I must comment on one final point, however. Zielinski has taken the term “state collaboration” (collaboration d'état), commonly used in France, as the title for his study. One might therefore assume that he would explain the origins and contents of this concept in the introduction. But in his extensive survey of the state of research he does not mention that the term was coined by the American historian Stanley Hoffmann to characterize the Vichy regime's overriding aim to protect French interests and preserve its sovereignty, and to differentiate it from other, ideologically motivated, forms of collaboration. Instead he mentions “state collaboration” in the context of Eberhard Jäckel's Frankreich in Hitlers Europa [France in Hitler's Europe], published in 1966, in Zielinski's view a “turning point” heralding a “change of paradigm” in Vichy studies (p. 12). I do not want to dwell here on the apologetic tendencies evident in Jäckel's work as well as in other older German-language studies of the German occupation of France. Suffice it to say that the description of the German military administration as a “supervisory administration” (Aufsichtsverwaltung), which Zielinski uses here to describe the occupation reality in France (pp. 21, 29), was introduced into the literature by Jäckel without comment. Jäckel in turn had taken the term from Werner Best, the SS's leading lawyer, theoretician of the police state and head of the administration department at German military command in France, who had coined it in the context of his notion of a “grand hierarchy of nations” (völkische Großraumordnung) under German leadership. That is how the language of the Third Reich survives in the specialist vocabulary of the historian.

Ahlrich Meyer


In this somewhat abridged and modified version of the thesis that Keller defended at Freiburg (Baden-Württemberg) in 1990, she questions the extent to which German social democracy served as an example for Italian social democracy. The author's perspective ties in with Ernesto Ragionieri's frequently quoted Socialdemocrazia tedesca e socialisti italiani 1875-1895 (1961), which advances the unchallenged thesis that the German movement exerted considerable influence on its fledgling Italian counterpart. Keller accepts Ragionieri's findings and investigates the continuation of this influence after the period covered by Ragionieri. Keller begins her research with the establishment of the Partito Socialista Italiano in 1892 and concludes with the International Socialist Congress in Amsterdam in 1904, where Jean Jaurès's impressive criticism of the German party signified the first massive international opposition to the claim to leadership by the German socialists. Keller rightly notes that her study is more than a mere chronological extension of Ragionieri's research strategy. While Ragionieri could – and did – largely limit his work to reconstructing the exchange of ideas between the German and Italian socialist leaders, the organization became crucial after 1892. This change led to a different use of sources as well. While Ragionieri's work is based primarily on the correspondence and journalist writings of the concerned individuals, Keller's primary sources of documentation are party newspapers, especially regional publications.
Her research report alternates a variety of perspectives. The two survey chapters about the history preceding and the period of the establishment of the PSI (1892–1895) are followed by a chapter comparing the German and Italian parties in terms of the social origin of the members, their positions in political spheres (forms of collaboration with reformist bourgeois parties and the like), and, finally, the party structure. The subsequent overview of the Italian press contains very valuable biographies of the leading Italian correspondents in Berlin. Finally, two chapters discuss the Italian debate over the agrarian issue and revisionism extensively, while presenting references to German standpoints.

What are the fruits of Keller’s indisputably meticulous study? The most significant result of her investigation concerns the first detailed account – unprecedented even by research in Italian – of the decline of the role of the SPD as an example to the Italian movement between 1892 and 1904 (when it had virtually disappeared). Although this trend is noted elsewhere, it rarely receives more than a brief mention. Keller, on the other hand, provides a commendable variety of documentation. Keller correctly argues that even though the PSI was imbued – especially during the programme discussion – with the ideological impact of the SPD throughout its establishment (circa 1892–1895), the organizational structure of the PSI as a product of Italian culture deviated considerably from the pattern of the SPD from the very beginning. The social composition of the PSI suggested a popular party, whereas industrial workers dominated the SPD. The regional chapters within the PSI had extensive autonomy. The SPD, on the other hand, was a highly centralized apparatus. This situation certainly contributed to the failure of efforts to enforce the German ideological influence concerning the agrarian issue – congress resolutions calling for “proletarian” rural agitation – when confronted with the reality that support for the socialist agrarian movement came from small peasants rather than from agricultural workers in several regions, especially in Emilia-Romagna. The power of conviction in Keller’s study lies in her confrontation of the level of the ideological discussions with basic everyday party affairs and with Italian social reality.

The sole ground for objection is, in my opinion, Keller’s passing remarks concerning the place of this German-Italian “dialogue” within the exchange of socialist ideas that took place in the broader framework of the Second International. Keller, who chooses to identify rather than to explore this issue, apparently considers the emancipation of the Italian party from the German Model party unique within the Second International. All European social democratic parties imbued with the German model during the period of their establishment around 1890, however, became emancipated from their German example before 1914 (as borne out by an increasing number of studies). This process invariably resulted from greater attention to their own socio-economic structure and increased the variables within the Second International. Personally, I would have liked to have proved this point on the basis of the socialist Balkan parties, the unrivalled admirers of the German Model party. Unfortunately, Keller overlooks this aspect.¹

Leo van Rossum