

independent. In 1923 the Romanian authorities embarked on an extensive programme of Romanianization. The Romanian language became obligatory in primary and secondary education, and German newspapers were heavily censored.

That is why this period was chosen for a deeper analysis of the German-Jewish press and the Jewish theatre. The five most important German-Jewish daily newspapers were the *Czernowitzer Allgemeine Zeitung* (1903–1940), the *Czernowitzer Morgenblatt* (1918–1940), *Das Volk/Neues Czernowitzer Tageblatt* (1918–1923), the *Ostjüdische Zeitung* (1919–1937), and the *Volkspresse/Vorwärts* (1899–1937). They represented the different political and cultural tendencies among the Jewish population: conservative, liberal/assimilatory, Jewish nationalist, Zionist, and socialist.

The same tendencies were represented in Czernowitz's German theatre, which was sponsored mainly by Jews. From 1905 onward, when a new theatre was opened, all kinds of German groups played there, with guest performances by Yiddish groups. But from 1921, the German theatre became the victim of Romanian nationalist and anti-Semitic hostility, two years before the official Romanian cultural policy was launched. Romanian students frequently disturbed German performances. At the end December 1921 the Romanian authorities decreed that theatre performances would henceforward be given only in Romanian. The German theatre moved into an old concert hall, but after two seasons it was forced to close.

In his detailed study, the author gives an insight into the unique cultural situation of Bukovina and its Jewish population. His attempt to combine a history of the press and the theatre is new, and daring. The list of all daily newspapers and journals in Bukovina from 1882 to 1940 provided at the end of the book is useful; it shows how important the German-speaking Jewish population was for the culture of the whole region. Winkler reveals for the first time the rich panorama of German-Jewish culture in Czernowitz and Bukovina during the first half of the twentieth century. A great amount of hitherto unknown material is now available for further study and deserves to be followed up by a series of other equally important books.

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KUHN, RICK. *Henryk Grossman and the Recovery of Marxism*. University of Illinois Press, Urbana [etc.] 2006. xv, 332 pp. \$60.00. (Paper \$25.00); doi:10.1017/S0020859008003799

This is the first comprehensive biography of the Polish-Jewish Marxist economist, Henryk Grossmann¹ (1881–1950), the result of a long research project on which the author, now Reader in Political Science at the Australian National University, embarked in 1993. In 1999, Jürgen Scheele published his 1997 University of Marburg Ph.D. thesis.² Scheele was the first to make extensive use of the Grossmann papers (in the Archives of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw) and Grossmann's many unpublished manuscripts, presenting and discussing them at length. His book is first and foremost an

1. Kuhn uses the "Grossman" spelling in the title of his book, the spelling used by Grossman in his Polish, Yiddish, and in some of his English publications. In his German publications the spelling Grossmann was used, and that is the generally accepted spelling of his name.

2. Cautiously announced as "Studies in the Political and Intellectual Biography of Henryk Grossmann"; Jürgen Scheele, *Zwischen Zusammenbruchsprognose und Positivismusverdikt: Studien zur politischen und intellektuellen Biographie Henryk Grossmanns (1881–1950)* (Frankfurt am Main, 1999).

intellectual biography, its main concern and focus being the development of Grossmann's thought and his contributions to the interpretation and reinterpretation of Marx's economic theories as well as to the history of philosophy and economic thought. The political and personal biography of Grossmann was not Scheele's main concern. In this respect, Rick Kuhn's work has a lot more to offer, in particular with respect to the early periods of Grossmann's life as a political activist. As a political biography, it surpasses Scheele's study.

In the rediscovery and revival of Marxism in the 1960s and 1970s, Grossmann was a core figure. His magnum opus on *The Law of Accumulation and Collapse of the Capitalist System (also a Theory of Crisis)* was first reprinted in Germany in 1967, thirty-eight years after its first publication in 1929, when it came out as the first volume of the new series of works published by the Institut für Sozialforschung (IfS) in Frankfurt, edited by Carl Grünberg, the institute's first director.³ Grossmann's claim to have recovered the true content and core of Marx's revolutionary theory in political economy was based largely on that book, although it was not a claim accepted during his lifetime. That book was not published in English until 1992, and only then in an abridged version – in an edition lacking the final parts of the German original. Grossmann's essay on "Marx, Classical Political Economy and the Problem of Dynamics" had already been published in English in 1977, but many of his writings from the 1920s and 1930s are still not available in English. For the English-speaking world, Kuhn's book is the first to offer some access to the various writings and manuscripts by Henryk Grossmann which have either never been published in English or remain unpublished even today.

The best and by far the largest part of the book is devoted to the personal and political biography of Henryk Grossmann. Starting with his childhood and adolescence in Cracow, the main phases of his life are presented, well documented and in much detail, using a number of hitherto unknown sources. In particular, Kuhn relates the story of the young Grossmann's involvement with the socialist labour movement in Galicia, where he became a leading figure in the Jewish Social Democratic Party for some years. Kuhn also tells of how Grossmann, a pupil of Karl Grünberg, became a specialist in Austrian statistics and trade policy during the period of reform, 1772–1790. The first stages of his academic career, at the Polish Statistical Office and at the Free University of Poland in Warsaw, as well as his role as a leading communist intellectual, heavily involved with the activities of the People's University, are presented here for the first time. In the following chapters, dealing with Grossmann as a member of the Frankfurt Institut für Sozialforschung and his years of exile, Kuhn provides more detailed accounts of his personal life and political views. Here, beyond any doubt, lies the book's strength and its great merit.

The author does not hide his sympathy, his deep admiration even, for Grossmann, who figures as the hero of his tale. Kuhn presents him as a shining example of that rare species – the "organic intellectual" of the working class. For a few years, Grossmann had indeed been heavily engaged in left-wing politics. But for much of his life there is no evidence of any political activity whatsoever. In Vienna, in Cracow, in Warsaw, in Frankfurt, and even in exile (except during the last few years of his life), Grossmann was part of the academic establishment, living the life of a professor and gentleman-intellectual with considerable ease. What is more, most of his adversaries among Marxist intellectuals, such as Otto Bauer or Fritz Sternberg, towards whom he harboured a particular hostility, deserve the title of "organic intellectual" no less than Grossmann.

Unfortunately, the strength of Kuhn's book, the love and admiration of the biographer for the person whose life and ideas he portrays, is also the cause of its major weakness.

3. Henryk Grossmann, *Das Akkumulations- und Zusammenbruchsgesetz des kapitalistischen Systems. (Zugleich eine Krisentheorie)* (Leipzig, 1929).

Henryk Grossmann was a man of high self-esteem, a man with a historical mission to fulfil. He claimed to have recovered, single-handedly, the true meaning of Marx's critique of political economy from the distortions and falsifications it had suffered at the hands of social-democratic Marxists. Kuhn accepts this rather bold and tendentious self-view of his hero unreservedly. Not only does he support Grossmann's claim to have recovered Marx, he actually outdoes him, ranking him with Lenin and Lukács: What Lenin had done for Marx's political theory and Lukács for his philosophy, Grossmann had achieved for his political economy. He, and only he, had managed to rescue and recover Marx's basic insights, obscured by the "Marxists" of the Second International. Hence, unlike Jürgen Scheele, Kuhn fails to distance himself from the object of his admiration; he sides with Grossmann throughout the book, in every single conflict and polemic. The hero of the tale, Grossmann, is always right, his opponents are always wrong. Of course, Kuhn is well aware that Grossmann became a diehard Stalinist in the early 1930s and remained one, even though he knew what was going on in the Soviet Union.

The longest chapter in the book is devoted to Grossmann's time working in Frankfurt, Grossmann's life and work as a member of the Frankfurt IFS where he wrote his magnum opus on the law of accumulation. The book was Grossmann's major achievement in his life-long struggle to recover the "true Marx" in political economy. Starting in the early 1920s, his great project to restate Marx's theory of accumulation as a theory of collapse and crisis, hence providing the scientific proof for the economic limits of capitalism and the necessity of a socialist revolution, he had by no means finished the job when his book was published in 1929. It made him a celebrity, but it elicited mainly harsh criticism, and even hostile reactions, from Marxist and non-Marxist economists alike. Undaunted, Grossmann continued some of the arguments of his book in several articles, but to no avail. He never replied to his many critics in public, but he did prepare a variety of responses in several longer and shorter manuscripts – all unfinished and most unpublished. From 1930 onward, he worked on a sequel, a second volume of his *Theory of Accumulation*, which was intended to provide a comprehensive theory of crisis and fill in the gaps left in volume one. In 1937 Grossmann's second volume was still being announced in an official list of books by members of the IFS due to be published soon.

Grossmann made two major claims that Kuhn wholeheartedly endorses: firstly, to have correctly restated the peculiar method that Marx had used in *Capital*; secondly, to have recovered the true theory of collapse and crisis which was, in his view, at the very core of Marx's critique of political economy. Both claims are untenable. Grossmann misreads Marx's formula of 1857 – from the "abstract" to the "concrete" – as a procedure of approximation, going from the highest abstraction, "pure capitalism" in volumes 1 and 2 of *Capital*, to the empirical reality, "empirical capitalism", in volume 3. It is a rather curious misrepresentation of the structure of *Capital*, as volume 3 is no less abstract and theoretical, dealing exclusively with analytical categories of political economy (such as the general rate of profit, the production price, interest, and rent) and presenting the "laws of motion" of capitalism "in general" as in the preceding volumes. Grossmann never cared for the all too obvious "dialectical" elements of Marx's method, which fly in the face of his simplistic and distorted reading.

Grossmann's reading of Marx's (incomplete) theory of accumulation is indeed peculiar. The crucial point of Marx's theory of overproduction and overaccumulation is transformed into its very opposite – lack of surplus value, lack of accumulation. Actually, Grossmann had no clear theory of accumulation, only an oversimplified model based on one by Otto Bauer which Grossmann did not improve but actually worsened by eliminating the reproduction structure and wrongly abstracting from any dynamic element in the long-term growth of a capitalist economy. Taking an arithmetic operation on that basis as "proof" of an inevitable collapse of capitalism and then adding "empirical" elements to show that the imminent collapse could manifest itself only in a series of crises

did correspond to Grossmann's peculiar idea of method, but it could never warrant his claim to have recovered Marx's true theory of the development of capitalism. As even his treatment of his simplistic model is flawed, his critics had no difficulty in demonstrating that Grossmann had failed completely to establish the necessity of capitalism's breakdown. In particular, they reproached him for having assumed away the major difficulties of any serious analysis of the dynamics of capital accumulation, such as the rise in the rate of surplus value, the variability of the accumulation rate, the problem of "devaluation", which would affect both constant and variable capital, and hence the very core of the dynamics of Marx's theory of value.

Grossmann had shunned tackling any major difficulty in a theory of dynamic growth and crisis – the impact of use values on the reproduction of social capital, the role of money and monetary circulation, and the differences between values and production prices. Actually, Grossmann had omitted the most salient problems of Marx's theory of accumulation. In two articles and in various manuscripts written during the 1930s (described and presented at length, with a wealth of extracts, in Scheele's book), Grossmann had tried to tackle them. However, his replies remained largely programmatic. The problem of devaluation was, in his view, an empirical question. The development of the technical and the value composition of capital did not follow a regularity, or a law, according to Grossmann (who implicitly rejected Marx's concept of the "organic composition" of capital). The criticism by Bortkiewicz and others of Marx's theory of production prices in relation to values had to be refuted, but Grossmann failed to present any solution to this problem. Possibilities of crisis were already included in Marx's analysis of simple reproduction, linked to the reproduction of fixed capital, but Grossmann never went beyond a mere outline of the problem at hand.

What is more, he became aware of the deficiencies of his own interpretation of Marx's method and started to rethink the matter. This time, he tried to explain in much detail – in several manuscripts and two articles, published in the 1940s – what the peculiar achievement of Marx was in comparison to his predecessors, who had also criticized the tenets and methods of classical political economy. These articles, as well as the fragmentary text on Marx and the classical economists published in 1941, are among Grossmann's most valuable contributions to Marxist political economy. Far from presenting a recovery of Marx, the manuscripts (as presented by Scheele) show that during the 1930s Grossmann became aware of the peculiarities of Marx's method of development and understood the centrality of the concept of mystification and fetishism. That is why, during the last years of his life, he restarted his study of the historical development of bourgeois rationalism – leading to an unfinished book on Descartes – and of Marx's dynamic "economics".

Many of the criticisms, Kuhn argues, were politically motivated. Of course they were. Marxist debates in the 1930s were as overpoliticized as they are today. So were Grossmann's criticisms of Luxemburg, Bauer, Sternberg, and others. Despite their political aversion to Grossmann, his critics did a good job – as they forced Grossmann to spend years writing rejoinders and refutations which he never finished.

Kuhn argues that Grossmann had no access to Marx's manuscripts. In this he is mistaken. The IFS maintained excellent working relations with the MEGA project in Moscow under the direction of David Ryazanov. As a member of the Frankfurt institute and its leading Marxist theorist, all Grossmann need have done was contact his colleagues in Moscow. But he never bothered to ask, or take a look at the manuscripts himself. He preferred to speculate on mistakes made either by Marx himself or by Engels or others whenever Marx's texts did not fit his interpretation. Grossmann, we are told, believed until the end of his days that somewhere in Marx's papers there was a formula, a mathematical proof of the inevitability of the collapse of capitalism. Of course there was none, and Ryazanov and his collaborators could have told him so. At least one copy of Marx's

Grundrisse, first published in 1939–1941, had found its way into a public library in New York; Grossmann, who lived there until 1948, never bothered to go and read it.

Political sympathies apart, Rick Kuhn's book will be more useful for historians interested in the history of the Jewish and Polish labour movement from 1900 to the 1920s than for social scientists or political economists interested in Henryk Grossmann's contribution to Marxist political economy. Whoever wants to learn more about that, whoever wants to get the best available insight into Grossmann's unpublished efforts to come to grips with the criticisms of his theory, will still have to read Scheele's book or wait for the publication of the Grossmann papers (which will be published in German, the language in which the bulk of them were written, in 2009).

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BIRKE, PETER. *Wilde Streiks im Wirtschaftswunder. Arbeitskämpfe, Gewerkschaften und soziale Bewegungen in der Bundesrepublik und Dänemark*. Campus Verlag, Frankfurt/New York 2007. 376 pp. € 39.90; doi:10.1017/S0020859008003805

Currently, labour unions are under attack because they represent fewer employees than they used to. Also, the strike, the weapon *par excellence* of unions and employees, formerly known as workers, is regarded by some commentators as a relic of the past and destined to become extinct.

However, similar voices have been heard in earlier times. During the "Roaring '20s", political commentators and economists claimed that the struggle between capital and labour was about to end. The events of the 1930s and 1940s showed how fallacious that claim was, but that did not prevent researchers making the same mistake at the end of the 1950s. Again, a period of diminishing strike activity tempted students of labour relations to expect the strike to disappear. "The withering away of the strike" thesis was in fact first propounded by Ross and Hartman, who analysed declining strike activity over the period 1900–1956 across a range of countries, including India and Japan,¹ and it has since been repeated over and over again. While Ross and Hartman cautioned against extrapolating the trends they observed into the future, this is exactly what many writers on the subject have done.

Before scholars could digest all the research and the predictions their thesis gave rise to, workers throughout the Western world unexpectedly began to show a greater willingness to strike. Without warning, they struck on a massive scale and strike figures rose astronomically. "1968" has taken on an iconic aura, because 10 million workers throughout France, and especially in Paris, went on strike or occupied factories. Some of them even fought against the police, standing side by side with students in revolt. This revolt, the fortieth anniversary of which was marked this year, shook the world. The postwar period of reconstruction and sustained economic growth and optimism seemed to have come to an end.

It was not only a French affair. In many other countries, workers struck on a scale unprecedented since World War II. Italy had its "Hot Autumn" (*autunno caldo*) in 1969 and Germany saw the September strikes (*Die September-Streiks*) that same year. In many other countries, including the Netherlands, massive waves of strikes broke out. This inspired a new view of the development of the strike by researchers such as Barkin, Crouch, and Pizzorno. Italy and Germany in particular saw the emergence of a new trend in left-wing political discourse, *operaismo* [workerism]. Unlike most students of labour

1. Arthur M. Ross and Paul T. Hartman, *Changing Patterns of Industrial Conflict* (London, 1960).