

sect-inspired rebellions — from other White Lotus movements and those of the Triad societies to the Boxers. It is likewise a milepost in the general study of milenarianism in history.

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LIEBETRAUT ROTHERT. — *Umwelt und Arbeitsverhältnisse von Ruhrberg-leuten in der 2. Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts. Dargestellt an den Zechen Hannover und Hannibal in Bochum.* Münster: Aschendorf Verlag, 1976.

This meticulously researched and well illustrated study examines the work routine of two mining communities clustered around their pit-heads in Westphalia. *Hannibal* sank its first shafts in 1848, and went into Krupp ownership in 1899. *Hannover* started in 1856, and was bought by Krupp in 1872. The mines reached their hey-day in the late nineteenth century, but operation did not cease until 1973. By 1885 *Hannover* was employing 1,900 men producing 600,000 tons of coal annually. It was the sixth largest mine in the Dortmund district. In the same year *Hannibal* was well under half the size of *Hannover*. By the end of the century employment and production had increased by well over one-third in both mines. At that time most of the miners were first or second generation immigrants from the surrounding Ruhr area, nearby Westphalia and Hesse, and from distant East and West Prussia, especially the Polish regions. As early as 1864 the owners of *Hannibal* were financing workers' housing to stall sharp competition with neighbouring mining companies for suitable labour. By the 1870s the work-force lived with their families in uniform semi-detached houses, split into two apartments, each with a large kitchen, two bedrooms and backyard. Workers were given the opportunity to buy their apartments and yards from the mining company and at *Hannibal* 35 workers took up 17-year mortgages at less than 3% costing 15 Marks a month in 1865. Householders were asked to abstain from taking lodgers who did not work at the local mine. The mining company sought to purchase loyalty with benevolence, and it seems that the system worked since each household provided on average three workers at *Hannibal*. With the increased pace of expansion after the 1880s, cheaper housing appeared in the neighbouring large towns together with a dense rail network. However, mines like *Hannibal* were able to offer a considerable amount of local accommodation on acceptable terms, although overcrowded housing always deteriorated. By 1881 the *Hannibal* miner averaged just under 3 Marks per shift. He achieved 26 shifts per month and brought home well under 80 Marks on which he still had to pay tax. His 15 Marks a month mortgage was thus hard but not unreasonable, provided he stayed healthy and that the price and demand of coal held up. It was when this could not be guaranteed that trouble came.

In *Hannover* 65% of the miners were aged 14 to 35, and only 10% were still working at age 45 or over according to a company survey of 1880-1. Wages fluctuated according to demand of coal, as well as availability of labour. In a company survey of 1882 the core of the labour force was made up of family men aged between 25 and 45. Each averaged 2.80 Marks net per day. Dr. Rothert compares these wages with the prices of basic foodstuffs in Krupp's Company stores in 1881. The active miner consumed .80-1 Mark's worth of food daily, leaving precious little for the rest of the family if one also takes rent, clothing and heating into account. The young bachelor miner was little better off. He

netted 51 Marks and paid a basic 40 Marks for food and rent. The working life of the average miner was less than thirty years. After the age of 45 nearly 90% of them had become invalids. The shifts worked per month varied between 22 and 31 in the mid-1880s. Miners worked five Sundays in two months or had to accept longer week-day shifts than the standard minimum eight hours underground. For 10 Pfennigs compulsory deduction from each shift payment the miner was entitled to eventual invalid pay of one-quarter to one-third of his normal earnings. His widow received one-seventh of his normal pay.

By April 1889 the miners were ready for action. Committees demanded pay increases of 15%, eight-hour shift maximum with no extra production quotas, coal wagons with honest calibration, better conditions at pit-head and in the shafts, and more protection against bad weather. Without waiting for the bosses' replies, scheduled for early June, strikes broke out in early May. The men at *Hannover* were offered 10% more almost immediately but local bosses were no longer in control of events. Prussian troops were called out and in Bochum on 9th May in dispersing a crowd, the military opened fire, fatally wounding two bystanders. By 14th May nearly 100,000 Ruhr miners were on strike above all for better pay. The hasty use of soldiers in Westphalia caused further friction between Bismarck and the young Kaiser, who received a deputation of miners in Berlin. By the end of May work had resumed as both sides of industry modified their stand. But in the three years from 1888 to 1890 average wages went up by one-third to nearly four marks per shift. Further strikes in 1890 and 1891 were less well supported but in the long-term one cannot say that they were totally unsuccessful. By 1891 miners were demanding a minimum wage, eight-hour shift maximum, and workers' representation. In March 1891 delegates took part in the International Miners' Conference in Paris.

In late April 1891 the management at *Hannover* counter-attacked. Miners were threatened with the sack and eviction, while those who had participated in previous strikes were summarily dismissed. This time victimisation seems to have worked and there was no total shut-down, although 40,000 Ruhr miners were on strike at one time or another. The fear at *Hannover* and *Hannibal* that mine shafts would collapse if not regularly worked, which had been a real threat in 1889, did not recur. In all, 2,000 Ruhr miners lost their jobs as a result of their strike record. But in the *Hannover* pits only about 30 were sacked. Compromise was reached once more by wage increases and by a certain amount of compensation for lost work days. The Prussian government set up machinery to process miners' grievances during the 1890s.

Hirings and firings ran at very high levels. In 1894-5 *Hannover* took on nearly 400 new hands. In 1898-9 it was almost 1,000. The number of men who left the pit in any one year was almost as great as the number of new hands taken on, despite an overall increase in the workforce from 2,700 in 1893 to 3,200 in 1899, and lay-offs were a regular occurrence.

In this excellent book Dr. Rothert has used the archives to let the mining communities speak for themselves. We are even given the architectural plans of the homes they inhabited. We can conclude that the job of a typical Ruhr miner in the *Gründerzeit* and *Wilhelmine* eras was not a popular one in the long term. In fact it was a sure killer. Only in 1898 had the rate of pay of 1873 been reached again. Just before the massive strikes of 1889 men were working 340 days of the year underground for less than three marks a work-day. They only rested once a fortnight. Payment was on a quota per shift basis. Shortfalls were fined, and no work meant no pay for whatever reason. In 1900 the *Hannibal* contract of work stated —

In the event of total or partial stoppage of work due to disturbances, shortage of customers or other reasons, the affected workers have no claim (*Anspruch*) to wages. However, if such a stoppage lasts three or more consecutive days then the affected workers can claim (*beanspruchen*) immediate dismissal. (translated from p. 101).

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VICTOR R. GREENE. — *For God and Country: the Rise of Polish and Lithuanian Ethnic Consciousness in America, 1860-1910*. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1975.

HELENA ZNANIECKI LOPATA. — *Polish Americans: Status Competition in an Ethnic Community*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1976.

HENRY RADECKI with BENEDYKT HEYDENKORN. — *A Member of a Distinguished Family: The Polish Group in Canada*: Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, and Ottawa: Department of the Secretary of State, 1976.

The ethnic revival that swept the United States and Canada in the 1960's produced not only group tensions and anxieties in society but also a new awareness of people's roots and a revived interest in the history of minorities. Scholars and governments, who had ignored non-Anglo-Saxon peoples for decades, all of a sudden began to write or commission monographs about them. The result has been a rapid succession of books on some of these groups, notably the Poles, which reveal both the strengths and weaknesses of such motivations.

Victor Greene's *For God and Country*, for instance, is quite a departure from his earlier *Slavic Community on Strike* (1968). In the previous work he set out to analyse the role of East European workers in the American labour movement. Now, because he considers the story of the rise of ethnic consciousness to be "more exciting, challenging and potentially rewarding" (p. vii) he has forsaken the labour struggle to portray another phenomenon. His statement of purpose is a disappointment to those of us who find labour history as exciting, challenging and rewarding as any other branch of historical enquiry.

In the Introduction Greene enunciates the essence of his book. He states that in Polish and Lithuanian communities of America national self-awareness developed from strife within the community rather than from conflict with other ethnic groups (p. 10). This theme, he freely admits, was first suggested by other scholars, notably Oscar Handlin and Milton Gordon.

To prove his point he utilizes eight chapters to trace the history of two Polish communities in Chicago and one to cover the Lithuanians. This breakdown will undoubtedly anger Lithuanian readers and one wonders why Greene did not confine his story to the Poles. In any event, he points out that American Poles were divided from the start over the issue of identity. The nationalists defined Polishness by language and culture while the religiously-oriented defined it by adherence to Roman Catholicism. It was the struggle of these two factions in Chicago and elsewhere that forced all Poles to ask themselves the question "who am I" and the result was the spread of Polish national consciousness in America. The same held true for the Lithuanians and, hence, Greene concludes, Polish and Lithuanian national identity evolved not from outside pressure and bigotry but from inner conflict.