

the party nor the unions treated women as equals; theory and practice did not mesh. "Blatant, as well as latent antifeminism was a fact of life in the socialist organizations, as it was elsewhere" (p. 153).

Quataert's monograph is well organized and well written. It provides a very valuable analysis of the nature of German socialist feminism. Along with the works of Evans, Thönnessen and Stephenson, it contributes to a clear, if incomplete, picture of German feminism and the problems besetting German women in the recent past. However, the author's focus is too narrow and many questions are left unanswered. The reader learns much about eight socialist feminists but little about the movement as such. One would like to know more about the 175,000 members and about the second and third rungs of the movement's leadership. Was the membership active or docile? Did it share the leaders' socialist radicalism? Why did the great mass of working-class women remain hostile to the movement? Was the movement too political, too committed to revolution? One would even like to know more about the eight feminists under discussion. Why were the majority of these socialist leaders radicals? Was this merely a coincidence, superior political acumen or necessity dictated by affiliation with the *SPD*? Why was the revisionist Lily Braun virtually ousted from the movement while Edward Bernstein and other revisionists kept their place within the *SPD*? A more thorough, more detailed analysis of the split in the socialist women's movement is in order. Who and how many supported the *USPD*, and the majority socialists? Why? How many of the second generation female leadership joined the *USPD*? Why had membership dropped so precipitously during the war? Finally, a firmer assessment of the socialist feminist movement is in order. What was its significance? The author writes: "The socialist women's movement had only a minor impact on the German working class in general" (p. 219). What was this impact? Is this what the *SPD* wanted? Could the impact have been strengthened? Despite these criticisms *Reluctant Feminists* is an important addition to the still meagre literature on German and European feminism.

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HANS MOMMSEN. — *Arbeiterbewegung und Nationale Frage*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1979. Pp. 429.

To make a collection of essays into a good book requires prudent selection and careful editing. The essays can all relate to a central theme, in which case editorial work becomes particularly important to avoid repetition, and to check that frequent habit of historians of inserting chunks of previously published material into new settings. A second method is to select essays from a wide range of topics, so that the distinct personality of the historian becomes the theme of the book. This volume falls between these two stools. In spite of its very specific title only half of the essays deal with the question of the labour movement and nationalism. The other essays are concerned with problems of German social democracy from Lassalle to the trade unions in the Third Reich. The first half of the book is seriously marred by endless repetitions, showing that merely reprinting essays published elsewhere does not add up to a worthwhile book, however valuable each essay may be in itself. The second half of the book lacks any central theme, and as the

essays are of varied quality this also does not make for good reading. That the book is actually unreadable is no fault of the author. The print selected is guaranteed to make any reader with normal eyesight cross-eyed after ten pages, producing an effect better suited to the world of Bridget Riley than that of the historian. That a prominent publishing house should use such a typeface for an expensive book in a distinguished series is a disgrace. Perhaps it is for this reason that there are more than the usual number of typographical errors, particularly towards the end of the book, but this reviewer has every sympathy for the unfortunate proof-reader. Hans Mommsen deserves better treatment, and so does the reader.

The theme of the first part of the book is the failure of socialists to take sufficient account of nationalism. The author's attitude towards this question is a trifle curious. He is full of the preoccupations of a 1960s German social democrat, with his somewhat naive belief in the "idea of Europe" and a desire that the *SPD* should become a genuine "people's party". At the same time he wags a stern finger at those who disregard the power of irrational national sentiment (or perhaps not quite so irrational, as it is said to be the result of "the need of the individual to articulate his historical identity"), and at labour leaders who compromised too much. With increasing national difficulties within the EEC, and the failure of the *SPD* to capture the centre vote in spite of abandoning all its socialist baggage, this attitude does not command automatic respect.

The book begins with a useful survey of the literature on nationalism. The essay is somewhat breathless and superficial, and many of the ideas discussed are so silly as to be hardly worth the trouble, but it does provide a useful overview of the literature, and is helpful in indirectly telling us what to avoid. Mommsen's views on Marx and Engels' writings on nationalism, in this essay and elsewhere, are a trifle simplistic. Part of the problem lies in the fact that their discussion of nationalism was largely in the earlier works, where charges of idealism are easier to make, and after 1850 Marx hardly addressed the problem directly. A further difficulty is that their judgement of nationalism was in large part directed by political expediency. Thus a positive assessment of Polish and Irish nationalism was due to the likely effects of successful national movements on Russia, Germany and England rather than their intrinsic merits. This point of view cannot be so easily dismissed as Mommsen seems to think, and it is simply not true that Marx was an apologist for British rule in India. Mommsen's sympathies are more with Otto Bauer and Bernstein who realized the significance of nationalism, and his approval goes whole-heartedly to Bernstein's desire to steer his way "between the Scylla of nationalism and Charybdis of an amorphous internationalism". However, it is difficult to excuse Bernstein for his horrendous views on imperialism by attributing them to the *Zeitgeist*. Such determinism, which crops up throughout the book, is merely the idealist version of vulgar marxism.

The essays on the problems of the nationalities in the Habsburg Empire contain much of interest, although it is familiar stuff to those who are reasonably well-acquainted with the literature. Here there is a further problem: since those who lack detailed background knowledge will find some of the issues somewhat arcane, a few words of explanation would help a lot; whereas those who do not need such *aides-mémoires* will find little that is new.

The final section is a very mixed bag. The survey of the European labour movement is a real pot-boiler which contains some oddities. It is claimed that the failure of Chartism, founded in 1840, can be seen in the passage of the Poor Law Amendment of 1834. Trotsky would not agree that the *Partido obrero de Unificación marxista (POUM)* was "Trotskyite", although Stalin said it was; and to blame the failure of the Spanish Republic on "Stalinist terror" is an altogether too

undifferentiated, although very popular, view. An attempt to restore Lassalle's credibility as an economist (iron law of wages) and as socialist strategist (cooperatives) is stimulating, but fails to convince. The piece on Ebert as chancellor is thought-provoking and original, although it is curious that after exposing him as an authoritarian without any trace of socialist principles he should praise him as a far-sighted democrat. This contradiction is to be found in other essays: the failure of the unions to develop a serious alternative political strategy, the inability of the SPD to mobilize youth, the fatalism and short-sightedness of the labour movement in the Weimar Republic are all stressed, and yet instead of drawing the obvious conclusions the author's own recipe is "more of the same", an opening up to a non-existent centre.

That this collection raises many interesting questions of considerable contemporary relevance is a measure of its success. How much better if it had been severely pruned, carefully edited and printed in legible type!

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HOWARD B. ROCK. — *Artisans of the New Republic: The Tradesmen of New York City in the Age of Jefferson*. New York: New York University Press, 1979. Pp. xviii, 340.

The purpose of this book is concisely stated by its author: it is to explore the efforts of New York City mechanics of the Jeffersonian period "to achieve the sense of independence and esteem they so greatly desired" (p. 8). In addressing the question whether New York mechanics reached that ideal condition by the second decade of the nineteenth century, Rock describes in detail artisan attempts to reach more specific and immediate political and economic goals.

Rock divides his topic into three major parts. The first, and the longest, traces the role of mechanics in New York City political life, with particular attention to mechanic involvement in the new political organizations which appeared after 1789. Initially supportive of the Federalist Party, mechanics went over to the Democratic-Republicans by the mid-1790s because the Jeffersonians, unlike the élitist Federalists, recognized the importance of artisans and tradesmen to society. But it was not always a harmonious relationship. A combination of local economic issues and Jeffersonian foreign policy produced large mechanic defections to the Federalists. In the main, however, New York's workingmen remained loyal to the Democratic-Republicans as most compatible with the mechanic notion of Revolutionary republicanism. Local party leadership in turn supported mechanic demands for suffrage reform and greater access to elective offices. By means of their common identity and through concerted action, mechanics won for themselves a greater role in New York politics, a victory that was both a measure and a recognition of their importance in society.

The economic activities and status of New York mechanics, from the Constitution through the War of 1812 and a little beyond, is covered in the remainder of the book. Part Two describes the traditional crafts and trades typically associated with a late eighteenth-century port town. As in political life, mechanics seized