

# SOCIALIST HISTORY SOCIETY

Newsletter

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Issue 2

Volume 5

New Series

## **Socialists and nationalism - a troubled relationship**

*Hesitant Comrades* by Geoffrey Bell, Pluto Press £18.99

Published to coincide with the centenary of the Easter Rising, this book's focus is actually on the period between 1916 and the Anglo-Irish Treaty of December 1921, which created the Irish Free State and also generated the Irish Civil War. The study is the first comprehensive study of the attitude of the British labour movement to this phase of the Irish struggle for independence, what Bell refers to as the 'Irish Revolution'. Bell, a Belfast Protestant, has previously written books on the Protestants of Ulster and British attitudes to 'the Troubles'.

The book is well researched and presents a fair assessment of the responses of different elements of the labour movement towards developments in Ireland. What is perhaps most interesting is the limited priority given within the movement to the Irish nationalist movement, a contrast with the central role of the Home Rule campaign in British liberalism and the early socialist movement in the last half of the 19th century, where radicals and socialist allied themselves with the nationalist cause.

### **War**

By 1916, attitudes and priorities had changed. Most of the British left, while supporting some degree of Irish self-government, did not support the Easter Rising, and even James Connolly's former colleagues of the Socialist Labour Party considered his view, that an independent Ireland was a precondition for the Irish working class to take power, was mistaken.

The rising occurred while Britain was at war with Germany and those Labour leaders who supported the war such as J R Clynes, George Barnes and Jimmy Thomas viewed Irish nationalism as a dangerous diversion, and there was little sympathy for Roger Casement, executed for trying to organise



*Image taken from the cover of Geoffrey Bell's book*

German arms for the nationalists. Ramsay MacDonald who had opposed British involvement in the war supported Irish self government, with status similar to Australia and Canada, but within the framework of a reformed British Empire.

### **Anglo-Irish Treaty**

Labour leaders were in fact to claim credit for the Anglo-Irish Treaty which was based on this premise, though there is little evidence that the Labour leadership contributed significantly to the settlement, and Labour leaders were shocked at the degree of opposition within Ireland to the settlement.

Bell provides a detailed analysis of the limited discussions on Ireland within the British trade union movement in the 1916

*continued on next page*

## **Two Years of Wandering A Menshevik Leader in Lenin's Russia**

**Fedor Il'ich Dan** - Translated and Edited by  
Francis King - Lawrence & Wishart, £15.00

This is a vivid picture of life in Soviet Russia during the civil war, through the eyes of Lenin's longstanding political rival, the leading Menshevik Fedor Dan. Francis King has done the first translation into any language of Dan's memoir, which was written and published in Russian in 1922.

Fedor Dan had been an active revolutionary and Marxist since the 1890s, and one of the Soviet leaders in 1917, but by 1920, when this memoir begins, he and his party were leading a precarious, semi-legal existence. From then until his expulsion from Soviet Russia in 1922, Dan's life as a mobilised state employee and political oppositionist took him from Moscow to the Urals, the Russo-Polish front, Soviet congresses in Moscow and Petrograd – and to prison.

### **First Time in English**

Now available for the first time in English, Francis King's translation of Dan's memoir sheds new light on life in the 'War Communist' siege economy in the capital and the provinces, on the mentalities of the supporters and critics of Lenin's government, and on the political logic driving the development of the Soviet one-party system and its criminalisation of any dissent. The volume should be essential reading for both academics and general readers interested in the crucial political and social shifts that took place in Soviet Russia during this period of great change.



*Fedor Il'ich Dan*

## **Hesitant Comrades by Geoffrey Bell**

*continued from page 1*

-1921 period, and provides an interesting study of William Walker and the Belfast trade union leadership's Protestant sectarianism, which is perhaps part of the explanation for the British Labour party leadership's caution about explicit support for either nationalist or Protestant faction.

### **Willie Gallagher**

Bell also focuses on the nascent British Communist Party, with Willie Gallagher in 1921 apparently advising the anti-treaty nationalists to arrest Michael Collins and the pro-treaty nationalists. Bell also presents a detailed analysis of the supportive commentary in Sylvia Pankhurst's *Workers Dreadnought*, the more hesitant position of the Independent Labour Party and the Fabian attitude which was more hostile to Irish nationalism arguing that a form of strengthened local government should satisfy nationalist aspirations.

Bell's book is well worth reading as it presents a sound analysis of a neglected subject and raises some interesting and difficult issues as to the relationship between socialism and nationalism. It is not insignificant that the Labour movement was more supportive of nationalist struggles in India and Egypt, both key concerns during this period, than of the struggle which was somewhat closer to home.

*Duncan Bowie*

### **Public Meeting**

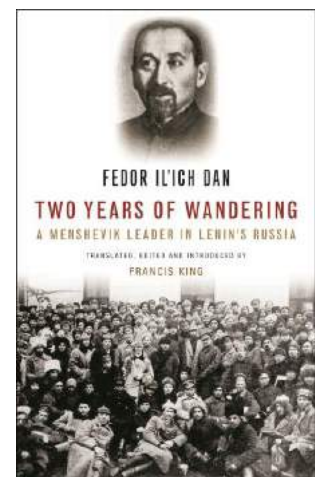
## ***Menshevik (Mis) interpretations of the Russian Revolution***

**Speaker Francis King**

Lecturer in European History at the School  
of History, UEA and the editor of *Socialist  
History*

**Saturday 2pm, 21st January 2017**

**MARX MEMORIAL LIBRARY**



The book is available from the publisher <http://bit.ly/2eCzUzc>

# The Euro and its threat to the future of Europe

Joseph Stiglitz, Penguin, 2016

Joseph Stiglitz, who is currently professor of economics at Columbia University in New York, was formerly chief economic adviser to the World Bank and was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics in 2001. He is no snake oil salesman. His writings show him to be critical of trade blocs such as the European Union and the North American Free Trade Area, believing that they largely benefit the big corporations with very few, if any, of the benefits trickling down to the low paid and the unemployed. He is also suspicious of the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) currently being negotiated between Brussels and Washington. He is on record as saying that Britain's vote to leave the EU is a sensible one from that point of view.

His latest book is a critique of the Eurozone project, devised and driven forward by the EU's Franco-German axis. Stiglitz believes the project to be deeply flawed, not only because it was launched without adequate preparation but because of the intrinsic difficulties of attempting to impose a single currency on twenty very different economies.

## Greece and Germany

The result has been to create high unemployment in those countries with weak economies, such as the Greek and Portuguese while the stronger economies, notably Germany, have enjoyed increased trading opportunities. In the Eurozone the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. Some Euro members have balanced their books by selling public assets which Stiglitz likens this to selling the family jewels; what happens when there are no more assets to sell?

If Greece still had its own currency it could have devalued the drachma and thereby made its goods and services cheaper. Instead



it had to borrow money, cut public expenditure and raise taxes, resulting in an unemployment rate of 25%. The 'deal' imposed on Greece by the so-called troika of the European Central Bank, the European Commission and the World Bank proved to be a painful and humiliating experience for the Greek people, with Chancellor Merkel warning that the solution to the EU's problems is 'more Europe not less'; in other words, tighter financial control

from Brussels.

## The future

Stiglitz forecasts severe financial crisis ahead for the Eurozone and increased economic stagnation for the EU. This could be avoided if the EU embraced a programme of reform, but he doubts if the Franco-German axis, increasingly dominated by Germany with France as a junior partner, will agree to any fundamental changes in the present structure. Fortunately for Britain we did not join the Eurozone and the British people have voted to leave the EU. It is a pity Joseph Stiglitz's book was not in the bookshops before the Referendum campaign in which the level of debate was abysmal. Surely the voters deserved something better than watching Boris Johnson dangling on the end of a crane?

Archie Potts



Anti-austerity demonstration in Greece

## ***Editorial***

### **Labour and anti-Semitism Telling it like it is**

Funny that claims of anti-Semitism only arose in the Labour Party after Jeremy Corbyn became elected as leader. During the Blair years there was not a murmur of any such wrong doings. Yet Blair in the course of becoming a property magnate and entrepreneur developed a very close and rather cosy relationship with the Saudi Royal family who are not noted for their liberal views.

If there is anti-Semitism in the party then it should naturally be rooted out. The victims of the charges so far appear to be those on the left of the party, some Jewish, some not.

Ken Livingstone was suspended because of his historically accurate claim that in the early days of Nazism a deal was done between leaders of the German Zionist movement and the Nazis to encourage German Jews to leave the country for the Middle East.

#### **Attitude towards Israel**

None of his detractors denied this and such was the hysteria from the media that the substance of his claim, then or now, was never discussed.

Why these allegations of anti-Semitism have arisen now has much more to do with Corbyn's critical attitude towards Israel than with anything else.

Corbyn has been a consistent supporter of the Palestinian cause and for this he has riled many Zionists. If Labour were to come to power the party's approach to the Middle East peace process would be very different from the bi-partisan approach adopted by previous Labour and Tory administrations.

The labour movement has only recently celebrated the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Cable Street. In 1936 the Jewish community in London was very different in its ideological commitment.

Most British Jews were not Zionists, many were associated with the left and Yiddish was the language of the Jewish proletariat and Yiddish theatre, for example, was at its height. Thousands turned out to oppose Mosley's provocative attempt to march through the East End. This popular resistance occurred despite the opposition of the Jewish establishment and the Board of Deputies of British Jews. Jewish workers fought shoulder to shoulder with their non-Jewish comrades and Mosley was stopped in his tracks.

Could the same thing happen today? Given the ideological shift in the Jewish community, I wonder.

Alarmingly anti-Semitism is on the rise again. This undoubtedly has much to do with Israel's treatment of its own Arab citizens who constitute 20% of the population and its appalling treatment of the Palestinians since 1948.

#### **Denial of Human Rights**

On the left we must always be very careful to ensure that our criticisms of Israel for its racism, its bellicosity and its denial of human rights, does not extend beyond the boundaries of that state's institutions and policies.

Most Jews are not Zionists. They may support Israel but don't choose to live there. Just over of third of the world's Jewish population lives in Israel, the rest in the Diaspora, with the United States having almost 50% of world Jewry residing there. New York and Los Angeles after Tel Aviv are two of the largest Jewish cities in the world.

Although most Jews are not Zionists and would never think of moving to Israel there is a widespread belief within the Diaspora that Israel has a right to exist and that it is a place of refuge should fascism arise again in any part of the world.

That is why a two-state solution based on the 1967 boundaries would be a good place to start negotiations between the Israeli state and the Palestinians.

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## **Labour and anti-Semitism** - *continued*

This is a solution sought by Corbyn, Livingstone and others on the Labour left Jewish and non-Jewish alike. It is not a policy supported either by the present Israel government, or for that matter the hard right among the Christian fundamentalists in the US.

Neither is a peaceful solution favoured by the right wing among the Muslim community. Some deny Israel's right to exist. Among these anti-Semitism has gained a foothold. This must be opposed and rooted out.

### **New Direction**

The Left must be clear: hostility to Israel's current policies is not hostility to Jews, no more than antagonism to the US's foreign policy is antagonism to Americans.

The Labour Party stands accused of anti-Semitism but this is a weapon to attack its new direction. The right in the party have acted in a despicable way. They have used these accusations to smear the new leader and his supporters. In doing this they have traduced the centuries-old struggle that has been fought against religious prejudice.

*Mike Squires*



*Cable Street 1936*

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**[drmikesquires@gmail.com](mailto:drmikesquires@gmail.com)**

## **London Socialist Historians Group Seminar**

Monday 5 December - *Merilyn Moos*

### **Breaking the Silence:**

#### **Voices of the British Children of Refugees from Nazism**

Room 304 (third floor) at 5.30pm in the Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU

### **Social Histories of the Russian Revolution**

Dreyfus Room (2.02), Birkbeck, University of London, 28 Russell Square, London WC1

Dec 15 – *Andy Willimott* (Reading University):

Living the Revolution: Urban Communes in 1920s Russia and the Invention of a Socialist Lifestyle

Jan 26 – *Sarah Badcock* (Nottingham University): The 1917 Revolutions at Local Level

Feb 23 – *Katy Turton* (Queens University, Belfast): Women in Revolt: the Female Experience of the 1917 Revolutions

March 16 – *George Gilbert* (Southampton University): The Radical Right and the Russian Revolution

March 30 – *Dimitri Tolkatsch* (University of Freiburg, Germany): The Ukrainian Peasant Insurgency in the Revolutionary Period

April 27 – *Chris Read* (Warwick University): The Social History of the Revolutionary Period

May 25 – *Barbara Allen* (La Salle University, USA): Alexander Shlyapnikov and the Russian Metalworkers in 1917

June 29 – *Don Filtzer* (University of East London): The Working Class and the First Five-year Plan, 1928-32

Sep 28 – *Wendy Goldman* (Carnegie Mellon University, USA): Taking Power: Remaking the Family, Levelling Wages, Planning the Economy

Oct 12 – *Lara Cook* (University of York): Local Soviets in 1917-18 and their Relations with the Central Executive Committee

Oct 26 – *1917 A Century On: A Debate* (Speakers including Simon Pirani (author of *The Russian Revolution in Retreat 1920-1924*))

Nov 23 – *Gleb Albert* (University of Zurich): Early Soviet Society and World Revolution, 1917-27

## Walter Rodney - Socialist Historian & Political Activist

Steve Cushion reports on a public meeting called by the Socialist History Society, Caribbean Labour Solidarity and UCU London Retired Members on 23rd June at the Marx Memorial Library. The speakers were Leland De Cambra and Cecil Gutzmore.

Walter Rodney, the prominent Guyanese historian, political activist and scholar, was assassinated in Guyana on 13th June 1980. At long last, the report of the Commission of Inquiry into his murder has been handed to the Parliament of Guyana. It was therefore a good time to revisit the legacy of the author of *A History of the Guyanese Working People* and *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*.



Dr Walter Rodney

Rodney was also founder of the Working People's Alliance, a political movement in Guyana dedicated to social transformation and unity of the Indian and African workers. He made a great contribution to revolutionary thought by establishing new thinking on questions of fighting racism and racial domination, the humanisation of the planet and the self-emancipation of working peoples. He was murdered for uniting this political theory with practical, militant activity.

### Leland De Cambra

Leland De Cambra is a Guyanese who was involved in the political affairs of his country since the 1970s. He moved to the UK in 1974 and worked as a teacher in primary and secondary schools in London from the 1980s. He is now retired. He was an active member of the Working People's Alliance (WPA) Support Group in London in the 1970s and '80s.

Leland spoke of the way in which everyone knew that Walter Rodney had been murdered on the orders of then Prime Minister Burnham. On June 13, 1980, a car bomb exploded killing Walter Rodney. The Government of Guyana contended that Rodney was responsible for his own death, claiming that he planned to use the bomb concealed in the walkie-talkie to blow up the prison, but that it accidentally exploded. The Rodney family and his brother Donald,

who survived the explosion, vehemently deny the government's claim. People and organizations around the world protested against the assassination. Over 30,000 Guyanese and international supporters attended his funeral in what was described as an "astonishing display of racial solidarity and defiance".

So why did the Burnham dictatorship murder Walter Rodney? Le-

land explained how Rodney had organised amongst Afro-Guyanese, Indo-Guyanese working people, bauxite workers and sugar workers, thereby threatening the racial differences that the post-colonial elite had exploited to divide opposition. This was the time of both the country's economic collapse and the intervention of the IMF which resulted in the 1977 sugar strike and break-away unions amongst sugar workers and teachers. Meanwhile there were the examples in the region of the Grenada New Jewel Movement and the Nicaraguan Sandinista revolutions. A Marxist organiser who was successfully uniting workers of African and Indian heritage was simply too dangerous to be allowed to live.

### Cecil Gutzmore

Cecil Gutzmore, a former researcher and professor at the University of the West Indies, has published many essays related to the Afro-American diaspora and in particular about the political processes that have negatively influenced the black community in the UK.

Cecil stressed the relationship between Rodney's historiography and his political activism. Walter Rodney was a Marxist and a revolutionary Pan-Africanist, who saw the importance of recognising that oppressed people cannot remain oppressed without collaboration by their own elites, thus the need for a class analysis of neo-colonialism.

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## Walter Rodney - continued

Rodney's pamphlet *West Africa and the Atlantic Slave Trade* shows how the rulers of West Africa had become incorporated into European capitalism as junior partners. The importance of this argument today is that most of the post-colonial governments in the Caribbean are similarly acting as neo-colonial agents for European and United States imperialism. To stop him from exposing this, these same interests murdered a great African Marxist.

The Commission of Inquiry's (COI) Report (February 2016) found that the Guyana Government was directly involved in Walter Rodney's assassination on June 13, 1980. However, the Guyana Government is doing its best to bury this report.

The oversubscribed meeting unanimously passed the following resolution:

*That the Government of Guyana must:*

- \* Officially release the COI Report
- \* Proceed with implementing its recommendations
- \* Change the 'manner of death' on the death certificate of Walter Rodney from "death by misadventure" to "murder"
- \* Change the profession on the death certificate of Walter Rodney from "unemployed" to "Historian/Professor"
- \* Overturn the conviction of Donald Rodney and expunge any related criminal history

If you want to listen to the full text of both speeches, they are available on-line: <http://bit.ly/2f1Knkg>

*How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* can be downloaded here: <http://bit.ly/2f7W9xu>



left to right: Cecil Gutzmore, Steve Cushion (chair) and Leland De Cambra

As part of the SHS 2017 Programme

### Public Meeting

Saturday 18 March 2017 at 2pm

Marx Memorial Library

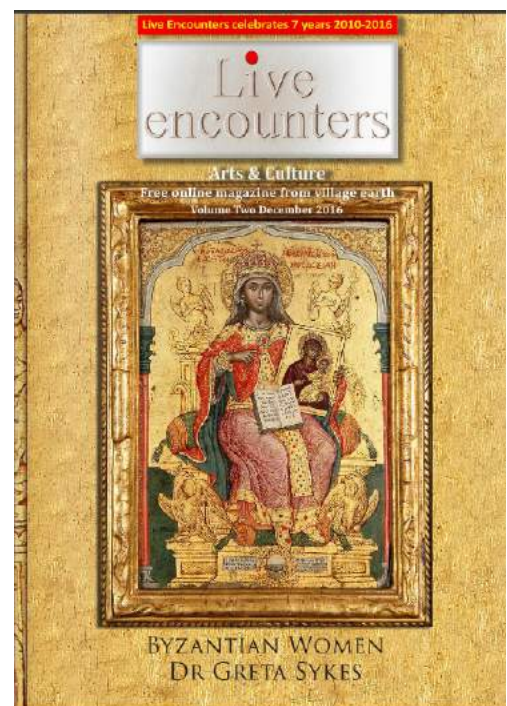
## Anarchists and the City From the Paris Commune of 1871 to the Occupy and Square movements.

Speaker Professor Carl Levy  
Professor of Politics, Goldsmiths College

## Women in the Ancient World

Greta Sykes, SHS joint chair, gave an ambitious and well received talk titled *Goddesses, Empresses and Sphinxes: Matriarchy at the crossroads to patriarchy*, which followed the society's AGM on 11 June. The illustrated talk explored the theme of women in the ancient world and how they were able to make a fundamental contribution to the running of the society of their day. Greta ranged widely over ancient mythology, religion and prevailing ideologies to examine how women's potential and power were circumscribed by their male dominated society.

Greta has now written an article on women in Byzantium where she develops some of the themes explored in her talk to the SHS. Her article can be read here <http://bit.ly/2f1NS0J>



## Liberty's Apostle: the Life and Times of Richard Price 1723 - 91

Paul Frame, a Welsh historian of the Enlightenment period, was invited to deliver a talk to the SHS on 1 October. His subject was the Reverend Richard Price and the illustrated talk provided an important introduction to this neglected figure of the radical Enlightenment. Frame is the author of a recent book length study of the life and ideas of Price, whose title is Liberty's Apostle. It is available in paperback from University of Wales Press [<http://bit.ly/2fT0XK0>].

### Unitarian

Frame explained how the Rev Richard Price remained right at the centre of many of the most urgent political and philosophical debates taking place in England and Europe during the latter half of 18th century. Born in South Wales, Price moved to London and was to spend most of his time as a Unitarian minister in the well-known radical chapel on Stoke Newington Green, a building which still stands today. Mary Wollstonecraft was one of the famous radicals who lived nearby and she was one of those writers who contributed to the debate ignited by Price's sermon welcoming the French Revolution. The sermon provoked Edmund Burke into writing Reflections on the Revolution in France, which expressed the classic conservative case against radical social change. Burke dismissed Price's ideas as "wicked principles".

### Finance

Frame's talk looked at all the main episodes in Price's life and his wide ranging contribution to the social, ethical, political and economic ideas of his time. Price was well respected as a practical thinker and was to be consulted by leading figures in the world of finance because of his original ideas about tax and insurance. Frame showed that he was a passionate proponent of Richard Price and sought to show how Price's ideas were not wicked at all but still have a contemporary relevance. One historian has described Price as Britain's "first left-wing intellectual". Frame's talk succeeded in justifying this assertion. The Reverend Richard Price deserves to be more widely known.

## Public Meeting

### Oxford Communist, Indian Nationalist & Tibetan Buddhist

### The Unconventional Life of Freda Bedi

Speaker: *Andrew Whitehead*

**2.00pm Saturday 20th May 2017**

Marx Memorial Library

*Freda Bedi*, (nee Houlston), a Derby woman who met and married an Indian student while at Oxford, was active in left and nationalist movements. Her friends at Oxford included Barbara Castle and Olive Shapley, she became a broadcaster and active student communist. Freda was to make a new life in India where she became a Tibetan Buddhist nun.

*About the speaker:* After 35 years with the BBC as correspondent, presenter and latterly Editor of BBC World Service News, Andrew Whitehead is now a historian, lecturer and freelance journalist. He is an honorary professor at the Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, the University of Nottingham and at Queen Mary, University of London. He is also senior visiting research fellow at the King's India Institute at King's College, London. He is a long-standing member of the SHS.

His website contains much that will be of interest <http://www.andrewwhitehead.net/>



*Freda and BPL Bedi at about the time of their marriage in 1933*



*Paul Frame*



# ***A Hidden History of the Cuban Revolution***

By Steve Cushion

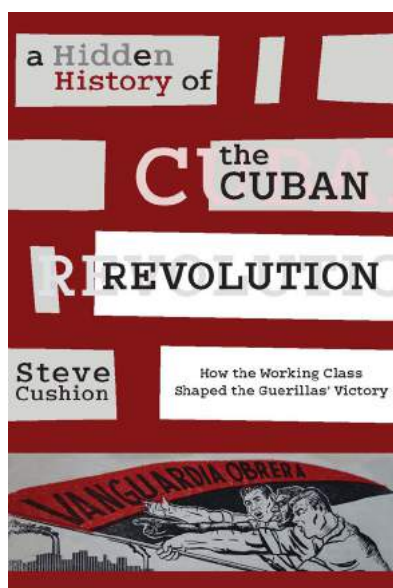
To both its supporters and detractors, the Cuban Revolution is almost universally understood as being won by a small band of guerrillas. This book turns the conventional wisdom on its head, and argues that the Cuban working class played a much more decisive role in the revolution's outcome than previously understood.

Cushion contends that significant sections of the Cuban working class launched an underground movement in tandem with the guerrillas operating in the mountains.

## **Agitational Material**

Developed during five research trips to Cuba under the auspices of the Institute of Cuban History in Havana, this book analyses a wealth of leaflets, pamphlets, clandestine newspapers and other agitational material from the 1950s that has never before been systematically examined, supplemented with many interviews with participants themselves.

The Hidden History of the Cuban Revolution uncovers widespread militant activity, from



illegal strikes to sabotage to armed conflict with the state, all of which culminated in two revolutionary workers' congresses and the largest general strike in Cuban history.

## **Interaction**

The book argues that these efforts helped clinch the victory of the revolution, and thus presents a fresh and provocative take on the place of the working class in Cuban history. This paints a different picture from the standard historiography. Cushion does not

underestimate the role of the Rebel Army, but rather offers an explanation of the way in which these guerrillas interacted with a mass-based revolutionary working class organisation. This interaction was essential for the victory of the rebel movement and the overthrow of Batista.

The result is not only an exciting story of clandestine revolutionary activity; but a book that also sheds new light on the relationship between mass industrial action and armed struggle in the face of a brutal dictatorship.

Available from: <http://bit.ly/2ezyAQh>

## **Call for Papers**

### **The Red and the Black – The Russian Revolution and the Black Atlantic**

*Conference to be held on 14 -15 October 2017*

*The Institute for Black Atlantic Research at the University of Central Lancashire, Preston.*

For colonial subjects of European empires internationally as well as black Americans, the Russian Revolution promised the hope of a world without oppression and exploitation. This conference aims to explore the impact the revolutionary events in Russia during 1917 made across the African diaspora and the subsequent critical intellectual influence of Marxism and Bolshevism on the current of revolutionary 'black internationalism' in its aftermath.

For the full details please see <http://bit.ly/2f8T82p>



*Claude McKay addressing the Comintern*

# **The Radical and Socialist Tradition in British Planning From Puritan Colonies to Garden Cities**

By *Duncan Bowie* Routledge, 2017, £95.00

Duncan Bowie, a member of the SHS, is one of the British left's leading experts on housing policy as well as a senior lecturer in planning and housing. His latest book is a history of the changing approaches to house building, public planning policies and land use adopted by various radical and socialist groups from the late 18th century to the outbreak of the First World War.

## **Strategic Planning**

In a distinguished career in housing and planning, Bowie has held key posts with the Mayor of London, the Housing Corporation, the London Docklands Development Corporation and local authorities around London. He is the author of a study of strategic planning and housing under Ken Livingstone when he ran City Hall. He has also authored numerous policy papers for housing think tanks. He is a member of the London Labour Housing Group and a regular contributor to Chartist political magazine. The SHS published Bowie's *The Roots of the British Socialist Movement* as an Occasional Publication in 2014. This latest book combines Bowie's expertise in housing from his various professional, academic and activist perspectives.

Although the academic publisher has priced the book well beyond the pockets of most activists and students, the book deserves to influence current debate on the direction of housing policy.

## **Housing Crisis**

Indeed, the book appears at a time of growing housing crisis when many of the present generation entering the labour market will never be able to afford a place to live of their own and where flat sharing has become the norm. Homelessness and rough sleeping are also on the increase once again. An assessment of the impact of these present housing trends on family life and child-rearing has not even begun. Bowie's book is a reminder that housing should be a

central policy concern of any progressive party claiming to represent the interests of ordinary people. Sadly, social policies such as public housing seem to have fallen off the political agenda in recent years despite the increased urgency of the need for affordable housing and the desperate social consequences of homelessness which itself takes various different forms.

## **Housing Campaigns**

Bowie's book helps us to understand where we are today with regards to housing and planning priorities. It will be read profitably by anyone involved in housing campaigns or in developing a modern housing policy that properly addresses, in a radically ambitious way, the enormous challenge of satisfying the growing need for public housing.

Bowie provides a very comprehensive narrative account of the organised movements for reform to land planning and housing policies in Britain. Beginning with early colonial settlements in the Puritan and Enlightenment periods, the book covers Benthamite utilitarian planning, Owenite and Utopian approaches, the Chartists, the Christian Socialists and the Fabians, moving on to independent working class initiatives and radical land reform campaigns of the late 19th century. He looks at the thinkers and architects who formed the Garden City movement many of whom were influenced by William Morris and John Ruskin. He also looks at campaigns for land nationalisation, an issue which has totally fallen off today's political agenda.

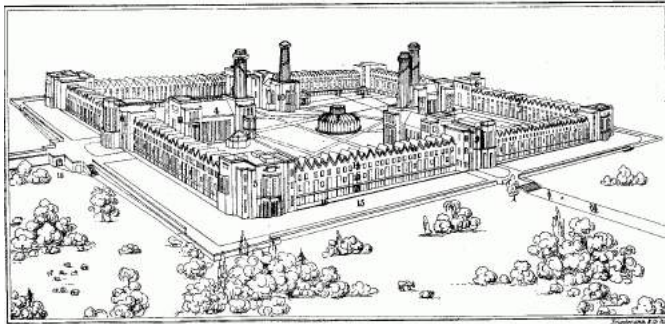
## **Class**

Bowie does not neglect class issues when he looks at differences between middle class and working class housing initiatives. He discusses such themes as the role of the state, relations between local government policies and reforms from central government and examines the close interconnec-

## The Radical and Socialist Tradition in British Planning - continued

tions of land use and ownership, housing and planning. The book along with Bowie's other work on housing should certainly be consulted by the Labour Party as it develops a housing policy fit for the 21st century.

David Morgan



DESIGN  
for a Community of 2000 Persons founded upon a principle  
Commended by Plato, Lord Bacon and Sir Thomas More

### EXPLANATION OF THE PARTS NUMBERED ON THE PLATE

- 1 Gymnasiums or Covered Places for Exercise, attached to the Schools and Infirmary.
- 2 Conservatory, in the midst of Gardens botanically arranged.
- 3 Baths, warm and cold, of which there are four for the Males, and four for the Females.
- 4 Dining Halls, with Kitchens, &c. beneath them.
- 5 Angle Buildings, occupied by the Schools for Infants, Children, and Youths, and the Infirmary; on the ground floors are Conversation-rooms for Adults.
- 6 Library, Detached Reading Rooms, Bookbindery, Printing Office, &c.
- 7 Ballroom and Music rooms.
- 8 Theatre for Lectures, Exhibitions, Discussions, &c. with Laboratory, Small Library, &c.
- 9 Museum, with Library of Description and Reference, Rooms for preparing Specimens, &c.
- 10 The Brew-houses, Bakehouses, Wash-houses, Laundries, &c. arranged round the Bases of the Towers.
- 11 The Refectories for the infants and children are on each side of the Vestibules of the Dining halls.
- 12 The Illuminators of the Establishment, Clock-towers, and Observatories, and from the elevated summits of which all the smoke and vitiated air of the buildings is discharged into the atmosphere.
- 13 Suites of adult sitting rooms and chambers.
- 14 Suites of Chambers, which may be easily and quickly made of any dimensions required; Dormitories for the Unmarried and Children.
- 15 Esplanade one hundred feet wide, about twelve feet above the natural surface.
- 16 Paved Footpath.
- 17 The Arcade and its Terrace, giving both a covered and an open communication with every part of the building.
- 18 Sub-way leading to the Kitchens, &c. and along which meat, vegetables, coals, &c. are conveyed to the Stores, and dust and refuse brought out.

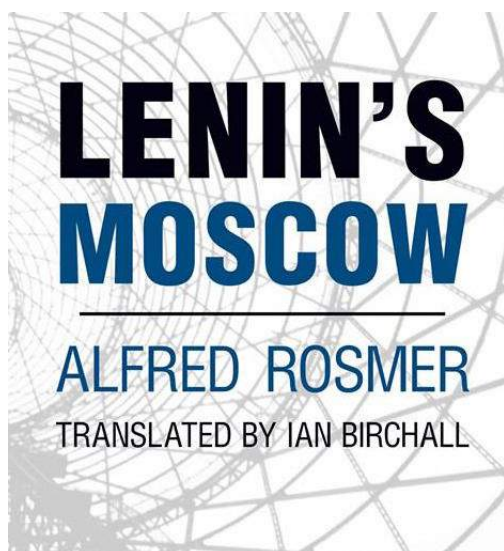
An illustration from the book.

Available from: <http://bit.ly/2fKrwTu>

## Walls

There are many different kinds of walls.  
Walls of an enchanted garden  
Where the ivy and roses entwine  
Walls of the high fortress  
Which fear and hatred bind  
These walls are very much in place  
Across both time and space  
There are the walls of finance  
Their rigidly divides us all  
The walls of prejudice  
That make civilisations fall  
The walls that conceal privilege  
Walls are everywhere  
They trap and enwrap  
They constrain and restrain  
Then the walls of silence  
Perhaps the most insidious of all  
As the rich avert their cruel eyes  
To the world's care and the people's cries  
So walls hewn by hands of human form  
Must rise and fall as is the norm  
Of anything that's transitory  
While the rose rose first  
And the vine embraced the tree

David Morgan



Available from <http://bit.ly/2eeZ1uA>

When Alfred Rosmer arrived in Russia in 1919 it was considered by millions to be the centre of world revolution. It was also a society beleaguered by civil war and encircled by hostile powers seeking to snuff out the promise and potential the first successful workers' revolution represented. It was in this context that revolutionaries from across the globe undertook the creation of the Communist International, hoping to forge an instrument to fan the flames of the struggle against global capitalism.

In this gripping political memoir of his time in Moscow, Rosmer draws on his unique perspective as both a delegate to the Comintern - and as a member of its Executive Committee - to paint a stunning and inspiring picture of the early years of Soviet rule.

## Two Sides to Every History?

**For the publication of *A People's History of Modern Europe*, William Pelz considers how the Brexit debate will be viewed once it becomes part of our history, and whose voices will be forgotten.**

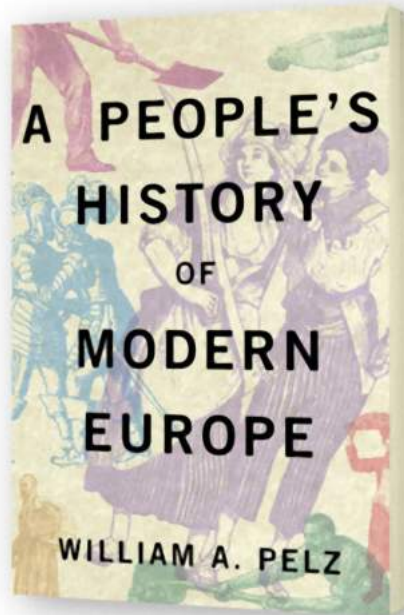
Recently I was paging through the weekend edition of the Financial Times. Jumping out at me, amidst the adverts flogging country houses in the south of France, was an article discussing historians lining up on different sides of the Brexit debate. It is no surprise to find history scholars staking out positions in a contentious debate. Still, some of the comments were striking. One outfit called 'Historians for Britain', led by a Cambridge Professor, appears to think that the UK has had a 'largely uninterrupted history since the Middle Ages'. What? No peasant uprisings? What about the enclosure movement creating an England, in the words of Thomas More, where 'sheep devour men'? Was King Charles I neither overthrown nor executed? Was there no commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell? Not a Leveller, Ranter or Digger in sight?

### Disruption

What of the industrial revolution - was this not a disruption, not least for the women, men and children caught up in it? Could the transformation from a relatively isolated island kingdom to the leading imperialist power amassing colonial possessions via great levels of violence not count as 'disruption'? One could compile a list long enough to fill volumes and many solid historians have made serious response to the "Historians for Britain" group. The problem runs far deeper than the Brexit debate or any other particular dispute for which a vote will settle the issue (at least in the short run).

### Two sides

'Two Sides to Every History'. Two sides? Only two? In my experience, there are always many more ways of looking at history.



Amid the myriad of viewpoints possible, the one most often overlooked, if not consciously ignored, is that of the common people. Look at the way history is presented to students. The Reformation, for example, is reduced to a theological wrestling match between Martin Luther and the Pope (with Calvin thrown in on occasion to give us some theological diversity). Were those the

only sides? What of the people? Were they passive subjects as the great men (and I do mean men as this was a very sexist age), decided the fate of nations? The German Peasants revolt of 1525, whose suppression claimed 100,000 lives, suggests otherwise.

Did fascist demagogues, like Mussolini and Hitler, really hypnotise entire nations or were they handed power by rulers fearful of leftist revolution? Was it really a speech by Winston Churchill that caused the British to fight fascism? Did de Gaulle conjure up the French resistance by some well-chosen words broadcast over the BBC? Across Europe, from within the Third Reich to the mountains of Yugoslavia, many people resisted fascism.

### Facts

History is typically presented as the story of a few men who changed the world. Of late, a small number of important women have been thrown into the mix as a sap to diversity. Even still, history is presented as 'facts' without social, political or even much historical context.

*A People's History of Modern Europe* is available to buy from Pluto Press:

<http://bit.ly/2fg3wcn>