

maintain some informal networks, but they were “officers without an army” (101). Here at least Peukert mentions the Christian unionists; otherwise the book tends to have the usual bias of West German labor history — it is a history of socialist labor movement. Chapter V discusses the most important miners’ exile group of the 1930s, the “Arbeitsausschuss freigewerkschaftlicher Bergarbeiter Deutschlands” of 1936-39, a group organized by Franz Vogt which brought together Social Democrats and Communists in the Popular Front era. It had minor success in smuggling periodicals into the Reich and in maintaining networks, but the overall situation was bleak, and after 1939, hopeless. Another long Vogt document, an August 1936 discussion of the situation of German miners, forms Chapter VI, and it plus Peukert’s analysis of miners’ everyday life in the 1931s in the next chapter, are the most significant parts of the book from the scholarly standpoint. As the rearmament-driven boom got underway in the late 1930s, the labor market position of all workers improved considerably, while Nazi economic controls and pressure for greater production meant little or no improvement in living standards while output and hours were forced up. The result was a rising tide of labor turnover, “sick outs” and “goofing off,” slowdowns, even localized strikes and protests. This has led some, notably Tim Mason of Oxford, to conclude that there was a “worker opposition” which was potentially destabilizing for the regime, especially since Hitler and other leading Nazis, believing their own “stab-in-the-back” myth, were afraid of another 1918 Revolution after the war began. While the fears of the elite have been confirmed, and Vogt and Peukert bear out Mason’s analysis of the mandatory German Labor Front as an organization forced to defend worker interests in a limited way, Peukert rightly questions the “worker opposition” thesis as exaggerated. Too much of this “resistance” was normal boom-period behavior to be described as consciously anti-Nazi, and terror, control and propaganda had been successful in atomizing and depoliticizing older workers, while a proportion of the young were won over by the Hitler Youth. The working class remained the most troubling segment of the German population for the Nazis, and class confrontation was not ended by the “national community,” but some historians on the left may have engaged in wishful thinking on this issue. This is at least the conclusion that Peukert’s analysis supports. The chapter ends with four pages on the World War II era, which is unfortunately typical for the social history of the Third Reich so far — half of the Nazis’ twelve years are treated as an afterthought. The book ends with a brief conclusion and a final chapter compiled from interviews of another member of the Social Democratic miners’ union who was active in the resistance and exile. Typically this just seems tacked on. In short this book has some very useful sections, and it includes some interesting documents of worker life in the Third Reich and of activity in the resistance, but its structure is too loose, so that the whole is less than the sum of its parts.

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Janet L. Polasky — *Revolution in Brussels 1787-1793*. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1987. Pp. 315.

It is now thirty years since Robert Palmer published the first volume of his *Age of the Democratic Revolution* and called for more study of the political and social revolts in Europe’s smaller states in the years preceding the French Revolution. Janet Polasky’s study of the revolution in Brussels, the administrative capital of the Austrian Netherlands, is the first English-language monograph on the Belgian revolution of the late 1780s and early 1790s, and the first new study of these events in any language since Suzanne Tassier’s works in the 1930s. As such, Polasky’s book is certainly a welcome addition to the literature on the neglected “democratic revolutions” Palmer drew attention to, and it brings out some of the peculiarities that make it difficult to compare the Belgian case with

the movements of the same period in the Netherlands, Geneva and Ireland. One must nevertheless regret that she has not done more to address the historical questions that the Belgian revolt raises.

In her introduction, Polasky points out that modern economic historians have completely revised our view of the context in which the Belgian events took place. Far from being a stagnant backwater, the Austrian Netherlands at the end of the eighteenth century was experiencing the rapid demographic and economic growth that would make the area the first center of industrialization on the European continent. She promises to provide an account of the Belgian revolt that will put the political events of the period in the context of this process of rapid economic change and counter "the numerous dismissals of the Brabant Revolution as the struggle of a bucolic people to preserve their stagnant society" (11). As her narrative proceeds, however, Polasky fails to fulfill her promise to integrate political with social and economic events. She provides instead a detailed political narrative, which certainly adds to the briefer English-language accounts available in Palmer and in E.H. Kossmann's *The Low Countries, 1780-1940* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), but which fails to address the connection between early industrialization and revolutionary unrest.

Polasky's narrative follows the lines of existing historiography on the Belgian revolt, emphasizing its origin in the resistance to Joseph II's administrative and ecclesiastical reforms, the role of the Brabant Estates and of the Brussels guilds who were represented in the Third Estate, the center of anti-Austrian resistance, and the catastrophic results of the split between the traditionalist Catholic followers of Henri Van der Noot and the more liberal supporters of J.F. Vonck. Her statistical analysis of the leadership of the two factions confirms the conventional characterization of Van der Noot's followers as members of traditional elites and of the prosperous artisan guilds, and Vonck's as members of the middle class who were excluded from positions of power in the traditional institutions.

The Belgian revolt was unusual compared to the other European revolutions of the period because of the central role the Catholic Church played in it. Polasky brings this out strongly; at times, her description of the religious millenarism of the Brabant Catholics and their crusade against their opponents as traitors "against God and the country" (160) suggests comparisons with the Islamic revolution in Iran and the factional struggles in Lebanon. She might perhaps have looked more deeply at the roots of this militant Catholicism in the earlier struggle over the fate of the Jesuit Order, abolished in 1773: the Belgian provinces had been one of the strongholds of support for the followers of Loyola, and the mood of exalted resistance to ecclesiastical reform undoubtedly owed much to this experience. Polasky's dreary picture of the divisions among the revolutionaries that led to the collapse of the *Etats Belges Unis* in 1790 makes one think of the endless infighting characteristic of present-day Belgian parliamentary politics, as well as raising the question of how a more or less unified national movement managed to arise by 1830.

In the course of her account, however, Polasky never gets beyond the high politics of the Revolution. We learn about Van der Noot and Vonck and their immediate followers, but little about the popular bases of support for their movements. The limitation of the study to Brabant, understandable in view of the volume of sources, makes some aspects of Belgian events unintelligible: the Vonckist democrats, for example, drew most of their support from the provinces. Above all, Polasky provides no clues to the relationship between economic development and revolution. The reader is left puzzled as to how industrialization could proceed unimpeded in a society where resistance to political modernization was so powerful, and what role manufacturers and workers in Brabant's growing industries played in events.

Polasky's accomplishment is thus considerably more limited than Simon Schama's in his study of the northern Netherlands (*Patriots and Liberators* (New York: Knopf, 1977)). She provides a generally clear and even-handed narrative of political events, but she does not really address the issues of the relationship between social and political change and of the place of the Belgian movement in the larger context of the "democratic revolution." Despite these limitations and some minor irritations, such as the failure to give the exact dates of some major events referred to and the insertion of quotes in French, German and Flemish in the text, *Revolution in Brussels* is a useful addition to

the literature on the revolutionary movements of the late eighteenth century. Polasky has mastered a large and complex body of sources in several languages, and provided Anglophone readers with a valuable introduction to a neglected topic.

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Rex Pope, Alan Pratt, and Bernard Hoyle, eds — *Social Welfare in Britain, 1885-1985*. London: Croom Helm, 1986. Pp. 266.

The present study, a worthy successor to Rex Pope and Bernard Hoyle's *British Economic Performance* (1984), significantly extends the literature of accessible source material intended for beginning students. The editors not only cover the conventional era of developments in welfare thinking and provision from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth; but also include the immediate past with its search for new definitions and approaches. Divided into two chronological parts, breaking about 1940, each section begins with an informative introductory essay in which the editors successfully place each document in historical context. A third segment gives useful background information in graph and chart form to facilitate both understanding and initial research. To further aid students, a brief bibliography is appended.

Late Victorian social policy, according to the editors, was largely defined by the deterrent Poor Law and welfare thinking was guided by the ideologies of self-help and laissez-faire. Modest legislative gains were recorded in education and the factories; however, they were hardly comprehensive, touching only elementary education for the working classes in the case of schooling and women and children in the factories. By the turn of the century, mounting pressures — originating principally from the statistical evidence of poverty and its complex causes, the reality of increased longevity, a heightened understanding of unemployment and underemployment, and concern for public order — prompted the state to assume more direct action in matters effecting social welfare. Despite increased intervention, the principles and attitudes governing welfare thought remained unchanged: individuals were responsible for themselves and their dependents. The First World War, with its insatiable demands for manpower, and the veterans, both whole and maimed, it left behind, brought a shift in focus toward the physical and mental well-being of the broader populace. A salutary byproduct of the horror and destruction of modern warfare has thus been a fuller emphasis on the social services the country needed rather than what it could afford. In the interwar period, economic problems and rising unemployment challenged social thinkers and administrators alike. Most services were cut; however, benefit allowances for the unemployed throughout the period remained generous. Unfortunately, relief efforts were never matched by concerted schemes to prevent unemployment. Overall, the expansion of social welfare provision before 1940 lacked coordination and did little to erase the stubborn survivals of earlier deficiencies.

The documents found in this first part are collected under several headings, including political economy and social policy, the administration of welfare, tests of needs and desert, and the role of charity and voluntary effort. Although some entries are extracted from statutes and familiar sources, others are less well known advocacy pieces exploring single aspects of key issues. Geddes' 'Axe' and snippets from Hansard on topics such as unemployment insurance are included along with entries less frequently found in standard undergraduate libraries. The editors make no systematic attempt to present a balanced portrait on every question; nevertheless, their selections are sufficiently varied to offer the reader real insight into the evolution of welfare questions.

By the 1940s, there was a clear change in policy, as popular opinion reconciled the states' obligation to guarantee a subsistence level of living to all citizens while preserving an essentially free-market economy. The result was the legislative establishment of the modern welfare state staring