might well have taken a different tack entirely if he had examined the failed effort of Loyalist officers to lord it over the rank-and-file which was given such a devastating analysis by William Dummer Powel in the Powell-Collins report of 1887.

One of the most problematic areas of the book is the suggestion that clientelism somehow merged with successful entrepreneurship and that economic transactions should be interpreted as a species of patron-client relationship. While indubitably there were aspects of this in some economic interchanges (as Douglas McCalla demonstrates in his study of the Buchanans' relationships with the retail merchant community), it seems fundamentally wrong to try to situate evolving commercial relationships and an expanding economy in the context of clientelism. So too it is strained indeed to interpret a political process in which religious, ethnic, economic, and regional interests competed and intermixed through brokerage politics as somehow exemplifying the processes and patterns of clientelism. In any case, for such an argument to be made, a much fuller, more empirical, more richly researched work would be required. Although Professor Noel is to be commended for offering a clearly written and stimulating study, those political scientists who seek to offer grand interpretations on the basis of the often limited historical work done to date should take warning. Likewise should publishing houses which too frequently place in print a flawed monograph when both author and readers would have been far better served by publication in the form of a provocative essay.

Peter Oliver
York University

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Katherine Roper — *German Encounters with Modernity: Novels of Imperial Berlin*. Atlantic Highland, N.J.: Humanities Press International, 1991. Pp. ix, 269.

A prevalent mood of resignation, despair, pessimism — perhaps most evident in the work of literary symbolists — is a commonplace characteristic of *fin-de siècle* European culture. Literary grumbling was sustained, of course, by the plethora of wrenching changes accompanying industrialization: the world became a bigger, dirtier, less serene kind of place. Katherine roper has examined some fifty novels set primarily in Berlin with the object of illustrating the response of middle-class writers to these disturbing developments. For the writers discussed, the motivating quest was nothing less than an engagement "in a struggle for Germany's soul" (3). Her book, which is an entertaining read though occasionally prone to sounding like the synopsis of a libretto, will useful in assisting social historians to understand better certain aspects of the Second Empire's confrontation with modernity.

While writers were very much aware of the woes besetting their country and their city, the solutions proferred were marked by perplexing ambivalence. Thus Conrad Alberti and Friedrich Spielhagen complained of aristocrats, militarism, political repression, class conflict, materialism — a litany, actually, which resounds across the length and breadth of the modern era. Both believed that the artist must make a commitment to change for the better. Spielhagen opted for the revival of a fuzzy liberal legacy from the *Vormärz*; Spielhagen threw his lot in with king and country. Paul Heyse depicted the unhappy German bourgeois buffetted by the winds

of social change in his 1872 novel *Children of the World* and intimated that the keys to salvation were self-cultivation, introspection, inwardness (*Innerlichkeit*). And so it went. Authors excelled at identifying assorted problems, waxed indignant over the lack of "spiritual commitment" in this brave new world, raged at the stifling effect of soulless convention and material pursuits. Yet in virtually every case, novelists failed to provide an adequate, ennobling vision to displace the flawed scenes confronting them and they failed to become meaningfully engaged in pursuit of Germany's "unfinished revolution," which, as in Karl Gutzkow's *Knights of the Spirit*, they envisaged primarily as spiritual rather than political fulfilment. They hammered away at the evils of anti-Semitism, but favoured the dissolution of Jewishness in the foaming waters of German nationalism. They criticized women's subordination to a dated patriarchalism, but could not imagine for women a role beyond the household. Indeed, women novelists were only slightly more perspicacious in this regard than was Thedore Fontane in *Effi Briest*. And they were contemptuous of aristocrats, but never bothered to challenge the aristocracy's hold over the Second Empire for fear of being coopted into the world of the bourgeois parvenu.

What did all of this agonizing, this wringing of hands, this spiritual turbulence produce. Nothing. Well, perhaps not quite. Novelists gave up. They became demoralized, dispirited, disaffected and sullen. They withdrew into a world of their own making, much like the literary symbolists, where they contemplated suicide, were driven to madness, or fashioned images of an impending *Götterdämmerung*. A few of the fiercest critics did something else: they chose a "mystical ideal of national solidarity that rested on internal oppression and external belligerence" (233). Optimistic hopes for a "humane German revolution" made way, at the turn of the century, for "pessimistic abandonment" of all such hopes.

This, says Roper, is unfortunate because what was badly needed at the time was more not less social engagement. I detect in this remark the shadow of her mentor, Gordon Craig, who has himself wrestled with the very difficult problem of the intelligentsia's sociopolitical responsibilities. The fact of the matter is that the vocation of writer/artist precludes effective engagement because such people assume, with tragicomic consistency, that what moves them must also move others. Their real impact therefore remains limited. Readers are not mobilized by manifestos disguised as novels. They rouse themselves to a second cup of tea. What we get from armchair *enragés*, as the present work illustrates, is bungling, which is often amusing and occasionally dangerous. It is therefore unlikely that the novels of Imperial Berlin go very far toward enabling us to understand why Germans in this era "sustained the rule of traditional elites in new authoritarian forms" (1). In order to do that properly, we need to re-examine the analyses of historians such as Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Fritz Stern, David Blackbourn, and others.

Karl Wegert
Bishop's University

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