

The second defect is one of method. Should an author impose his or her own political and social views on the past and on the life's work of the subject under consideration? Probably historians will agree that authors cannot put aside their own views, but to maintain some distance is desirable; as in other disciplines, a fine line usually divides the best history from the less good.

Monteleone does not like Turati's "reformism" and what it implied for the Socialist leader and his times. This attitude permeates the book's entire interpretation of Turati and all his actions, from the beginning to the end of his career. The reader does not come away with the feeling that this particular leader may have made his errors but also provided some correct or interesting interpretations, or perhaps performed laudable actions. In short, despite its self-assuredness, Monteleone's book fails to provide a balanced interpretation of Turati's life work – and that is its greatest failing.

The book may thus serve as a starting point to find out about Filippo Turati, but it would be a poor place to end.

Spencer Di Scala

WALLER, P. J. (Ed.) *Politics and Social Change in Modern Britain. Essays presented to A. F. Thompson.* The Harvester Press, Brighton (Sussex); St. Martin's Press, New York 1987. xx, 236 pp. £ 30.00.

For forty years A. F. ("Pat") Thompson has been a History Tutor at Wadham College Oxford and also, as these essays testify, the supervisor of a large number of doctoral theses on modern British political and social history. With Hugh Clegg and Alan Fox, he was a contributor to the magisterial Oxford survey of British trade-union history from 1889 to 1911; but apart from that he was a "teaching don", as is stressed in the two short prefaces discussing his career written by C. S. L. Davies and L. G. Mitchell. As Dr Mitchell says, there is no "Thompson school", but perhaps a "Thompson style" – lucid, wide-ranging and sceptical of existing views and dogmas. This attitude is well exemplified in the essays that comprise the bulk of this volume.

Phil Waller himself contributes a study of the variety of dialects within Britain, and their relationship to social class. Although "vernacular vestiges" are on the way out, pursued by radio and television, it may be that a "Black British" patois is emerging in some areas, while Scots and Welsh accents have long been "acceptable" in a way that English regional accents are not. As befits the editor of the Gladstone Diaries, Colin Matthew examines helpfully the topic of "Rhetoric and Politics", explaining how speeches were delivered as much to the press as to the live audience in the later nineteenth century. It would have been interesting to have learnt from him how Lord Randolph Churchill shot to fame on the basis of a few speeches lampooning Gladstone in the early 1880's. P. R. Ghosh returns to the study of Disraeli and Social Reform, to conclude that the social legislation of 1875, though bi-partisan in origin, was propelled by "the self-interest of the party and the remarkable gifts of its leader". The extent to which Dr Ghosh modifies the views of Professor Paul Smith seems rather less than he suggests.

Dr Gillian Sutherland contributes one of the two essays in the book to deal directly with social history. Her subject is the beginnings of women's university education. She finds the origins of the movement not so much in the pioneering efforts of individual women – although these played their part – as in “the wholesale shift in society towards formal, institutionalised schooling, a movement spearheaded by the bourgeoisie and owing [much] to the activities of a self-consciously liberal intelligentsia”. This essay by itself would justify the purchase of the book. Dr Ross McKibbin discusses a “theory” of the behaviour of the unemployed suggested, on rather slim evidence, by P. F. Lazarsfeld on the basis of a study of Marienbad, near Vienna, in the early 1930s. Lazarsfeld traced a pattern of decline of the unemployed from indignation to despair and apathy. In Britain at the same time, however, the dole was “a kind of wage and it permitted a good deal of social continuity”. Some reference to W. G. Runciman's theory of relative deprivation would not have been out of place here.

The remaining essays all discuss aspects of Labour Party or trade-union history. Professor Richard A. Rempel, of McMaster University, where Bertrand Russell's papers are now located, traces Russell's conversion from Liberalism to Labour, occasioned by his opposition to the First World War. Dr R. C. Whiting provides an account of the Labour Party's commitment to the Capital Levy between 1918 and 1924. In spite of the savage post-war deflation, which increased the burden of the National Debt, the British economy proved resilient to high taxation, and the levy was thought by the other political parties to be “not worth the trouble”. Dr Gordon Phillips, whose work on the General Strike was well received a few years ago, considers whether the T.U.C. engaged in “corporatist politics” when it expressed willingness to collaborate with the Mond group of employers, as has been suggested by some authors. He finds, on the contrary, that the T.U.C. remained closely committed to the Labour Party, and that its attitude to the state was “imbued with wariness and scepticism”. In the final essay in the book Dr Robert Waller discusses “Sweehearts and Scabs” in the twentieth century. He concentrates rather narrowly on Havelock Ellis's National Union of Seamen and the two Nottinghamshire miners' breakaways of 1926 and 1985. As he quite correctly says, they were not “scabs” but represented a genuine constituency of workers. It is a pity that he did not investigate the categories of “staff associations” and “professional organisations” which he only mentions in passing, as they would also qualify under his definition.

Henry Pelling

LADANY, LASZLO. *The Communist Party of China and Marxism 1921-1985. A Self-Portrait. With a Foreword by Robert Elegant.* C. Hurst & Company, London 1988. xx, 588 pp. £ 32.50.

Laszlo Ladany is a familiar name to those who write or teach about People's China. Born in Hungary in 1914, Ladany studied the violin at the Budapest Conservatoire, obtained the degree of Dr Iuris Utrisque at the University, and went to China as a