

thereby paved for aliens to be excluded and for the extension of a bureaucratic apparatus to ensure this.

In order to understand the origins of this, we have to go back even further. Even in the first half of the nineteenth century itinerant aliens were regarded as undesirable, and considerable energy was expended by the still modest police apparatus to bar them. A tempting explanation for this is to be found in Brubaker's study, which notes that when the Prussian state took over from the cities responsibility for providing for the poor, the state found itself forced to define who had Prussian citizenship. The codification of citizenship in 1842 speeded up this process and the economic liberalization and the freedom of movement (*Freizügigkeit*) suddenly made the nationality issue acute. Now that responsibility lay with the state, conflicts between the municipalities over who had responsibility for the poor became less important.<sup>6</sup>

A second limitation of Moch's perspective is her somewhat stereotypical description of the new, non-European immigrant groups in the twentieth century. This limitation is most apparent in her attempt to explain the formation of minorities in post-war Western Europe. In her account she concentrates on the religious, linguistic and cultural characteristics of the groups themselves. Although she is aware of government immigration policies, Moch argues that it is principally the deviant cultures of immigrants that have made the Turks in Germany and the Algerians in France, for example, into a minority. I do not want to deny that culture has played a role (and still does), but culture is certainly not the only factor and probably not the most decisive one either.<sup>7</sup> Studies of the attitudes of those societies to which immigrants have moved, the attitudes of government, people, employers, social groups and trade unions, have shown that the categorization and, in extreme cases, the stigmatization of aliens can be essential in making "culturally deviant characteristics" apparent.

None the less, these critical remarks do not detract from my great admiration for Moch's achievement. Her book is balanced, clearly organized and well written. I can do no more than wholeheartedly agree with Charles Tilly's comment reproduced on the cover of the book: "by far the best general book on its subject [. . .], [it] will remain a standard reference for some time to come".

Leo Lucassen

SMYTH, JIM. *The Men of No Property. Irish Radicals and Popular Politics in the Late Eighteenth Century*. Gill and Macmillan, Dublin 1992. xi, 251 pp. £12.99.

Rejecting the revisionist fashion in Irish history, Jim Smyth offers a return to a more heroic mode, celebrating the participation of the propertyless, the poor

<sup>6</sup> Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood*, p. 34.

<sup>7</sup> A shrewd analysis of the German situation which emphasizes the attitude of the state and society is offered in Daniel Cohn-Bendit and Thomas Schmid, *Heimat Babylon. Das Wagnis der multikulturellen Demokratie* (Hamburg, 1993). Among other things, they refute the idea that foreigners are so different from the indigenous population and they show that the preparedness of, for example, Turkish immigrants to adjust is much greater than is generally assumed (see, for example, pp. 163–175).

and the common people in the politics of the 1790s. In no sense partisan or tendentious, the analysis is compelling and convincing, showing how a revolutionary momentum – absent in neighbouring England and Scotland – developed in Ireland. Based on meticulous research, Smyth's approach is holistic, an overarching analysis within which the much-fêted United Irish, the "Irish Jacobins", are but one component. He rejects the conventional compartmentalized chronology with its sharply-drawn distinction between the constitutionalism of 1791–1793 and the reluctant revolutionary departure of 1795–1798. In its place, he offers a narrative of continuous and escalating politicization, charting the complex interweaving of agrarian discontent, sectarian nationalism and United Irish republicanism. The construction of this narrative, however, reveals the weaknesses as well as the strengths of Smyth's approach.

Smyth is at his best in charting the dynamics of political engagement, underlining the rapidity (and confrontational logic) of tactical and programmatic developments. In the early 1790s Catholics and radicals sought political advantage through concerted appeal to a popular constituency, hinting in the process at immediate and concrete social change following Catholic relief or parliamentary reform. Extremism, already evident in the events of 1792, developed apace, hastened by heightened expectation and the impact of repression. The leadership cadre of the United Irish, characterized here as populist-radical pre-socialist revolutionaries, added an egalitarian inflection to their propaganda as the logic of popular revolution – overt separatism, republicanism and a strategy of insurrection – proved irresistible. Seen in this way, the politicization of discontent was a dynamic process. "Defenderism" developed from rural discontent into a popular ideology of mass disaffection with a loose, pro-French, anti-ascendancy blend of "inherent" and "derived" ideas. The Whiteboy legacy and the new French revolutionary input of the United Irishmen were fused in action, by experience and participation in public affairs. However, this stress on politics and popular ideology as action and dynamic process, heavily underlined in Smyth's introduction, serves to disable the argument. Smyth's approach rests on a narrow view of politics and on an unproblematic (and literal) reading of political language as propaganda. While the absence of the tortuous theoretical post-structuralists and post-modernist prose of the "linguistic turn" is much to be welcomed, Smyth should surely have engaged with new historiographical approaches which stress the constitutive role of language in the construction of political identity. Smyth needs to examine how people acquired a socio-economic, sectarian or national affiliation before they entered the public space of active politics. By ignoring this essential preliminary, by taking identity as given, Smyth fails to examine a crucial aspect of the dynamics of political action. To what extent were socio-economic, sectarian, or national identities affirmed, modified or subverted in collective political action? As it stands, his study of propaganda is production led, showing how leaders generally took account of local circumstance – Defenderism is presented as a chameleon ideology – but the complexities of its reception, adaptation and incorporation by local audiences remain unexamined. There is one exception here: the excellent (and much-needed) examination of the street politics and mentalité of the Dublin crowd. Here the purchase of United Irish republicanism is placed in the interactive framework of long-standing collusion and convergence between middle-class patriots and the lower-class Dublin crowd, increasingly Catholic, politicized and proletarian.

Its methodological shortcomings notwithstanding, the great virtue of Smyth's study is its concentration on the politicization of discontent as a major historical development in itself, irrespective as it were of subsequent events – indeed, Smyth is emphatic that the book is not about the background, causes and course of the 1798 rebellion. It is a free-standing study of considerable merit, essential reading for all historians interested in the 1790s. However, it also serves as the best introduction to the radical and popular political context of Ireland's tragic "year of liberty".

*John Belchem*

**PETERSON, LARRY.** *German Communism, Workers' Protest, and Labor Unions. The Politics of the United Front in Rhineland-Westphalia 1920–1924.* [Studies in Social History, Vol. 14.] Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht 1993; International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam. 556 pp. D.fl. 385.00; \$239.00; £157.50.

In recent years a series of studies on the trade union policies of the KPD during the Weimar Republic have been published, yet none previously in the form of a detailed specific survey for the Rhineland-Westphalian industrial region in the years from 1918 to the mid-1920s. Larry Peterson closes this gap with the book under review, which is based on his Ph.D. for the Columbia University in New York. He examines the various causes for economic discontent and its types among the workers, and in pursuing the reasons for the relatively strong power of the Communists in the region, the author emphasizes their concentration on the work in the ADGB, the trade union federation dominated by the Social Democrats. Traditionally did the KPD consider the industrial districts of Rhineland-Westphalia, alongside Berlin, as particularly important for the aspired Communist revolution in Germany.

In the first chapter the author deals with the trade unions and the German Left before 1920, especially with the "precursors" of the Communist labour unions from December 1916 onwards. In the first phase after the Party had been founded at the turn of the year 1918–1919 the KPD had a decentralized structure. At local levels, therefore, the Communists employed various tactics towards the trade unions, including the "Arbeiter-Unionen". The Kapp-Lüttwitz-Putsch of March 1920 had a general radicalizing effect on the industrial workers in Rhineland-Westphalia.

The following chapters are concerned with the origins and politics of Communist United Front tactics in the trade unions, i.e. the Party's "industrial strategy", to use the author's phrase. He gives a detailed description of the development in the various regions, whereby he carefully evaluates the police files in the State Archives in Düsseldorf, Arnsberg and Münster. Moreover, he examines the differences and correspondences with the Gelsenkirchener "Freie Arbeiter Union", as well as the effects of the so-called "März-Aktion" of the KPD in Rhineland-Westphalia. Among the consequences was a crisis within the party which also affected the trade union work and it was the cause for the reorganization of the party by setting up two new districts. The policies of a united front were continued until spring 1922 and the relations of the KPD to the "Union der Hand- und Kopfarbeiter" were newly adjusted. Peterson describes the