harvest of 1934, but the harvest of 1936 was again poor. In spring 1937, peasants felt the effects of heavy procurements, although the resulting famine was smaller and less deadly than that of 1932–1933. Osokina credits Politburo policy, which returned food and seed to the villages, as well as the peasants’ private plots, which provided a marketable reserve. Yet once again, urban workers were short of food, and local authorities introduced rationing. The Soviet–Finnish war created new fears and shortages in 1939. The Politburo abandoned the consumer sector, and the more moderate targets of the Second Five-Year Plan, in favor of increased investment in defense, and returned 2 million hectares to the *kolkhozy* that the peasantry had surreptitiously appropriated for their private plots. The food situation reached a nadir in the spring of 1940. Despite requests from all over the country, the Politburo agreed reluctantly to re-establish rationing only after the German invasion in 1941.

Osokina argues that the state was never ideologically committed to rationing and full market control. The Politburo permitted peasants to market the produce from their private plots, quickly abolished rationing after the good harvest of 1934, and prohibited closed distribution for the local *nomenklatura* as an undeserved privilege. The Second Five-Year Plan targeted greater investment in light industry. In fact, without the threat of war, the painful shortages of the First Five-Year Plan might have been remedied by the Second. Osokina points out that local authorities and individual consumers, anxious to ensure

distribution without long lines, frequently instituted rationing from “below”. Urban neighbors banded together to prevent peasants from entering the cities, buying in bulk, and denuding urban shops. Osokina refuses to reduce the complex conflicts in Soviet society to a state pitted against a hungry, united population, but examines tensions between peasants and city dwellers, local and upper-level authorities, and poor and wealthy peasants. She details a variety of large and small scams that people used to get scarce goods, make money from shortages, and divert state resources into their own threadbare pockets. In 1930, the peasants began hoarding money and melting silver coins into bars, wreaking havoc with the state’s monetary policy. Her use of NKVD reports allows her to describe previously hidden reactions to shortages – bread lines of 5,000 people, severe disruptions in production, strikes, mass disturbances, and food riots – that encourage us to reconsider the Politburo’s responses in a new light.

Osokina notes from the outset that the black market, or illegal “free market”, operated in the realm of speculation, taking advantage of shortage by reselling low-priced state goods at tremendous mark ups. Despite the efforts of the state, the market thrived under a variety of guises. Osokina contends that the market would have been able to distribute goods far more “equitably” and efficiently than the state. She argues that the state distribution bureaucracy constituted a drain on production, that planning was inherently unable to account adequately for people’s needs, that privileging industrial workers was a new form of inequity, and that closed distribution to the army, state institutions, and industrial enterprises only exacerbated shortages. The market, in her opinion, would do the best job, presumably under all circumstances, of “equitably” distributing goods to consumers.

These ideas deserve to be scrutinized more closely, not only in view of popular experience with socialism, but with capitalism as well. Osokina’s own research shows that the Politburo searched for a middle ground between rationing and the market, but their attempts at balance foundered on poor harvests and ultimately, the threat of war. While the market may have been a more efficient distributor than the state, Osokina fails to take into account the fact that the state invested the capital generated by food export, low wages, and high agricultural procurements in rapid industrial development. Under conditions of rapid industrialization, it is difficult to imagine that the Soviet people would have been better off if the market had distributed the meager resources that remained. And while the lure of profit may have stimulated peasants and small handicraft workers to produce more, the “market” itself was incapable of production. It could move but not produce goods, and it could not conjure plenty from shortage. The painful investment in heavy industry that ultimately produced industrialization could not have occurred if the state had not taken control of the country’s resources. Given the rise of fascism, the Politburo simply did not have the luxury of a long path to development.

This fine translation by Kate Transchel and Greta Bucher now makes Osokina’s work available to a wider audience. It will be of interest to social historians, economists, and anyone more broadly interested in the lessons of the Soviet experience. Assiduously researched, glittering with important new findings, powerfully conceived and comprehensive, the book will be mined and quoted by scholars for generations to come.

*Wendy Goldman*

TISCHNER, WOLFGANG. *Katholische Kirche in der SBZ/DDR 1945–1951. Die Formierung einer Subgesellschaft im entstehenden sozialistischen Staat.* [Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Zeitgeschichte. Reihe B: Forschungen, Band 90.] Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn [etc.] 2001. 629 pp. Ill. DM 168.00.

The German Democratic Republic (GDR) was a predominantly Protestant state, with a mere million or so Catholics (swollen to two million in the early years by refugees from eastern territories) in a total population of around seventeen million. The Protestant Churches, whose membership dwindled from the original fifteen million or so to perhaps only a quarter of that figure by the 1980s, have to date received a great deal more historical attention, in part because of their ambiguous political role: there was, on the one hand, the prominence of pastors in what has been dubbed the “Protestant Revolution” of 1989, and, on the other, the widespread Stasi infiltration, and the growing partnership between atheist state and increasingly compliant Protestant Church leadership. By contrast, the politically more quiescent and smaller Catholic community has largely been left out of the general script of GDR history.

Tischner’s exhaustive analysis of East German Catholicism from 1945 to 1951 seeks to help to redress this balance, and to explore the bases of the longer-term survival of strong Catholic traditions within a hostile ideological and political environment. He begins by pointing out that in 1990, after forty years of Communist domination, Catholics in eastern Germany were still disproportionately likely to vote for the CDU, the non-denominational successor to the pre-1933 Catholic Centre Party (the Zentrum); along with other evidence, there were substantial grounds to think that a strong Catholic milieu, comparable to that of a hundred years earlier, had somehow survived through nearly half a century of atheist rule. Tischner argues that key institutional transformations of the early years help to explain this remarkable resilience. Through a combination of social and political history, and with the aid of an explicit conceptual framework in terms of a “functionally differentiated sub-society”, Tischner aims to show how this was possible.

Combing an impressive array of archival sources, Tischner’s doctoral thesis spans over 600 densely packed pages. Part 1 of the book focuses on largely conventional political and institutional church history; Part 2 turns to the building of a Catholic “sub-society” (which Tischner defines differently from, and prefers to, the terms “milieu” and “subculture”). On its own substantive ground, this is likely to be the “standard work” on Tischner’s chosen topics for some time to come. Whether Tischner adequately answers his opening puzzle and fulfils his theoretical ambitions is, however, another matter.

In Part 1 Tischner shows how the partial initial cooperation of the Catholic Church with the Soviet Military Administration in Germany (SMAD), and the communist parties (KPD, then from 1946 SED) developed into an ever more hostile relationship. Eventual withdrawal from the developing political system of the Soviet zone led to a “political niche existence” for the Catholic Church. After 1947–1948, there was increasing ideological demarcation, and at times open confrontation. By the end of 1951 and beginning of 1952, an increasingly centralized Catholic Church under the domination of Berlin had reorganized its structures into institutional patterns which would largely persist until the end of the GDR.

Part 2 explores in detail selected aspects of the institutional transformation. The founding of the East German CDU was at first seen as a resurrection of the old Zentrum. Not only were many Catholic functionaries involved; some even took the initiative.

Catholics – in the person of Andreas Hermes until deposed in December 1945 and then Jakob Kaiser until his own ousting two years later – provided the early leadership of the CDU, and Catholics were far more likely to support the CDU than were Protestants. But this situation did not last long. Increasing tensions over aspects of communist socio-economic reform (contested doctrines of Christian socialism notwithstanding) and more particularly over German–German developments, along with growing splits between Catholics and Protestants (fostered by the communist authorities) contributed to the eventual cooption or *Gleichschaltung* of the CDU by the communist regime. From the early 1950s until 1990, the East German Catholic “subsociety” had effectively lost its political representation through the CDU.

This loss of formal political representation was, however, compensated for by shifts in other functional spheres, which allowed Catholicism to preserve and propagate its distinctive world view. Tischner explores in detail the areas of socialization, welfare work, humanitarian support for prisoners of war and internees, and the “communication system” of the Catholic press, radio, and publishing houses. In each area, in different ways, Catholics were able to adapt to the new political circumstances and find new means of preserving certain functions. Thus, while Catholic denominational schools were forbidden (with one exception in East Berlin), Catholic kindergartens, after-school centres, and orphanages survived; and other means of out-of-school religious instruction, catechism teaching, and parish-based youth work ensured that Catholic socialization processes were not too adversely affected by the spread of atheist doctrines and youth organizations. The training of Catholic “functional elites” – those entrusted with the care and cure of both souls and bodies – remained in church hands. The Christian ethic of selfless help for others similarly contributed to the survival and development of Catholic Caritas activity – summarized as “the most important instrument of the social presence” of Catholicism in the GDR. Despite setbacks in areas which were politically sensitive (such as the “railway station mission”), overwhelming postwar social and health needs were so great that the state could hardly seek to suppress the benign combination of Catholic goodwill, resources, and trained personnel: thus there was extraordinary growth in the numbers of Catholic hospitals and homes for children, the sick, and the elderly in the first five years after the war. The story with respect to pleas on behalf of prisoners of war and internees, particularly young people, was less unambiguous. Finally, with regard to the “communication system”, basic organizational means of communication at parish level were relatively impervious to state intervention; West German radio stations were able to take over the functions of opinion formation and influence which were suppressed in the East; and the “long-term mentality formation” of Catholics was sustained through the publication of “purely religious” books and worship services which conformed with the state’s notions of freedom of purely religious practice.

Thus Tischner seeks to demonstrate in great detail that East German Catholicism was – in different ways in different areas – able to effect an institutional transformation in the early postwar years which allowed it to preserve a system permitting the transmission of a distinctive Catholic milieu, right through the forty years of an antireligious, atheist state up to its collapse in 1989–1990.

The diligence, organization, and clarity of this work are beyond question. What follows, therefore, are not so much criticisms of the work as conceived and executed within its own narrowly defined terms, but rather more general comments about its wider claims and implications.

Tischner's claim to combine political and social history is only carried out in the most conventional sense. This remains a largely institutional history: there is next to no discussion of mentalities, of subcultures, of the experiences of everyday life – no whiff of any “new cultural history”. The actors are, for the most part, not social groups or classes, but prominent individuals holding high-status positions (and mostly old men at that). The theoretical discussions of “pillarization” (with comparisons to research in the Netherlands and Switzerland) promise more than in the event they deliver. And if there was a distinctive Catholic milieu in the GDR, we get very little feel for a lived subculture, or how Catholicism was actually experienced on the ground. This book is thus really about the struggles for the preservation through transformation of an institutional shell, and not so much about what went on within that shell.

In part for this reason, but also because of the narrow chronological focus of the work, the wider claims with respect to the long-term survival of a Catholic milieu cannot be conclusively demonstrated. While some parts of Tischner's thesis are clearly well-founded – particularly the continuing importance of hospitals and homes for children, the elderly and infirm – other elements, particularly those to do with the socialization of the young given the effective end of Catholic schooling after the 1950s, are less convincing. In the face of long-term social trends fostering secularization (rural–urban mobility, industrialization, changing youth subcultures), one would need to explore further hypotheses about Catholic survival among rising generations: for example, that the regional concentration of pockets of Catholicism (such as the Eichsfeld) with what might be called “an actively lived Catholic milieu”, combined with the Catholic Church's withdrawal from active politics, and hence relatively nonthreatening position vis-a-vis the state, together help to explain the survival of Catholicism in a regime which was prepared, for a variety of reasons, to tolerate religious practice. Aspects of the early “functional system of sub-society” were no doubt prerequisites, but only in the form of a necessary, but not sufficient, explanation of the persistence of Catholicism in the GDR. To explain the latter, a longer chronological sweep and a more generous conception of the scope of social history would be required.

But for those who want to know a great deal, in great detail, about the reshaping of the institutional framework of East German Catholicism in these crucial early years, this book will undoubtedly hold a well-earned place as a standard work for a long time to come.

*Mary Fulbrook*

GIMPELSON, VLADIMIR and DOUGLAS LIPPOLDT. *The Russian Labour Market. Between Transition and Turmoil*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., Lanham [etc.] 2001. xvii, 224 pp. \$70.00. (Paper: \$26.95.)

This is a book about the Russian labour market in 1992–1998, i.e. between the initiation of the Gaidar liberalization and “stabilization” package in January 1992 and the macro-economic crisis of August 1998 and its immediate aftermath. One of the authors (Gimpelson) is Russian, a researcher at the Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The other (Lippoldt) is American, an economist at the OECD. The authors are well aware of the limits of the available official national statistics of labour market developments. Hence they use not only the official national statistics, but also surveys and regional case studies. Together, the authors have a good knowledge of labour market economics in general, labour market

conditions in other countries, and a good understanding of the special features of the Russian labour market.

The book contains a mass of data about the Russian labour market in 1992–1998. During this period, formal sector employment fell significantly, unemployment steadily grew, average real wages both declined and fluctuated sharply, wage arrears became a major problem, the state was unable to provide adequate unemployment benefits, and the Russian labour market experienced “deinstitutionalization”. Labour turnover was high, ranging between 43 per cent and 50 per cent. Labour turnover was inversely related to skill level. The former system of centralized wage-setting was replaced, not by collective bargaining, but by unilateral management wage-setting. There was increased earnings differentiation. The economy functioned like a lottery, with some lucky winners and many unhappy losers. Hiring rates remained surprisingly high, and there was a surprising increase in employment in public sector activities such as public administration, education, and medical care. The job-creation rate was very low, partly because of the inhospitable environment for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

The overall interpretation offered by the authors combines the “transition” discourse of the international financial institutions (IFIs) with the “turmoil” they see as characterizing Russia. Their conclusion is the currently orthodox one that in 1992–1998 Russia experienced a partial transition, but unfortunately it did not work out as intended due to inadequate attention to the need to develop appropriate institutions for a market economy.

Anyone needing an English-language source on developments in the Russian labour market in 1992–1998 will find this book of great value. It not only provides data and comprehensive economic analyses, but also devotes a chapter to the politics of labour market adjustment Russian style, and considers some questions of public administration (e.g. the role of the State Employment Service). Furthermore, considering the complex material it deals with, it is quite short and also easy to read.

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