

**Sandra Carreras/Horacio Tarcus/Jessica Zeller (Hrsg.), Die deutschen Sozialisten und die Anfänge der argentinischen Arbeiterbewegung. Anthologie des *Vorwärts* (Buenos Aires 1886–1901)/Los socialistas alemanes y la formación del movimiento obrero argentino. Antología del *Vorwärts* (1886–1901), Buenos Libros/Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, Buenos Aires 2008, 364/354 S., kart., ohne Preisangabe.**

This book edited by Sandra Carreras, Horacio Tarcus and Jessica Zeller in 2008 represents an important contribution to the study of the labour movement press, the socialist thought and the ideas and actions of German immigrants in Argentina.

In addition, as the authors emphasise, it allows the study of the German Social Democratic Party and it helps to examine “the translating procedure of the German actions to the Argentine reality” (p. 7). The book is a Spanish and German edition, so it attracts readers from both language areas. The editors decided to organise it around certain central themes that refer to the interests of those who established the journals, as well as to the condition of German émigrés inserted in a particular historical process such as the Argentine one at the end of the 19th century. Each one of these topics (I. The *Vorwärts* as a social democratic journal; II. German immigration; III. Images of Argentina at the end of the Century; IV. *Criolla* politic trial; V. The social matter; VI. The workers organisation; VII. The cultural life; VIII. European socialism reception; and IX. International perspectives) is preceded by an introduction that intends to orientate the readers about the contents of the selected documents.

Through these introductions and the selection of articles published at “*Vorwärts*”, it is possible to follow the social democratic history and the ideas that it sustained, to analyse the way in which contemporary people observed German immigration to Argentina and especially to its capital, Buenos Aires, to study the periodical “*Vorwärts*” in a context of diffusion and transformation of the press in general and the German press in particular, and to differentiate it from the other journalist experiences, as the expression of the workers point of view. The presented articles also allow an examination of the journal’s contribution to the construction of images of the Argentinean society through the ideas and practices related to experiences, cultures and traditions of the German regions the émigrés came from. The journalistic notes describe the local conditions with cultural tools from the German context, and that is why racial and gender prejudices emerged quite often. The journal called for the transformation of society and with that purpose it intended “deleting the economic actions of rapacity and government” (p. 127). The political battle, the organisation and the elections were regarded as the keys for the social transformation and an improvement of living conditions.

Press prohibitions were important elements in the German émigrés experience. As a counterpart, in Argentina, even during a complex political context, the émigrés founded a socialist association, organised a library and edited a journal in German. Through its pages, the trails of the Social Democratic Party of Germany can be followed away from Germany as well as the debates that took place in Argentina. As I have shown in my analyse of the labour press at Río de la Plata, the labour press expansion between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century contributes to the formation of the working class in the country and also to the circulation of the ideas of solidarity, cooperation and social transformation.<sup>1</sup>

The introduction of the book and the selected articles allow us to explore the emergence, development and transformation of the labour press into a fundamental tool for the construction of identities more than the process of written media expansion, the consolidation of diverse readerships and the place of the emergence of subaltern publics. That is why it would be important to have a more de-

<sup>1</sup>Mirta Zaida Lobato, *La prensa obrera. Buenos Aires y Montevideo, 1890–1958*, Buenos Aires 2009.

tailed examination around the literary or visual resources with which the journal organised its information.

The publication of this selection of the “Vorwärts” is significant in order to study the workers, the political, social and cultural movements of the women and men involved in the historical process of the formation of classes and the creation of social and political rights in Argentina. As it is pointed out in the introduction, during some time the journal collection was thought to be lost. But a few numbers resided in Amsterdam, other documents were conserved in Bohemia, material was also found at Bonn and a microfilm was kept in the Library of the National University of La Plata. This geographical dispersion – pointed out by the editors – illustrates the difficulties to study labour experiences. Studying the labour world, the cultural and educational proposals, the conflicts and ideologies competing for the workers’ guidance was always like a tour around different institutions, it was like solving a puzzle where there was always a missing piece. Sometimes the pieces were too far away, as the resources with which the researchers generally count on were and are poor. In recent years, the public visibility acquired by CeDinCi (Center of Documentation and Research of the Culture of the Left Wing in Argentina) and its project of conserving important documents for the study of the left wing movement allow the access to a rich documentation. Besides, as a part of its preservation policy, the CeDinCi participates in ventures such as the one that made possible editing “Vorwärts” in a bilingual edition.

This book materialises diverse institutional and personal projects and represents an essential material to the study of the labour world, the immigration process, formation of identities, the ideas and its many journeys and destinies, in conclusion, to a social and cultural history, situated at both sides of the ocean.

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#### **Zitierempfehlung:**

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