

Nor is there any sense of Spencer's contribution to popular debate over his principles; no mention is made, for instance, of H.M. Hyndman's response to the "socialism and slavery" hypothesis in *Socialism and Slavery*, 3rd edn (London, 1892), though Francis notes Spencer's attack on Hyndman (p. 325). Indeed, a complete lack of confrontation with anything approaching the left of the late-Victorian political and economic spectrum mars an otherwise interesting and useful discussion. Spencer's "radicalism" is provided an essentially internalist account drawing chiefly on high political theory and equally ignoring much of the recent secondary literature on Victorian radicalism. An admittedly awkward man who had difficulty fitting into most company, he seems here equally awkwardly excluded from a variety of frameworks which would obviously have shed further light on his more eccentric ideas.

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FISCHER, LARS. *The Socialist Response to Antisemitism in Imperial Germany*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 2007. xix, 252 pp. £45.00; \$80.00; doi:10.1017/S002085900990125

The Social Democratic Party, the SPD, in imperial Germany exhibited an ambivalent attitude in relation to anti-Semitism and the Jewish emancipation. On the ideological level, German socialists interpreted Marxism as a positive science of society. The idea of a natural, necessary, and linear direction of historical development towards socialism inevitably had a profound influence on their attitude toward the "Jewish question". The notion of the disappearance of anti-Semitism and of the growth of Jewish assimilation were seen as two aspects of the "natural evolution of society". In contrast to this over-optimistic belief, German anti-Semitism did not disappear, but transformed itself from religious-based anti-Judaism to modern chauvinism and racism. While colonialist ideologies that also became increasingly popular at this time, were directed against so-called "underdeveloped and primitive peoples" outside Europe, modern-anti-Semitism tried to stop and to reverse the political and cultural emancipation of a part of the population that shared the cultural standard of its environment.

In his book, Lars Fischer, lecturer in the German Department of the University of London, goes beyond these generally accepted attitudes. He argues that social democracy in imperial Germany did more to consolidate than subvert the generally accepted notions regarding the Jews. Fischer asks to what extent "both self-avowed antisemites and those opposed to political antisemitism in Imperial Germany subscribed to many of the same anti-Jewish stereotypes" (xii). He examines to what extent leading social democrats tended to identify Jews with capitalism. Fischer criticizes Franz Mehring, who could never free himself from anti-Jewish prejudices. He discusses Bernstein's, and even Kautsky's, underestimation of the problem during the 1890s. But both Kautsky and Bernstein came to much more nuanced interpretations after 1900. Fischer exposes numerous anti-Semitic remarks that can be found in the private letters of a number of SPD politicians. He points out that social democratic attacks against "Jewish capitalists" kept among the workers the anti-Semitic stereotype of Jews as money-makers. Some German social democrats even contributed to anti-Semitism, such as in their negotiations with anti-Semitic parliamentary deputy, Hermann Ahlwardt, who was mistakenly seen as

“anti-capitalist” (pp. 75–79). Consequently, they neglected the fact that modern anti-Semitism did not seek the conversion of the Jews to Christianity, but opposed assimilation and, finally, the physical existence of the Jews.

These and many other shortcomings of the socialist analysis of anti-Semitism are meticulously researched in Fischer’s book. It, nevertheless, tells only one aspect of the story. What Fischer tends to underestimate are the frequent warnings of Engels, Bebel, Kautsky, Bernstein, and a number of other socialists that anti-Semitism could play a progressive role in politics. They called for solidarity with Jewish proletarians as doubly oppressed victims of capitalism and anti-Semitism, and recognized the extensive contacts of German and east European Jewish socialists. Numerous writers of the Jewish Workers’ *Bund* contributed to German socialist periodicals and participated in meetings where they explained the brutality of anti-Semitism in Czarist Russia. Furthermore, it was the German social democratic press, namely the periodicals *Neue Zeit* and *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, in which the first analyses of anti-Semitism, the Zionist movement, and the emerging Arab–Jewish conflict in Palestine could be found. While *Neue Zeit* reflected Kautsky’s anti-Zionist stand, the *Monatshefte* under Joseph Bloch had a much more positive attitude to the Zionist project (and to colonization in general). Fischer does not discuss these debates in detail.

Before World War I, the social democrats did not regard the “Jewish question” as a central issue in German or European politics. But the SPD around 1914 had greater sympathy for the Jews than Fischer concedes. Within the party, the defenders of the Jews were obviously more numerous than their opponents.

Fischer insists that the rather passive attitude of the SPD after 1918 towards *völkisch* and Nazi anti-Semitism can be understood only within the context of social democratic interpretations of anti-Semitism in imperial Germany. After reading Fischer’s book, it seems to be a paradox that in the Weimar Republic the SPD depicted anti-Semitism as an element that contributed to undermining Germany’s democratic order. But this was a guideline of social democratic policy in relation to anti-Semitic organizations and particularly the Nazis. Hence, it is hardly surprising that significant numbers of Jewish political activists and rank-and-file voters attached themselves to the SPD. Although the SPD occasionally dropped its candidates of Jewish origin in order to refute the Nazi allegation that it was the “party of the Jews”, it nevertheless emphasized the vital interest of the democrats and the socialists in fighting anti-Semitism. Except for a handful of social democrats and independent leftists people could not and did not predict the extent of Nazi anti-Semitism. This attitude was mainly based on the assumption that, once in power, the Nazis would respect the constitution. The underestimation of Nazi anti-Semitism restrained the SPD from developing its opposition to anti-Semitism into a major part of its organized campaign against Hitler.

In the beginning, but not at the end of the Weimar Republic, a number of SPD politicians still continued to express anti-Semitic attitudes. The overwhelming majority of social democrats, however, saw the Jewish community as part of German culture, even within the realm of the paradigm of assimilation. But this should not be confused with the alleged dream of “a future without Jews”, as Fischer suggests (p. 228). The overwhelming majority of those German social democrats who were dealing with Jewish matters did not share this ghastly dream. Instead, they were engaged in fighting anti-Semitism once it became a significant political force – in spite of all the shortcomings that Fischer’s book discusses in great detail.

Given the complexity of the social democratic attitudes towards anti-Semitism and Jewish matters in general, Fischer's conclusion is too far-reaching: "To the extent that Social Democrats shared this dream [of a future without Jews] they also share the responsibility for rendering German society susceptible to Nazi anti-Semitism and preparing the ideological seedbed from which the Shoah could grow" (p. 228). Such a judgment disregards the fact that, when the SPD was outlawed and persecuted by the Nazis in 1933, German Jews lost their most important source of support.

Mario Kessler

COLE, PETER. *Wobblies on the Waterfront. Interracial Unionism in Progressive-Era Philadelphia.* [The Working Class in American History.] University of Illinois Press, Urbana [etc.] 2007. x, 227 pp. \$40.00; doi:10.1017/S0020859009990137

Wobblies on the Waterfront is an important book; one that implicitly challenges the myth that the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, popularly known as the Wobblies) were intrinsically incapable of building strong, lasting unions, whether because of their revolutionary orientation or as a result of a perceived preference for mass strikes and other dramatic action over the difficult work of organizing and representing workers on the job.

While there have probably been more books written about the IWW than about any other union (at least on a per-member basis), there was until recently remarkably little historical work on the union's activities on the job. The IWW's Marine Transport Workers Local 8 represented Philadelphia longshoremen from 1913 through 1922, when the union's job control was broken by a united front of employers, police, the federal government and the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA, which shipped in hundreds of scabs from New York City) in a long lock-out and strike that crushed a fight to win the eight-hour day. Although the IWW continued organizing on the Philadelphia waterfront for many years to follow (something Cole discusses only briefly), and waged job actions as late as 1936, it was never again able to assert the job control that transformed working conditions and race relations on the waterfront between 1913 and 1922. Indeed, many of the gains won by the Wobblies, such as integrated work crews and an end to the shape-up, were surrendered once Philadelphia came under ILA contract, and would not be restored for decades.

Philadelphia Wobblies faced many challenges in establishing and maintaining job control. As Cole notes, some were predictable – employers were loath to deal with any union, let alone one which encouraged its members to use direct-action tactics to resolve grievances and improve job conditions. Police ruthlessly cracked down on union organizers and pickets. Employers repeatedly tried to crush the union, as they had defeated earlier efforts to organize the city's longshoremen. Philadelphia had a long history of racial animosity that had left its waterfront workers weak and divided. The federal government jailed key IWW leaders, infiltrated the union, and helped recruit and house scabs during the 1922 dispute that ended IWW job control. But the union was also undermined by repeated clashes with the larger IWW in the postwar era. Philadelphia's charter was twice suspended in 1920 – once for allegedly loading munitions to the Wrangel forces trying to overthrow the Bolshevik government (as Cole notes, evidence for this is scant), and a second time for charging a \$25 initiation fee, violating the IWW's policy of low initiation fees and universal transfer between its branches.