betrof maar een twintigtal personen, die een zeer kleine splinterbeweging vormden. Weinig verwonderlijk. De *völkische* aantrekkingskracht van Duitsland tot het wallingantisme was evident zwak en bovendien was de Duitse bezetter ook later met dit beleid begonnen.

De voetnoten in het degelijke werk zijn vaak te lang wat soms storend werkt. Eenmaal vinden we een verwijzing naar *wikipedia* (p. 57, (1)), hetgeen wetenschappelijk moeilijk te verantwoorden is. Al te vaak vervalt het boek in een personenstudie. Een lezing van het eerdere werk van Delforge over het Waalse activisme, is overigens aan te raden voor wie zich in dit boek wil verdiepen.

Bruno Yammine

TOMMASO MILANI
Hendrik de Man and Social Democracy. The Idea of Planning in Western Europe, 1914-1940
Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2020, 329 p.

In the mid-1930s, Belgian politics were under the spell of a short-lived experiment with technocratically informed 'planning'. This 'technocratic moment' is most strongly associated with the ideas and actions of the socialist theoretician and politician Hendrik de Man, whose 1933-1934 Labour Plan sought to curtail the dramatic unemployment figures by reconfiguring the relationship between the state, the economic world, and the citizens. Essentially, de Man called for a more authoritative executive power, expert-driven policy making, an ambitious series of public investments, and a nationalization of crucial sectors (among which the credit system). Largely detached from the concrete realities of Belgian politics, these aims soon proved to be unrealistic. The socialists' participation in a succession of government coalitions (1935-1939) did not lead to any significant change along 'Planist' lines, causing de Man to become highly sceptical of reformist strategies within a liberal democratic constellation: a mental shift that contributed to his infamous 1940 decision to collaborate with the German occupant. De Man was certainly not the only exponent of a technocratic mindset in 1930s Belgium: apart from the example of Prime Minister Paul van Zeeland (1935-1937), one could also think of the chronically overlooked Louis Camu, whose work as Royal Commissioner for Administrative Reform (1936-1940) aimed at raising both the power and the intellectual level of the civil service. Nevertheless, de Man rightfully remains the best-known Belgian thinker on the subject, not in the least due to the Labour Plan's spectacular resonance in other European countries. As such, it is indeed remarkable that no international comparative analysis on de Man's 'Planism' existed until the recent publication of *Hendrik de Man and Social Democracy,* an adaptation of historian Tommaso Milani's dissertation (2017) at the London School of Economics.

Another recent book on 'the father of Planism', Jan Willem Stutje's 2018 biography *Hendrik de Man: Een man met een plan,* has unearthed various incriminating details on de Man's life and intellectual trajectory. Stutje's book portrayed the Belgian socialist as a conceited personality, who was thoroughly guided by elitist, authoritarian, and even anti-Semitic views. In an interview accompanying the biography's release, Stutje's final judgements were nothing short of uncompromising: de Man was a *"despicable"* and *"insincere"* figure, driven by a *"sickening self-centredness"*.[1] For Stutje, these personal characteristics evidently explain de Man's 'will to power' at the start of the Second World War. Decades before Stutje, an equally crushing evaluation of the Belgian socialist's work had been provided by Zeev Sternhell, whose controversial 1983 *Ni droite ni gauche* described de Man as a crypto-fascist. *Hendrik de Man and Social Democracy,* in contrast, is clearly sympathetic towards its research subject. Remarkably enough, Milani barely makes mention of Stut-

1. 'Hoe onoprecht kan een leven zijn? Links en collaborateur: de fascistische trekken van socialistenleider Hendrik de Man', in *Knack,* 14 November 2018, p. 110-114, p. 114.

je's study: a somewhat unfortunate choice, which can partly be explained by the author's wish, outlined in the introduction, not to deal with the biographical determinants of de Man's work *per se*. In relation to Sternhell, however, he does have a clear historiographical agenda. The main thesis on which Milani's work rests, is that between 1914 and the beginning of the Second World War, de Man's work *"agreed with the essential goals, values, and methods of social democracy"*, and hence with the movement's *"democratic, pluralistic, and humanitarian"* goals. Most importantly, Milani emphasizes that de Man was also seen as such by other European social democrats, *"no matter how profound the disagreement between him and other members of the movement on specific issues"* (p. 11). By giving centre stage to the *reception* and *effects* of de Man's ideas among ideological peers of the 1930s, Milani effectively *historicises* Planism, thereby providing a stimulating 'archival-based' counterstory to Sternhell's political philosophical *Hineininterpretierung*.

Combining a precise and eloquent writing style with an impressive command of languages (including Dutch as well as the author's native Italian), Milani first retraces the theoretical roots of de Man's socialism. In the wake of authors such as Nimrod Amzalak, Dick Pels, and Stanley Pierson, Milani describes de Man's 1927 magnum opus *Zur Psychologie des Sozialismus* as a blueprint for a moral rehabilitation of society, which was to be led by a voluntarist class of intellectuals (*"chefs"* or *"Führer"* in de Man's own terminology). Milani then retraces the genesis of the Labour Plan and its development in Belgium after de Man's relocation from Germany to his country of birth in 1933, noting that the socialist theoretician *"had something appealing to offer [:] an original analysis of the rise of right-wing nationalism based on his experience as a first-hand witness of the demise of the Weimar Republic"*, as well as *"an embryonic strategy to counter the advance of fascism"* (p. 101). Making ample use of newspaper articles and conference reports, Milani is able to demonstrate that Socialist contemporaries of the mid-1930s (both in Belgium and abroad) indeed did not think of de Man's work as anti-democratic or extremist, rather the contrary. While the Labour Plan did criticize the social-democrat's traditional focus on *"negotiations, compromises, and concessions"*, and while it did call for a *"strong state"*, de Man emphasized that the Planist reforms were to be realized by a majority government within a parliamentary framework (p. 117). As such, Planist views *"hardly resembled a destructive force [or] tainted a respectable movement with crypto-fascist beliefs; rather, they appeared a flawed yet bold endeavour to step up to the intellectual and political challenges of the time"* (p. 254). Moreover, even though it contained strong technocratic overtones, the Labour Plan also took the more 'emotional' factors of political representation into account, as it sought to *"energise and mobilise"* the public: *"While fully acknowledging the paramount role of experts in forging a mixed economy, de Man wished to make the Plan a rallying point for ordinary people, a multi-class political platform which would broaden the appeal of social democratic parties […]"* (p. 123).

That de Man was seen as a democrat by fellow socialists evidently does not imply that they greeted his ideas with universal acclaim. For the Belgian case, the antagonism between the revisionist Marxist de Man and the orthodox Marxist Émile Vandervelde has been extensively documented for a long time, while Stutje's biography has elaborated on the complex relationship – sometimes fraternal, but mostly quarrelsome – between de Man and Paul-Henri Spaak. Diverging visions on theory and strategy were at the root of these disputes, but also – and not in the least – incompatible personal ambitions. Milani's two case studies on the reception of Planism beyond Belgium underscore that these phenomena were also at play in France and Great Britain. De Man's intellectual influence on British socialism was bigger than usually assumed, Milani signals: *"[…] [Some] sections of the Labour Left were more interested in, and entangled with, Continental developments in the 1930s than most historians have realised until now"* (p. 186). Assembled in a left-wing pressure group named the Socialist League, these sections

would nevertheless fail to make a decisive impact on the Labour party. In France, the overall attention to de Man's work was obviously much more outspoken, with three separate groups vying to be recognized as the most 'pure' (and strategically sound) representatives of Planism. This discord once more resulted in a general lack of concrete influence, even though Milani suggests that many of de Man's ideas would later be realized in post-war France during the *Trente glorieuses*. To underscore his point of view concerning the democratic character of de Man's ideas, Milani does not fail to mention that many French Planists would join the resistance during the war (p. 182-183).

On the whole, Milani's argument that Planists should be taken seriously in their political and moral judgments about the democratic character of de Man's work, rather than being seen as *"naïve […] cadres [who] had been tricked into bowing to an anti-democratic and anti-parliamentary movement"* (p. 245), is a valuable and convincing contribution to the political historiography of the 1930s. A couple of selections and interpretations in Milani's book can be questioned, however. First: while the author emphasizes the transnationality of Planism, he essentially bypasses its enthusiastic reception in countries such as the Netherlands and Switzerland.[2] As such, the motivation behind the inclusion of no more than two non-Belgian case studies (France and Great Britain) should have been explained. Second: the choice not to engage with Stutje's findings comes across as a missed opportunity. In this respect, it is not without significance that the original version of Milani's dissertation asserted that de Man was *"between 1914 and 1936 at least […] by all standards a democratic socialist"*,[3] whereas the 2020 book makes exactly the same claim for the period until 1940. While it indeed seems correct that mid-1930s Planism was a democratic movement, it is questionable that de Man himself could still be considered a full-fledged 'social democrat' from about 1938 onward, when his ministerial career had ended and the appeal of Planism had dwindled. *Hendrik de Man and Social Democracy* does signal that the 'father of Planism' became more *"illiberal"* and *"elitist"* by the end of the 1930s (p. 227 and 236), but Milani firmly places the tipping point between the 'democrat' de Man and the 'authoritarian' de Man in June 1940. Upon reading Stutje's biography, however, one cannot escape the notion that the boundary between de Man's two incarnations was somewhat more permeable. It can be argued that the de Man of 1938-1940 was a democrat with increasingly authoritarian inclinations; yet, it can also be argued that he had become an authoritarian figure with some persistent democratic beliefs. Various biographical elements mentioned in Stutje's book (many of which contrasted strongly with de Man's self-representation in public) point towards the latter interpretation. As such, Stutje was probably right when he asserted that one should not *"maintain a very strict separation"* between de Man's political ideas and his *persona*.[4]

Jens van de Maele

LUC HUYSE, STEVEN DHONDT, BRUNO DE WEVER, KOEN AERTS, PIETER LAGROU
Onverwerkt verleden. Collaboratie en Repressie in België 1942-1952. Een update na dertig jaar
Tielt, Kritak, 2020, 404 p.

Qui s'intéresse à l'historiographie de la Seconde Guerre mondiale en Belgique ne peut ignorer le caractère fondateur des travaux de Luc Huyse et Steven Dhondt. Leur *Onverwerkt verleden* (« passé toujours présent ») a été publié initialement en néerlandais en 1991 puis traduit en français et mis à jour deux ans plus tard à l'initiative du CRISP. Pour la première fois, les auteurs avaient pu y

2. On this reception, see for instance: E. Hansen, 'Decade Crisis: Social Democracy and Planisme in Belgium and the Netherlands, 1929–1939', in *Journal of Contemporary History*, 2, 1981, p. 293–322; p. 296.
3. T. Milani, *"Les belles années du Plan"? Hendrik de Man and the Reinvention of Western European Socialism, 1914-36 ca.*, Unpublished doctoral dissertation (London School of Economics), 2017, p. 31.
4. 'Hoe onoprecht kan een leven zijn?', p. 110.