

Germany in Transition

The Controversy over German Industrialization, by Kenneth D. Barkin, *Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970. 307 pp. \$11.50.*

Germans and Jews, the Right, the Left, and the Search for a Third Force in pre-Nazi Germany, by George L. Mosse, *New York: Howard Fertig, 1970. 206 pp. \$8.95.*

THESE TWO BOOKS are scholarly contributions to the study of modern German history. Each is written by a professional historian and teacher, Dr. Kenneth D. Barkin, Assistant Professor of History at the University of California, Riverside, and Dr. George L. Mosse, Bascom Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin. Both books appeal primarily to the specialist in German history, but because of the variety of themes investigated by Professor Mosse his book will be of interest also to specialists in intellectual and cultural history *per se*. Even Professor Barkin's book, though very much an in-depth study in a narrow period of German history, should, because of the universality of its major theme—the conflict between agriculture and industry, between rural and urban society, between the old order and the new—have an appeal also for specialists in economic and cultural history *per se*.

It is this theme in its specific German manifestations, during these years that Barkin has investigated, and, of course, in all its complexities, for as any student of German history knows no "happening" in German history is ever simple, clear, and harmonious. So here, the transition from a rural noncapitalist society to a mature industrial one, as the author shows, became for the Germans a conflict of major proportions between two completely contrasting economic and social systems, agricul-

ture versus industry, *Agrarstaat* versus *Industriestaat*, the primacy in society and politics of the landed aristocracy versus the threat to that primacy from industrialists and merchants, a controversy over industrialization which embraced the bitter parliamentary debates over tariffs, the political disputes, the economic developments and the intellectual life of Germany from 1890 to 1902 when the landed aristocracy, their agrarian followers, and their academic supporters achieved victory in the tariff debates of that year and "a new equilibrium was created in which industry was allowed to expand as long as the gentry's right to enjoy economic, social, and political prerogatives was clearly recognized."

To achieve order out of chaos, which is the task of the historian, Barkin has organized his presentation of the controversy in three parts. In Part I he sets forth in analytical narration first the political system and economic structure of the German Empire under Bismarck, his policies, the party-political and socio-economic realities, and other aspects of the legacy of the nineteenth century which would be inherited by the new German Chancellor, G. F. Caprivi, and then in similar fashion the developments of the "New Course" under Caprivi, the controversy in its theoretical as well as practical aspects, and the economic trends in Germany under the Caprivi treaties to 1905.

In Part II the author delineates the controversy over industrialization in the academic world between political economists of conservative persuasion, who were exponents of the anti-industrial movement and hence of the *Agrarstaat*, and liberal economists, who were exponents of rapid industrialization, and hence of the *Industriestaat*. Here, through a critical analysis of the writings, speeches and activities of three anti-industrial conservative professors, upholders of the agrarian cause,—Karl Oldenberg, Adolf Wagner, and Max Sering—the author sets forth the substance of the theoretical strand of the anti-industrial movement, namely, the components

of, and arguments for, an agricultural capitalist Germany, as well as a political, economic, ethical and national security critique of an industrial capitalist Germany. This analysis which also demonstrates in these professors the breadth and depth of anti-modernism among German political economists, as the author intended, is followed by a less extensive treatment of liberal response as revealed in the writings, speeches and activities especially of Max Weber, Lujo Brentano, and Friedrich Naumann.

In Part III the author portrays, again in analytical narration, first the controversy in its practical manifestations in the opening years of the chancellorship of Bernard von Bülow, the bitter debates over the new tariff schedule, the politics of the political parties, and the pragmatic skill of Bülow in achieving a parliamentary majority, a new equilibrium, and a renewal of the trade agreements, and then in similar fashion a critical analysis of the effects of Bülow's tariffs on the German economy—agriculture, industry and the consumers—until the outbreak of World War I.

Throughout the book Barkin involves himself in the narrative, analyzing, interpreting, arguing his points from the sources. These include unpublished material from a variety of German archives and libraries, an enormous body of the published writings in books and periodicals of the conservative and liberal economists cited, other scholarly literature of that time and since, and official records, such as statistical socio-economic tables and stenographic reports of the *Reichstag* and the Prussian House of Representatives. The book is full of fascinating details and interesting developments, for example, the effect of anti-modernism on the political process, the influence of professors on politicians and *vice versa*, and the skillful interweaving of the historical forces of the period, to mention a few. And although specialists are apt to disagree about any "happening" in German history they will find rewarding this splendid study of Bar-

kin's, which is a brilliant display of his knowledge in the field, an erudition for which he is partly indebted to his mentor, the late Klaus Epstein, to whom the book is dedicated.

The book of Professor Mosse is creative work of a different order. It is a collection of seven of his scholarly essays, six of which have been published before. However, for this volume the essays have been revised to include new material, a hitherto unpublished essay has been added, and he has attempted to give them "a unity in terms both of the historical problem with which they are concerned and of the time span which they cover." The time span extends from the last decades of the nineteenth century to the eve of the Second World War. The problem appears to be—"appears" because in the hands of the author it has many facets—the attempt of modern intellectuals to solve the problems of an industrial capitalist materialist bourgeois society, which they disliked and in which they felt alienated—the existential dilemma of modern man—by creating a "Third Force" which would achieve a new society which would be "neither capitalist nor materialist."

This "urge" toward a society neither capitalist materialist nor Marxian materialist, the author explains, is closely related to the form which German nationalism took in this period as well as to the attempt of the Jews to affirm their own identity. In addition, many European intellectuals, whether those of the left wing in Germany or those committed to fascism, shared similar longings in the years between the Great Wars. Yet no history of this "third force" exists. These essays, the author indicates, "are intended to contribute to an understanding of this phenomenon."

In the analytical introductory essay Mosse sets forth the facets of the problem, the elements making up the "third force," and the essential characteristics of each chapter-essay. This essay includes a consideration of the development of "Völkisch" (*sic.*) thought in German nationalism from

Herder to Hitler, its relationship to German anti-Semitism and the stereotyped "image of the Jew" and conversely the puzzling influence of "Völkisch" thought on German Jewry, the relationship of "Völkisch" thought to the fascist movement, and the interrelationship between these movements and the left-wing intellectuals expressed in their idealism and concrete programs. The author recognizes that the relationship of "Völkisch" thought to facism and the relationship of these movements to left-wing intellectuals are highly controversial, so it is left to the reader to draw his own conclusions from the author's argumentation.

In the following chapters these considerations are elaborated and discussed in greater length and detail and in scholarly fashion from a variety of primary and secondary sources dealing with the many men, the many ideas, and the many attitudes encompassed in this intellectually stimulating book. Especially valuable, it seems to this reviewer, are Mosse's chapters on the image of the Jew in German popular literature, the influence of the "Völkisch" idea on Germany Jewry, and the left-wing intellectuals in the Weimar Republic. Not so valuable is his attempt in an appendage to the last named chapter to draw parallels between the Weimar intellectuals of the Left and the radical intellectuals of the New Left in the United States. Contrary to the author, the reviewer holds that "it is infringing the boundaries set by historical reality to point to such parallels" (Italics mine). The Weimar of 1919-1933 is not Bonn since 1949 nor the American historical reality of the 1960's. However, students of German, Jewish, and European history will find these essays, conveniently organized under one roof, a fitting addition to the other books of this well-known teacher, scholar, and co-editor of the *Journal of Contemporary History*.

Reviewed by HENRY M. ADAMS