

BOOK REVIEWS

RUPP, LEILA J. *Worlds of Women: The Making of an International Women's Movement*. Princeton University Press, Princeton 1998. xiii, 325 pp. Ill. £39.50.

This book explores the complex process at work as women from far-flung countries came together in transnational women's organizations and constructed an international collective identity. Rupp, a professor of history at Ohio State University, rejects the idea that international organizations of any kind had been left to political scientists. She does not want to write an organizational history. However, she believes that the workings of the international women's movement can best be understood by focusing on the three major organizations and their interactions (p. 5). These three organizations – also identified as grandmother, mother and daughter (p. 13) – are the International Council of Women (ICW, founded in 1888), the International Alliance of Women (IAW, an offshoot of the Council, founded in 1904 as the International Woman Suffrage Alliance), and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF, which grew out of the famous anti-war congress of women in The Hague in 1915). Inspired by work on nationalism as an identity that is created, she focuses on the process of constructing internationalism. Conflict and community within international women's organizations are not regarded as opposites but as part of the same process by which women came together across national borders to create a sense of belonging and to work together for common goals.

For her analysis of the construction of a collective identity Rupp uses a framework developed by Verta Taylor and Nancy Whittier. In their scheme, collective identity consists of “the boundaries that mark off a group; consciousness, or the ways of defining a group's common interests; and personalized politics, embodied in symbols and actions that challenge received wisdom about the way things are” (p. 7). After a chapter on “Building an International Women's Movement”, the remainder of the book is divided into three sections corresponding to the Taylor/Whittier definition. Section 1 (“Boundaries”) focuses on the lines drawn between members and non-members; section 2 (“Consciousness”) analyses the interests of internationally-organized women; and section 3 (“Personalized Politics”) focuses on the international headquarters, committees, congresses and publications that served to knit together the international community of women. What are the results?

Chapter 2 deals with the establishment and characteristics of the three organizations, their cooperation in the context of the League of Nations (referred to as “superinternational” coalitions, where political scientists would prefer the term “transnational”), and their experiences during the Second World War and the period of postwar reconstruction. The early international connections are dealt with in less than one page (p. 14), which has the disturbing effects that the founding of the ICW comes out of the American blue, that European developments are somewhat underestimated, and that organizational developments are slightly overestimated by someone who does not want to write organizational history. The chapter argues against the common idea of a time gap between the two “waves” of the women's movement (around the turn of the century and in the 1970s). Rupp's conclusion

that no such gap exists and that the Second World War marks a turn instead of an end is in line with earlier publications about the international women's movement. She rightly stresses that the patterns of interaction among the whole range of transnational groups mirrored "the dominance of European or European-settled, Christian, capitalist nations in the world system" (p. 48).

In section 1 on "Boundaries", chapter 3 deals with the impact of variables like class, religion, age and ethnicity on the composition of the movement, and chapter 4 with the line dividing women from men as well as the assumption that "all women shared certain characteristics and thus naturally would flock together in women's organizations". Rupp concludes that the relative homogeneity of the first wave served both as a source of solidarity for those within the fold and a barrier to the participation of others. She seems rather idealistic about lowering that barrier because the boundaries of class, religion, etc. were "unintended" and complemented by a "desire" to lower the barriers. Although she may be right in the theoretical rejection of any limitation by the organizations, one may also suppose that the women outside the inner circle (from Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and Africa), whose challenges actually played the most important role in recognizing and breaching the exclusionary walls, have been less optimistic about the expansion of the circle than Rupp (p. 81). Compared to the lines that divided women, the gender barrier unified them against men. The ideology of difference resulting from elements like hatred of war, which unleashed a veritable barrage of anti-male sentiment, "maternalistic" politics and wartime sexual violence formed the basis for a boundary between women and men. It found organizational expression in the continued woman-only membership and linked women's intimate lives with their political choices. As a result the gender barrier formed the keystone of women's international collective identity.

Section 2 on "Consciousness" shows how women defined their common interests in terms of internationalism and feminism. Chapter 5, dealing with the meaning of internationalism, argues that the forging of an international "we" emerged out of never-resolved tensions over the relationship between nationalism and internationalism. Rupp speaks about a difficult and contested process. Women did not agree about the primacy of nationalist versus internationalist loyalties, yet managed to envisage themselves as part of a common endeavour. Internationally minded women were bound together by the agreement that they had to come together across national borders and "work to make the world a better place" (p. 129). In national and international interactions women developed a collective feminist consciousness, as is shown in chapter 6, by pointing to their collective disadvantaged status and claiming their right as women to make decisions about how best to improve their conditions. This feminist consciousness was far from monolithic, but had a common base in the belief that "the international arena was the appropriate place to work to change the condition of women" (p. 155). This conclusion seems fair. The originally national orientation has been replaced by an international consciousness that in an interdependent world "questions of labor legislation, nationality, and the traffic in women could only be addressed on the international plane". This, however, does not mean that national interests ("the original impetus for transnational organizing") have suddenly disappeared, since international standards agreed upon by international organizations (such as non-discrimination) must be implemented in national laws and practices. If Rupp's conclusion here suggests that national conditions are functional to international solutions, I disagree; it is the other way round: international organizations are functional to national solutions.

Chapter 7 (“International Ground”) in section 3 on “Personalized Politics” is rather disappointing. It leads to such superficial conclusions as that organizational structures facilitated contact among members, that when women in an organization increased in number they interacted less and less intimately (p. 178), or that most interactions took place within discrete groups, to which members expressed intense devotion (p. 159). Nor is it very surprising to read that the most intimate relationships flourished at the WILPF’s headquarters, where women lived as well as worked together (including indulging in “austere vegetarian meals”), rather than the high-society atmosphere of the ICW. The conclusion that comparable structures helped create a sense of an international women’s movement community (p. 179) is unconvincing. One could also argue that the organizations maintained their own cultures in spite of functionally comparable structures. Chapter 8 (“Getting to Know You”) is more interesting because it deals with recruitment through friendship networks, commitment, costs and rewards of participation, devotion to international leaders, transnational friendships and the formation of international “families”. What we learn is that personal interaction staked out common ground among women of different nationalities and inspired women to exert themselves for the cause. Friendship was the most significant thing about international work, notwithstanding the fact that “sisterly comradery” has not always been reciprocal (pp. 202–203). The assessment of these very general conclusions, however, would have been more interesting if a comparison had been made with other movements, for instance with comradery in male workers’ organizations or with women in mixed organizations. Unfortunately, the similarities and dissimilarities are left to the imagination of the reader.

Having read the book with pleasure – Rupp knows her subject well and draws on many original sources – my conclusion is that sections 1 and 2 are the best because they provide us with explanations of women’s international collective identity from the perspectives of boundaries and consciousness. Section 3 is less convincing because it does not question the difference between constructing internationalism in general and women’s internationalism in particular. I also believe that some editorial work would have enhanced the first chapter; there are too many personal impressions, which are not really essential to Rupp’s theoretical perspective. One irritating feature of the book is that the author calls attention to every spelling mistake by a non-native speaker by adding “*sic*”. Surely the functioning of these women at the transnational and international levels is more important than their spelling abilities. This critique is somewhat compensated by the fact that the book contains many interesting details about internationally-active women. The final chapter, chapter 9 (“International Matters”), looks at women’s impact on public consciousness and international policy making by the League of Nations and its successor, the United Nations.

Bob Reinalda

SCOTT, GILLIAN. *Feminism and the politics of working women. The Women’s Co-operative Guild, 1880s to the Second World War.* [Women’s History.] UCL Press, London [etc.] 1998. xii, 297 pp. £40.00.

Gillian Scott considers the Women’s Co-operative Guild, particularly in its pre-1920 phase, especially in terms of two feminist campaigns, divorce law reform and state

financial provision for maternity – cash grants to help women through childbirth. She has much less to say about other issues important to the grass-roots membership. The early part of the book is seriously flawed because she fails to set the development of the Guild in its wider historical context. She concentrates too much on the personal role of two of its secretaries, the middle-class, educated, dedicated Christian socialist, Margaret Llewellyn Davies, and, from 1922 the working-class Eleanor Barton.

The Women's Co-operative Guild was established in the seven years preceding Margaret Llewellyn Davies's appointment as secretary in 1889. Like other working-class movements of the time, it had help from the educated middle class – specifically Mrs Alice S. Acland, who learnt a great deal about working women through travelling about northern England with her husband, the educationalist, Arthur Dyke Acland. She inspired the formation of the Guild with an appeal: "Spend our money at our own [co-operative] store we must [...] but cannot we go further ourselves? Why should not we have our meetings, our readings, our discussions?" It was published on 6 January 1883 by her friend, Samuel Bamford, editor of *Co-operative News* in which he allocated space for "a Woman's Corner"; Mrs Acland was the first editor of this innovation. For the record, her idea was taken up by Mrs Mary Lawrenson of Woolwich who devised a structure of central board with local committees. Both women are credited as founders of the Women's Co-operative Guild. Scott mentions the appeal but scoffs at Mrs Acland for "not proposing a major assault on the sexual hierarchy" [p.16]. The two women hit the right note for, although Scott claims that the Guild remained "a delicate plant" during the 1880s, by 1887 it had twenty-nine branches and 1,400 members; the structure was consolidated with branches being grouped in geographical sections.¹

What impressed Mrs Acland and led her to trail the idea of an organization for women in their homes was the wonderful ability they showed in running them, whereas what struck Margaret Llewellyn Davies was their heavy work load and vulnerability to oppressive husbands, from which not only working-class wives suffered. The women who for many centuries were worst afflicted by male oppression were from the propertied classes: the working class had little or no property so laws to ensure male control of it impinged on them less. As industrial and colonial developments enabled men to raise their pay (with Britain as the "workshop of the world"), they began to aspire to middle-class status; a non-working wife was a status symbol. At the same time the rising standard of living of the working-class elite, as attested by nineteenth-century books on household management, greatly increased women's load of household and family work.² Since the school-leaving age was twelve years, all children, irrespective of gender, took paid jobs to help the family economy. Most working-class wives had spent years in paid work. Like children and unskilled male workers, they were open to exploitation not only by employers but by their menfolk. At the same time they were part of the working class. There was, cutting across their particular exploitation, a sense of class solidarity. The response to Mrs Acland's appeal arose from a deeply felt conscious need not only to improve their own lives but also to satisfy their desire for a wider outlook. Similarly, Margaret Llewellyn Davies succeeded in building the Guild not just because of her undoubted leadership abilities, but because women supported her. They supported not

1. Catherine Webb, *The Woman With The Basket: The History of the Women's Co-operative Guild, 1883–1927* (Manchester: The Women's Co-operative Guild, 1927), pp. 16–20.

2. E.W. Kirk, *Tried Favourites Cookery Book with Household Hints and Other Useful Information*, 25th edn (Edinburgh and London, 1946), pp. 278–314.

only women's trade unionism but trade unions in general, improvements in child labour and various aspects of education, housing, universal suffrage, better pay for women shop assistants and labour struggles like the 1894 miners' lockout, when they helped the miners' families.

Scott acknowledges the help the Guild had from male liberals and reformers, particularly through the connections of Margaret Llewellyn Davies. However, the support Guild members gave to working men, as well as approval of their aims, also brought reciprocal help. Scott does not stress sufficiently women's solidarity with men and early support for labour representation in Parliament. She ascribes the arbitrary controls to promote unity, which deprived the Guild of its treasured local autonomy, almost wholly to personal ambition on the part of some of the generation of women Guild and labour leaders between the wars.

Political labour, like the trade unions from which it sprang, was all through its history riven by conflicting interests. As women joined the political Labour Party, all these differences were reflected in the attitudes of Guild leaders and members. As Scott explains, the Women's Co-operative Guild and other existing women's bodies in 1916 were affiliated to a Standing Joint Committee of Working Women's Organisations. Two years later Marion Phillips became its secretary. As a result of the grant of the franchise to women of thirty years and over, the Labour Party instituted women's sections to gain the political support of women. The representatives of the women's sections dominated the Standing Joint Committee and under Marion Phillips's tough leadership avoided issues which provoked dissension in Labour ranks, cash payments to mothers chief among them, as many male trade unionists feared the scheme would undermine their wage negotiations. Very quickly the women's sections far outstripped the membership of the Guild:

<i>Women's Co-operative Guild</i>		<i>Labour Party Women's Sections</i>	
1919	30,000	1923	120,000
1922	50,000	1925	150,000
		1926	250,000

Scott does not address the question of why working women flocked to the Labour Party. Besides women's common experience in going straight from school to paid jobs, they went through the 1914–1918 war which she touches on only in the final chapter. Renewed experience of working for pay and struggles for “the rate for the job” hardened their attitudes. What clinched female support for organized parliamentary labour was unemployment – the ending of the postwar boom and the development of long-term unemployment among women as well as men. There was a belief that only a Labour government could give them the legislation to improve women's and children's health which they had sought all along.

The book comes more alive in the later chapters where Scott does make clear that internal struggles in the political labour movement, including the women's arm, were potent causes of the decline of the Guilds. During the bitter 1926 miners' lockout, the Guilds gave strong support to the miners; the Miners' Federation reciprocated by backing the demand for cash maternity payments to women in face of Trades Union Congress determination that payments should only be in kind. The persistent opposition of ordinary members to changes to Guild rules forced upon them was part of that internal struggle. The “political rule”, developed in the late 1920s and early 1930s, aimed

to exclude from Guild office not only Conservatives and Liberals, but also fascists, communists and anyone in private trade.

At the same time, new women's organizations, like Townswomen's Guilds, appeared duplicating some of the Guild's work, while the Guild leadership, not only the secretary, Eleanor Barton, pursued right-wing Labour policies and, on pacifist grounds, failed to oppose the rise of Nazism and other authoritarian regimes. In the run-up to the outbreak of war in 1939, the leadership lost touch with members and prestige by refusing government invitations to participate in civilian preparations for war.

Guild members never entirely lost their autonomy; their support for maternity benefits and better health provision were realized by the 1945 Labour government. Scott erroneously claims that the general fight to improve women's status did not reappear until the rise of Women's Lib. in the 1960s. Through numerous organizations and individually all through the 1950s and 1960s, women kept up the pressure on pay, job opportunities, educational opportunities etc. and, although the renamed Co-operative Women's Guild accepted the official Labour Party line that women should be content with their maternity grant, the National Health Service and full employment, local Guildswomen still studied national and international matters. They deserve a deeper and more penetrating testament than this book, although it will go some way to providing one. They still have a crucial role to play now in containing new problems like globalism.

Sheila Lewenhak

BURDS, JEFFREY. *Peasant Dreams & Market Politics. Labor Migration and the Russian Village, 1861–1905*. University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh 1998. xiv, 314 pp. Ill. \$50.00. (Paper: \$22.95.)

Peasant Dreams and Market Politics deals with peasant migration for work in industry and handicrafts in the central industrial region of the Russian Empire during the latter half of the nineteenth century. In this region, which consisted of the industrial centres of St Petersburg and Moscow with their vast hinterlands, wage-work in the towns formed an important source of additional income for the rural population, which faced a tax burden that was too high to be met from the proceeds of farming alone. In order to pay taxes and redemption payments on the land that had been allotted to them with the abolition of serfdom in 1861, not less than one-third of all adult males regularly went away to work elsewhere for sometimes extended periods, or indeed worked and lived in the towns on a more or less permanent basis.

The existence of a substantial peasant element in the industrial workforce of the late Tsarist empire is a well-known theme from historiography. Peasants that went to work in industry usually remained committed to the village through a myriad of administrative, economic and family ties. To start with, most of these "peasant proletarians" moved to the towns alone, leaving their families behind in the village to attend the farm. Also, it was not uncommon for industrial workers that came from nearby villages to be more actively involved in farm work, particularly during the harvest and other peaks in the agricultural season. Apparently, this was more than just a temporary phenomenon. Even when working in industry for years at a stretch, peasants rarely severed their links to the village. Thus, in Russia the separation of the industrial and the agricultural work-

force seems to have been a much more drawn-out affair than in other industrializing countries.

Historiography has offered various explanations for this. Alexander Gerschenkron pointed out that the system of communal land tenure as it existed after the abolition of serfdom constituted a formidable barrier to permanent out-migration from the countryside. Peasants were collectively responsible for taxes and redemption payments on their allotments through the land commune, or *obshchina*, from which, for these reasons, they could not secede. What gave the *obshchina* a considerable degree of control over its members was that peasants were dependent upon the consent of the commune both for receiving and for renewing the internal passport that was required in order to go and work away from the village. Thus, the commune was a straightjacket that prevented a process of urbanization (as had taken place in the West during industrialization), was Gerschenkron's argument.¹ This interpretation was subsequently challenged by Chayanovists like Teodor Shanin, who stressed that the complementarity of different economic activities within one household was part and parcel of the subsistence-oriented peasant economy, and served mainly as a strategy of risk aversion. In other words, peasants did not strive towards permanent out-migration and secession from the commune, but chose to retain extensive links to the rural economy while working in industry.²

The problem with both of these explanations for peasant migrants' links to the agricultural sector is that they stem from two opposed views on the nature of the peasantry and the peasant economy. Whereas Gerschenkron and his followers used modern economic concepts to describe peasant economic behaviour, the Chayanovists stressed the orientation to subsistence and risk aversion as the main organizing principles in the peasant economy. One of the side effects of this theoretical debate has been a rather unfortunate tendency towards too-wide generalizations of findings, in spite of the fact that much of the research on the Russian peasantry in the period under study shows quite clearly that regional differences in peasant economic behaviour were significant.

Burds's regional approach is therefore part of the reason that makes *Peasant Dreams and Market Politics* such an invaluable contribution to historiography. Avoiding too-large generalizations, he builds up a credible picture of the intricate social fabric that bound peasant migrants in the central industrial region to the village community and the agricultural sector. Burds's analysis centres around the strong position of the commune in the central industrial region. Faced with the task of extracting state obligations from large numbers of peasant migrants that resided outside the village, the commune became deeply involved in peasants' lives, without necessarily being the state-backed straightjacket that Gerschenkron had claimed it to be. Of course the communes could use their formal powers to discipline peasants who failed to meet tax obligations, withhold their passports and have them brought back to the village under police escort, but at the same time they could not be too hard on peasant migrants because the income from wage-work in industry was in many ways the lifeline upon which peasant wellbeing, tax-paying ability and, ultimately, the fate of the community as a whole depended.

In response to this basic dilemma, the commune came to provide a whole set of

1. Alexander Gerschenkron, "Agrarian Policies and Industrialisation. Russia 1861–1917", in *Cambridge Economic History of Europe* (Cambridge, 1978), vol. 6, pp. 709–800.

2. Teodor Shanin, *Russia as a Developing Society* (London, 1985), pp. 66–92, 110–118.

largely informal arrangements that served both to cater to the needs of migrant workers and to ensure community control over their behaviour. To start with, the commune often served as a credit network for peasants who were unable to pay their taxes or for migrant workers who had to raise the cash for their journeys to Moscow or St Petersburg. Sometimes loans were given out directly by the commune, but more often it were the wealthy peasants within the community that acted as moneylenders for their less fortunate fellow villagers. Such credit transactions should by no means be mistaken for acts of charity though; very high interest rates were charged, and often peasants who had taken out such loans found themselves unable to repay the full sum and had to borrow even more, thus ending up in a situation akin to debt-servitude. According to Burds, such credit networks, which were very widespread in the central industrial region, served as a powerful lever of control over migrant workers, and prevented them from breaking with the village community while working away in industry.

Another example of commune control over migrant workers is the latter's involvement in the recruitment of industrial labourers in the countryside. Communes often acted as labour brokers, and intervened directly in the hiring process. Contracts between urban recruiting agents and groups of migrant labourers were negotiated and signed under the auspices of the local commune and *volost* authorities, often with the stipulation attached that urban employers would deduct state dues directly from workers' wages and forward it to the commune. Migrant workers apparently preferred such hiring procedures, because they could call upon the commune and the *volost* authorities for help in case employers did not live up to their obligations.

Thus, peasant-migrant links to the village were not just a matter of administrative control over population mobility through the land commune, but rather the expression of an intricate web of often informal social and economic relations, through which migrant workers remained firmly embedded in rural society. This was compounded by a strong sense of collective identity and responsibility towards the village community. Peasant migrants were not just expected to pay their taxes, but also to support their families and fulfil a host of other duties to the commune, and those that forsook these responsibilities were submitted to the strictest forms of social control. In the last chapter of the book Burds shows, for example, how denunciations against peasants who were suspected of having neglected their religious duties often targeted migrant workers that were thought to have turned their backs on the village and the rural community. What made peasant migrants susceptible to community pressure was that they relied on the commune as an insurance scheme to fall back upon during periods of economic downturn in the industrial sector as well as in case of old age, when the plot of land in the village formed the only basis of survival.

Given the central role of the commune in Burds's analysis of peasant migrants' links to the agricultural sector, it is a pity that the book does not cover the years after the Stolypin reforms of 1905/1906, when all peasants gained the right to leave the *obshchina* if they so wished. On the other hand, Burds's study implicitly provides us with the explanation for the much-debated fact that, on the whole, the peasantry does not seem to have seized this opportunity. Since commune control was based primarily on informal rather than formal social and economic relations, a simple change in the institutional framework can hardly be expected to have torn apart the intricate web of often highly personalized relations that bound peasants to the commune and village society. It is these insights that make *Peasant Dreams and Market Politics* into a path-breaking study on the functioning and the role of the commune in the late Tsarist Empire.

It would, however, do injustice to Burds's cleverly researched and pleasantly written book to judge it on its insights into the functioning of the land commune and peasant migrants' links to the village alone. In the penultimate chapter the author transcends these topics and builds up a vivid and evocative picture of how the wealth and experiences of non-village life that peasant workers brought back from the towns profoundly changed the countryside of the central industrial region. Average living standards and consumption patterns improved tremendously over the period under study as the earnings generated by wage-work in industry were used to build larger and more elaborately decorated houses and to buy modern consumption goods ranging from furniture to fashionable clothes and even make-up. The other side of this new consumer culture was, however, that the contrast between the haves and the have-nots in society became much more pronounced. This put a strain on inner-village relations, and although Burds does not draw this line, it is tempting to connect this erosion of communal identity to the violence and aggression against the wealthier peasants, or *kulaks*, during the later years of the Civil War and the collectivization and dekulakization of the early 1930s.

Gijs Kessler

ANDERSON, CARLOTTA R. *All-American Anarchist. Joseph A. Labadie and the Labor Movement.* [Great Lakes Books.] Wayne State University Press, Detroit 1998. 324 pp. Ill. \$34.95.

If one can speak of echelons among anarchists, Joseph Labadie (1850–1933) definitely belonged to the second. Except for a short stay in Lansing, Detroit provided the decor for his activities. Only on a few occasions did he show up at a national convention.

Immanuel Kant never left Königsberg, but the importance of his thought soon spread widely beyond his town. It is difficult to say the same of Labadie the Detroit anarchist. Why then a biography of this honest champion of the rights of the individual? Two reasons present themselves. First, Jo and his wife Sophie effectively founded the world-famous Labadie Collection at the University of Michigan. Second, the author is Jo's granddaughter.

Some people, even anarchists, believe attraction to anarchism is a matter of character. Carlotta Anderson and Jo Labadie seem to have subscribed to this belief. Both have stressed the importance of Jo's youth, when, together with his father, an interpreter for a missionary, he lived among the Michigan Indians. Incidentally, Jo himself was part Indian. "Joseph's love of liberty was a legacy of his father, the only legacy he was to have" (p. 29). The life of liberty with the Indians in the woods of Michigan filled Jo with a nostalgia that lasted for the rest of his life.

On turning seventeen he started his working life as a "tramp" printer. Travelling through the United States, he developed a keen sense of inequality and the value of trade unions. During these years he seems to have plunged into the works of such diverse authors as John Stuart Mill, Ralph Waldo Emerson and David Henry Thoreau. In 1877 he married his cousin Sophie Archambau, much against the will of her family. Sophie was a devout Catholic, while Jo had already become an atheist. She kept her faith until her death (1931), but neither this nor Jo's developing socialist convictions seem to have affected the stability of their marriage. The biography is rather silent about

her, and about the family life she shared with Jo, but Sophie must have cared deeply about her husband. She preserved all the papers that came into their house, as well as all Jo's writings. "Preserving them was the only active role Sophie played in Jo's reform efforts, but it was a major one" (p. 227). She must have been a strong-minded woman before she married, but she became "a docile and supportive helpmate" (p. 45), and that is about all Carlotta Anderson says about her grandmother.

In 1878 Jo, already registered as a member of the Socialist Labor Party, became a member of the Knights of Labor. He was to found the Detroit lodge of this secretive organization. In both the Party and the Order Jo voiced his own opinions: he criticized their efforts to ban Asian workers from the United States. Within the Order his advocacy of trade unionism was out of tune with the policies of the leadership. Even as a young worker Labadie was anything but a sectarian: he tirelessly tried to unite the labour organizations of Detroit under one federation. He proposed various options: a special lodge of the Knights of Labor, or the Labor League and the Detroit Trades Council. He founded the latter two in 1878 and 1880 respectively. In addition to being involved in the SLP and the Knights of Labor, he was active in the ranks of the Greenback Party. In 1879 he ran for mayor with the support of those in the Party who objected to its support for the Republican candidate. Having won 110 of the 15,000 votes, this was the last time Jo ran for any office. In the Greenback Party he campaigned for socialist policies, for social control of output and the means of production.

The 1880s were key years in Labadie's activities. He contributed to all sorts of short-lived newspapers, either as an editor and printer or as a contributor and printer. He spoke at many meetings and set up his own schooling conferences. His life in the labour movement became very busy once the Knights had decided to open up their organization and the importance of their religious inspiration and mystique declined. The membership of the Detroit lodge grew rapidly, with Labadie refusing to enlist only those associated with idleness (bankers and speculators) or corruption (lawyers, gamblers and retailers of liquor). By 1887 the lodge seems to have had 10,000 members.

The socialism of Labadie was eclectic through and through. "He rarely saw a cause he did not like – socialism, Greenbackism, the 'single tax' scheme, the Knights of Labor, and, finally anarchism. Ideologically, he was always an ardent lover, but not a monogamous one" (p. 57), Anderson rightly concludes. Being a member of the SLP too, he ardently strove to get the Greenback Party to adopt a socialist platform. At the same time, he was a subscriber to Tucker's *Liberty* and an eager correspondent with this leader of American individualist anarchism, but he also maintained very cordial relations with Henry George and Samuel Gompers that continued until their deaths. One gets the impression that all of these correspondents were of greater importance to him than he was to them.

Labadie's conversion to anarchism occurred during 1882/1883 and was guided by reminiscences of his youth and by suspicion of political action. Labadie thought economic action much more important, which not only makes him an early syndicalist but also paved the way later to his becoming a member of Gompers' AFL. The AFL was likewise suspicious of political action. His definitive conversion to anarchism was inspired by his acquaintance in 1883 with the German anarchist Johann Most and with Ben Tucker. It was accompanied by a clear radicalization of Labadie's thought. Though Labadie had read Proudhon and other anarchists, Carlotta Anderson is probably right in stressing the American roots of his anarchism. It was essentially a radical rendition

of the individualist and anti-authoritarian elements in the American Revolution. Moreover, Labadie's syndicalism would soon cause a break with Most.

Many activists in the American labour movement became radicalized at this time. Labadie now approved of propaganda by deed, and he even seems to have helped organize paramilitary groups of revolutionaries. In 1886 and 1887 he became an ardent defender of the Chicago Haymarket martyrs. In 1883, together with Spies and Parsons he led the syndicalist opposition against Johann Most. His defence of the martyrs now brought him into conflict with Terence Powderly, who not only criticized strikes in general but also failed to help the Chicago anarchists in particular. In 1887 Labadie left the Knights of Labor and continued to participate only in the AFL, which had also defended the Chicago martyrs.

By 1890 the heyday of his activism had passed. He would go on to contribute "cranky notions" to all sorts of labour journals, but he lost his position as a leader of the Detroit labour movement. People started to regard him "as a sort of charming, eccentric, cantankerous and irreverent, but venerable" man (p. 181). In 1893 he lost his job as a printer for the last time. His health had suffered as a result of his work, and he took a job as a clerk with the Detroit water authorities. His anarchism did not prevent him working as a local government representative for thirty years. At the end of the 1890s, and especially after Leon Czolgosz's murder of President McKinley in 1901, the United States experienced ever-grimmer witch-hunts against anarchists, but Jo Labadie never got into trouble. He was not even a victim of the Palmer Raids (1919–1920), and saw this as a vote of no confidence in the sincerity or the danger of his anarchism. In summer, Labadie lived at his own summer spa – "Bubbling Waters", a gift from the rich Detroit entrepreneur Carl E. Schmidt. By then, Labadie had long been virtually outside the Detroit labour movement. From 1900 onwards he wrote a host of poems, many in the style of Walt Whitman (whom he admired), but apparently of a quality that does not allow for an extensive analysis in this biography.

Carlotta Anderson has admirably charted the *faits et gestes* of her grandfather. She has written his life with sympathy, but not with the aim of either detecting much structure in it or explaining much about it. Perhaps nothing more deeply analytical is required. That might also explain why only forty pages of the book have been devoted to the last forty years of Labadie's life and to his poetry.

Bert Altena

POPE, ROBERT. *Building Jerusalem. Nonconformity, Labour and the Social Question in Wales, 1906–1939.* [Studies in Welsh History, vol. 13.] University of Wales Press, Cardiff 1998. xiv, 269 pp. £25.00.

No visitor to Wales can fail to be struck by the profusion of chapels dispersed throughout its communities, large and small. These places of worship (for protestants who failed to conform to the requirements of the state religion, the Church of England) are a defining feature of the Welsh built environment. Much that remains characteristic of the modern Welsh nation was nurtured within their walls. As this book shows, the chapels were also the space wherein a purposive and radical response to contemporary society and its problems was forged. Though conscious that his history is essentially one of decline, the author argues that nonconformity commanded a degree of loyalty

from Welsh men and women which countered the trend of secularization and the rise of labour politics elsewhere in the British Isles. Yet, he claims, most historians of Wales during the past two decades have concentrated “on the doctrine of class war, Socialism and the politics of labour”, largely to the exclusion of nonconformity in religion and liberalism in politics. The kind of history which this volume opposes, the author remarks in tones approaching a warning, “has been promulgated effectively by the members of the Society for the Study of Welsh Labour History and their journal *Llafur*” (p. 1).

It is therefore with a certain sense of irony that one notes that the remarkable Welsh religious revival of 1904–1905, the basis of so much upon which the book’s argument depends, is given only a perfunctory treatment. Still, for a recent study (not cited in this book) the reader can turn to *Llafur* (vol. 6, no. 2, 1993). Recent writing in Welsh history is very seldom as blinkered as the author suggests and these remarks are indicative of a tendency to over-generalization and caricature. The book is weakened further by its somewhat shallow acquaintance with recent historiography. True, the bibliography does list Chris Williams’s 1991 doctoral thesis, “Democratic Rhondda”, but not its sophisticated reworking as a book of the same title (1996). Nor does the author cite David Gilbert’s important *Class, Community and Collective Action* (1993), even though the latter addresses similar issues and offers, through the medium of a comparative study with England’s Nottinghamshire coalfield, a revealing approach to the complexities of Welsh social history. The shortcomings of the volume under review as a contribution to the history of labour are likely to be further exposed by comparison with Chris Williams’s latest book, *Capitalism, Community and Conflict: The South Wales Coalfield, 1898–1947* (1998).

Pope’s conclusions are not particularly insightful. There is an old adage that the British Labour Party owed more to Methodism than to Marx. The fact that this is very largely true does not rescue it from being a cliché. Yet here on page 241 it is presented almost as if freshly minted. Similarly, the observations that “a commitment to labour politics did not necessarily mean a departure from organized religion” and that “many men recognized a parity of aim between their religious and political creeds” are hardly original either. Elsewhere it is clear that the author knows this. Perhaps it is his honest realization that Welsh nonconformity cannot be cast in a more triumphal light, that subconsciously leads him to this curious combination of high-handedness and near-platitude.

A further defect is an occasional tendency to factual error where the labour movement is concerned. For example, Arthur J. Cook did not precede Frank Hodges as general secretary of the Miners Federation of Great Britain (p. 79) but was elected in 1924 after Hodges became a Labour Member of Parliament. Hodges was a right-winger (he subsequently became a company director) while Arthur Horner remained an active member of the Communist Party until his death in 1968. It is misleading, then, to speak of them as colleagues (p. 97). Perhaps this minor misapprehension stems from a more substantial one: the author tends to see labour politics as a monolithic entity (in contrast to an increasingly confused nonconformity). Thus it is implied (p. 71) that the South Wales Miners Federation was a key agent in “the dissemination of Socialism” right from its formation in 1898 and the obvious liberal characteristics of its early history are ignored. Similarly, the 1910 Cambrian Combine dispute in the Rhondda is misleadingly tagged simply “a demonstration of revolutionary fervour” (p. 129).

Where Franks and Horner are at one is in their revolt against the nonconformist

world – not merely a chapel upbringing, for both men had been seen as candidates for religious ministry. That figures from opposing ends of labour's political spectrum could evince so similar responses to organized religion is informative and more could be made of it. Instead their spiritual biographies are simply aggregated with those of three others in a section headed "The Role of Reason". On the other hand, for every man like Hodges or Cook who were caught up in, but ultimately repelled by, the revival of 1904/1905, there were others for whom it remained a formative experience. "Two collier uncles of mine", recalled the historian Gwyn Alfred Williams, "who had been rather routine members of an Independent chapel and Liberal voters, were swept up in it. Their passion did not last, but they remained total abstainers for the rest of their lives – and they moved straight from the Revival into the Independent Labour Party" (*When was Wales?*, p. 240). *Building Jerusalem* lacks this kind of human detail and is uncomfortable with contradiction; hence perhaps the tone almost of surprise in the conclusions already quoted. A simple causal model in which nonconformity declines and "socialism" (used here to cover labourism, communism and syndicalism alike) rises is unhelpful. What are we to make of miners' leader and left-Labour MP George Daggar (ignored by Pope), the son of a radical Liberal, who conducted secular funerals for atheists, but described himself as an agnostic and was given a religious funeral led by the nonconformist minister who had succeeded him as MP when he retired?

Building Jerusalem is therefore something of an opportunity missed. This is regrettable for it is a thoroughly documented analysis of religion and social purpose. There is no comparable study – in terms of breadth, detail or empathy – of this aspect of twentieth-century religion for anywhere else in the British Isles. A Welsh-speaking theologian, the author offers a penetrating examination of the development of Welsh nonconformity. A series of thoughtful and well-rounded portraits emerge of important Welsh ministers, about whom there is little literature available in English: for example three influential supporters of the Independent Labour Party: Silyn Roberts (a Calvinistic Methodist minister from the slate-mining district of north Wales), 'Gwili' Jenkins (academic and liberal-modernist theologian) and the Reverend T.E. Nicholas, a Congregationalist minister from the Swansea valley.

For understandable reasons, much of the literature on Welsh history in this period concentrates upon the industrial heartland of south Wales. One of the great merits of this study is that it treats the Welsh nation as a whole. This brings us, however, to a curious hiatus in a book so alive to Welsh-language material, namely the language issue. "My parents, Welsh-speaking themselves, never taught me the language", recalled Gwyn Williams of his Dowlais childhood in the 1930s. "Welsh became to us a Chapel tongue, a sacerdotal language. [...] Religion in English was, to us, almost as much of a blasphemy as a joke in Welsh" (*Fishers of Men*, pp. 11, 15–16). Bound up with the contrasting economic trajectories of north and south, Wales was a widening linguistic divide. The "socialism" that runs through these pages was one of several currents eroding the influence of the chapel. Robert Pope recognizes that there was "a multitude of reasons" for Welsh nonconformity's failure "to retain the interest and allegiance of the working class" (p. 249). However, the implicit monocausal model within this book's argument both does a disservice to the religious movement the author so clearly admires and, ironically, relates to another simplistic model, the teleology of an inevitable rise of labour, that has for some time been largely abandoned by labour historians themselves.

Malcolm Chase

TARTAKOWSKY, DANIELLE. *Les manifestations de rue en France 1918–1968*. [Histoire de la France au XIXe et XXe siècle, 42.] Publications de la Sorbonne, Paris 1997. 869 pp. Ill. Maps. F.fr. 280.00.

This is a monumental study of the street demonstrations that took place in France during the fifty years between the end of World War I and May 1968. The cover shows an illustration of two attractive young women laughing and shouting against the backdrop of a demonstration. They are holding up a cardboard box in the air as a sort of placard; on it is written in large black letters: “*La seule solution, la manifestation*”. This slogan is, I believe, a reference to one of the questions Danielle Tartakowsky poses in her book, namely the significance for politics – in a broad sense – of the fact that people opt to express their views or demands by demonstrating, even though, as was the case in France during the period being studied, they have the right to strike and the right to vote. What is the function and significance of movements that take to the streets in order to be heard by the state? This practice is, the author claims, the negation of the parliamentary system. How, why and with what result then did it begin to intrude on the public stage? Though it is never more than a minority that participates in demonstrations, and such demonstrations are inconsistent with parliamentarianism, they cannot be ignored in contemporary social and political history. Moreover, they can teach us a great deal about political history. It is around that paradox that the issue central to Tartakowsky’s book revolves.

Les manifestations de rue en France is the first comprehensive study for France of the phenomenon of the demonstration as a form of expression and protest. Unlike strikes and collective action in a broader sense, it was not until the 1980s that demonstrations became a subject worthy of investigation by historians and social scientists. Tartakowsky blames this belated interest on the enduring dominance of organizational and ideological approaches.

The way Tartakowsky describes the subject of her study and distinguishes it from other forms of protest is enlightening, as much for international comparative research as for more localized sociohistorical studies. For a long time the ambiguous phenomenon of the “demonstration” had no legal status in France. Successive French constitutions gave citizens the right “to demonstrate their opinion”, but without explicitly formulating a right to demonstrate. It was not until 1935 that the demonstration as a form of protest was institutionalized, and in public-order legislation it was distinguished from an *attroupement* or *émeute*. The word *manif* was coined and became part of popular usage only in the early 1950s.

As with *cortège*, *défilé* and *attroupement* the *manif* was a specific type of spatial occupation. The purpose of a demonstration was “to demonstrate” the existence of a problem to others not directly affected by that problem. A group demonstrates to achieve visibility. A demonstration entails a precarious and transitory occupation of the street, and a rupture in the normal use of time and space. Unlike a parade, which is always circumscribed within a prearranged space and time, a demonstration has a subversive dimension which invariably poses a threat to public order. This implies *ipso facto* an inevitable relationship with the state, which, Tartakowsky argues, functions as a guarantor of the demonstration. In principle, all social groups can hold or participate in a demonstration, while strikes are essentially an expression of the conflict between capital and labour. A demonstration is less spontaneous than a revolt, riot or rout, less directly related to its causes and objectives, and often non-violent too. Indeed, it is precisely in its peaceful

character that the potency of the demonstration lies. Unlike a riot or a revolt, a demonstration presupposes preparation, planning and the elaboration of a strategy by its organizers. The assumption too is that the organizers will be able to control the crowd; demonstrations are not supposed to get out of hand.

In her work Tartakowsky has been greatly inspired by semiotics, and throughout her study she attaches considerable importance to the symbolic aspects and the narrative character of the demonstration. Originating during the July monarchy of 1830 and with its roots in the religious and corporative processions of the *ancien régime*, the demonstration was conditioned, in more than one respect, by the French Revolution right from the start. As a political phenomenon the street demonstration preceded the formation of modern political parties, but it could only develop fully, with its own rites and symbols, once mass political parties had begun to emerge. From the 1880s onwards, governments too showed an interest in the street as a theatre of commemorative and symbolic practices. The French Revolution continued to be the central point of reference in this (hence the 14 July celebrations), but attempts were made to emasculate the demonstration by stripping it of its initially subversive dimension and transforming the crowd into passive observers. From then on, the functions of the demonstration as a form of protest on the one hand and as an expression of identity on the other were continually intertwined.

Although she has much of interest to say concerning the origins and development of the demonstration during the nineteenth century, Tartakowsky's study actually commences with 11 November 1918, a date with no significance other than the fact that the jubilant crowd could once again appropriate the streets. In France it was only after 1968 that the police were relatively systematic in counting the number of demonstrations, and so Tartakowsky's study is based on her own database of over 15,000 demonstrations, a figure the author does not pretend is exhaustive. A comprehensive database would have taken at least a lifetime to construct; what Tartakowsky has produced represents, I believe, a labour nothing less than Herculean. Appendix 1 (pp. 811–817) contains a critical methodological exegesis of the selection criteria employed and the sources used. The principal sources are the *Archives nationales*, the national newspapers and periodicals of the organizations that urged people to demonstrate, and *Le Monde*. For the interwar period the *Archives de la Préfecture de Police* for Paris were also systematically researched. Like perhaps every researcher of collective action, Tartakowsky is very aware of the epistemological problems concerning the homogeneity, representativeness and “objectivity” of her database. In fact she claims a quantitative study of the *longue durée* is simply impossible because of these problems. The press privileges the spectacular and the archives reveal only the demonstrations that the Interior Ministry deemed worthy of special attention at a particular moment. The demonstrations recorded in the archives actually tell us more about shifting normative processes than about the objective reality of demonstrating. However, because a demonstration is essentially a question of representation and of “becoming visible”, Tartakowsky writes, the subjective perception of the actors and of contemporaries is ultimately of key relevance to the subject.

This study is conceived along fairly traditional chronological lines, with chapters on brief homogeneous political sequences (1919–1924, 1924–1926, 1928–1931, 1931–1934, 1934–1936, 1936–1939, 1939–1944, 1946–1952, 1953–1956, 1958–1962, 1966–1968), the period of rapid political change. It is impossible within the scope of this review to do justice to the wealth of detail provided by an initial, political reading of Tartakowsky's

book. A demonstration is and remains primarily an event to be talked and written about – otherwise it does not exist. While the research conducted in the 1960s and 1970s on strikes tended to ignore that factor, *Les manifestations de rue en France* shows very convincingly how new theoretical insights into collective action can be applied to the practice of historical research. The emphasis is shifted from the structural factors that cause collective action to contextual and even situational factors. *Mutatis mutandis*, greater consideration is given thus to the contingent and the coincidental, without necessarily ignoring the importance of the structure. However, there is a tendency to abandon determinism: within a restrictive structure context and situation are also important in shaping collective actions. The fluctuating character of the sociopolitical process is considered, and the author attempts to allow for the shifting alliances and coalitions between factions and the fact that this sometimes rapidly led to new configurations in power relationships. Time plays a key role in the author's account of fifty years of French street demonstrations. The volatile, fluid character of mobilizations becomes evident; in the past researchers have tended to misjudge the unity and permanence of the organization underlying a collective action. Tartakowsky's observations prove that demonstrations cannot simply be reduced to an organization and its potential for mobilization. Nor does this book make the mistake of identifying movements and protests with the organizations that supported them: in the past that led to the reification of movements that appeared to have well-defined objectives. The emphasis in the present book lies less on organization than on tactics and strategy and the shifting alliances and coalitions that factions entered into with one another. The attitude of the authorities and the state is a crucial factor in Tartakowsky's analysis, since it determines the strategic options available to the contestants. Finally, there is Tartakowsky's particular interest in the language and symbolism of demonstrations and in the political passion they unleashed. She thus arrives at a new definition of the demonstration as a modus of sociability, of socialization even, and as a political phenomenon, in which history resonates:

[...] *la manifestation devient une des modalités du cheminement de l'histoire dans la politique et d'inscription de la conjoncture dans la longue durée, celle de la mémoire du peuple ou d'une nation. Elle signifie donc quelque chose du rapport des masses à l'histoire, quelque chose de sa possible portée politique. Cette circulation de l'histoire s'opère par relais successifs. Elle permet à chaque manifestation de s'inscrire dans une chaîne signifiante intégrant chaque événement singulier dans l'histoire de toutes les manifestations antérieures [...]. Loin d'être une quelconque 'écume des luttes', elle tiendrait plutôt du 'sel de la terre', faisant rejaillir à la surface de la politique la mémoire et l'émotion comme autant de possibles moteurs de la mobilisation* (p. 20).

Tartakowsky's chronological narrative is sprinkled with such reflections and vivid insights that clearly transcend the French *casus* and provide a multitude of perspectives for comparative research. Paradoxically then, it is unfortunate that at various points the author unconsciously ascribes an exceptional status to her French demonstrations and thereby risks isolating them from analogous developments in the rest of western Europe. Undoubtedly the francocentricity of this book will particularly strike researchers of collective action in small countries (such as me). It nonetheless permits a reading based not only on the French experience (as I have attempted to make clear in this review). This is the book of a Marxist-trained historian who has absorbed the "linguistic turn" in her work in both a practical and an exciting way. Moreover, reading it instils a sense

of nostalgia for the days of the *doctorat d'état*, of which this substantial volume is an adaptation. To write an "ordinary" *thèse* of such import is quite simply impossible.

Gita Deneckere

LIEBICH, ANDRÉ. *From the Other Shore. Russian Social Democracy after 1921*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass.) [etc.] 1997. xii, 476 pp. Ill. £31.95.

In the early 1920s the cream of the Russian Social Democratic Workers' Party (RSDRP) left Russia involuntarily. The socialist Revolution, to the realization of which these Mensheviks had contributed their might, had taken a turning other than the one intended. However, the Mensheviks considered the harm inflicted upon the Revolution by the Bolshevik (or communist) sister party to be reparable. Within a few years, they would return to Russia to help realize true socialism; at least this is what they wrongly expected.

When I once referred to the illustrious journal *Sotsialisticheskii vestnik* (*The Socialist Courier*), published by the Mensheviks outside Russia for over forty years after 1921, as an emigré journal, I was rebuked, kindly but resolutely, by the last surviving member of their Foreign Delegation (by then an elderly colleague of mine at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam). The *Vestnik*, he insisted, was no émigré journal, but the central organ of the RSDRP. It was smuggled into Russia and also read in the highest circles there. The Mensheviks did not even admit new members: only those who had already joined in Russia were accepted.

The Mensheviks have often been depicted as the party of democratic socialism, and in that sense the alternative to totalitarian communism. However, André Liebich's learned study of Menshevism after the Revolution convincingly shows that this is a distorted view. Only after World War II did the remaining Mensheviks turn to criticizing Stalinism from an anti-totalitarian point of view, appealing to the values of democracy. Within the leading party organization, the Foreign Delegation, this meant a victory of the right wing; the left wing, directed by the most prominent of the Mensheviks, Fedor Dan, broke away.

When in 1903 Russian social democracy fractured into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, the divisive element was not the acceptance or rejection of democracy. Both wings were Marxist and they agreed on many practical and theoretical matters. Liebich places them in a "broad continuum, each end of which is defined by a Bolshevik or Menshevik ideal type, but where the real historical actors find themselves cutting across the continuum at different angles and different points" (p. 32). Before the Revolution, one of the founders of the Bolshevik regime, Trotsky, had as a Menshevik sharply criticized the Bolshevik leader, Lenin; Stalin's prosecutor during the infamous show trials of the 1930s, Vyshinskii, had been a Menshevik as well. On the other hand, some prominent Mensheviks, like Woytinsky, Nicolaevsky, or Aronson, had a Bolshevik past.

After 1917 the Mensheviks began to criticize the Bolshevik regime from a Marxist point of view. They accepted the October Revolution, and their opposition was a loyal one, within the framework of the Soviet system. It was the so-called "Martov line", named after the Menshevik leader, Iulii Martov. Without any problem they were prepared to sacrifice the democratically chosen parliament, the Constituent Assembly –

which had been disbanded by the Bolsheviks – for the sake of the Soviets; for in their eyes the parliament was a “counter-revolutionary” bastion. “Given such an option between general democratic and specific class values, the Mensheviks opted for the latter” (p. 73). During the Civil War they even offered military support to the regime against the “counter-revolution”. Pressure from the Russian and international workers’ movement was needed to put the Revolution back on track.

However, after the early 1920s Russia no longer had a workers’ movement able in any way to put pressure on the regime. On the other hand, during the interwar period the Mensheviks had considerable influence on the Labour and Socialist International in determining its position toward Soviet Russia. In fact, in no way did it result in a condemnation of the communist regime. Unlike Karl Kautsky, who referred to Soviet Russia as being reactionary or counter-revolutionary and advocated the ousting of the communist regime, the Mensheviks regarded it as a deformed but still revolutionary regime that should not be overthrown.

After Martov’s death in 1923 his line was continued by the new party leader, his brother-in-law, Fedor Dan. The right-wing minority was much more critical toward the Soviet regime. However, during the second half of the 1930s, after the rise to power of the National Socialists, the balance shifted. Dan moved to the left, increasingly becoming an apologist of Soviet socialism; the party centre, led by Abramovitch, now united with the right wing. In 1940 the Foreign Delegation broke up.

If the Mensheviks refused to be called emigrés, they were certainly exiles, even plurally. After the communists had thrown them out of Russia, the National Socialists drove these socialists (most of them Jews) out of Berlin and then Paris. During the 1940s the surviving members of the Menshevik Party assembled in New York. They had lost their influence in the international socialist movement, and their ranks were depleted in the absence of new members. By now they had shifted their course in an anti-communist, anti-totalitarian direction. Some of them even became disenchanted with Marxism.

“The Mensheviks wanted to be foot soldiers of the Revolution but found themselves soldiers in the cold war”, writes Liebich (p. 309). Although their anti-Sovietism after World War II was hardly the logical outcome of the traditional “Martov line”, I do not share Liebich’s disparaging attitude toward that anti-Sovietism. One could scarcely expect the Mensheviks to be more nuanced toward a regime that had killed almost all their political associates and relatives remaining in Russia. (Abramovitch’s son was even kidnapped by the communists in Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War; he disappeared without a trace and was undoubtedly killed.)

Liebich makes no comment on the mistaken claim that Groman, Rubin and Sukhanov were still alive during the 1940s and 1950s (p. 214); in fact they too had perished during the Stalinist terror. Despite this, as Liebich has discovered, once in the United States the Mensheviks were subject to persistent investigation by the FBI, even during the height of their anti-communism. By making a comparison between fascism and communism, they seriously contributed to the theory of totalitarianism. Kremlinology and Sovietology are also greatly indebted to them.

The Mensheviks turned out to be unable to change or even predict the course of the Soviet regime. Its expected evolution toward “Thermidor” and “Bonapartism” did not materialize, nor was the Revolution put back on the right track. Stalinism came in its stead. From a political point of view, the history of Menshevism has been full of illusions and failures. Intellectually, however, the “extended Menshevik family” has been

of pre-eminent importance, and André Liebich has superbly described and analysed this.

Marc Jansen

LEVINE, ROBERT M. *Father of the Poor? Vargas and his era*. [New Approaches of the Americas.] Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 1998. x, 193 pp. Ill. £35.00; \$54.95. (Paper: £12.95; \$15.95.)

Getúlio Vargas was, as Robert Levine states, the most influential Brazilian of the twentieth century. His two periods of rule, 1930–1945 and 1951–1954, have left a statist, nationalist and populist legacy that the present neo-liberal government in Brazil is rather gingerly seeking to eliminate.

Vargas initially came to power through a coup d'état, the consequence of economic difficulties brought on by the Depression. The economic crisis had also further lessened the ability of a narrowly-based liberal state to meet demands for political and social inclusion from provincial oligarchies and an increasingly important working class. Vargas headed a rather heterogeneous coalition, united only in its desire to establish a strong and centralized state.

For most of his first period in office, Vargas governed as a dictator, showing as much brutality as he thought necessary to maintain himself in power.¹ While not exactly fascist, the regime adopted a number of corporatist measures and deployed a fair amount of the fascist kitsch and public theater common to many right-wing regimes of the period. Although the practical benefits of Vargas's social measures fell far short of what the government claimed and may have been, as Levine maintains, "essentially manipulative", Vargas did offer workers notably new forms of recognition, as well as new expectations. These elements, along with Vargas's attempts at populist mobilization and his skillful manipulation of nationalist sentiments, help account both for his removal from office by the military in 1945 and his victory in the presidential election of 1950.

Levine wrote the first serious academic study of the 1930s Vargas government some thirty years ago.² Surprisingly, in view of the enormous growth and professionalization of Brazilian historiography in recent years, there is still no satisfactory biography of Vargas, despite his importance. Vargas's papers are readily available, as are those of many of the major figures of his government. The CPDOC in Rio de Janeiro, which houses most of this material, also conducted a number of interviews, beginning in the late 1960s, with the surviving leaders of the Vargas period. Political police records are now available, albeit under some restrictions, and Levine includes several telling quotations from this new source.

The present book consists of 138 pages of text and appears in a series, "New Approaches to the Americas", aimed at students and the general public. Levine is quite good at identifying questions concerning Vargas and his times. He has also sought to go beyond a conventional political narrative and, in an effort to give readers an idea of Vargas's effect on people's lives, includes an appendix of oral history interviews, letters

1. Elizabeth Cancelli, *O mundo da violência: a polícia da era Vargas* (Brasília, 1993).

2. Robert M. Levine, *The Vargas Regime* (New York, 1970).

to Vargas, and some quite interesting photographs. Nevertheless, the book inevitably reflects the weakness of existing social history on the period, that is to say the lack of efforts to reread political dynamics from the point of view of society.

Vargas could certainly be a rather enigmatic character. Levine, following the line of most Brazilian writers, remarks several times on Vargas's guile, contradictions and inscrutable style. The Introduction to the book is entitled "Vargas as Enigma". It is easy to make too much of this. Vargas, I suspect, was something of a sphinx without a riddle, or at least not a very complicated one. Like most politicians, he enjoyed power and found it useful to keep his opponents (as well as his allies) guessing about his intentions. As Levine recognizes, Vargas could be quite deft at tactical maneuvering, but lacked much of a strategic vision. His instincts remained deeply conservative, though his later populist and nationalist style disguised this to some extent. When the contradictions of populist economic policy reached an impasse by raising expectations to unrealistic levels, and confronted Vargas with a second and final removal from power by the military, he committed suicide rather than attempt resistance.

The book contains a number of odd errors. João Goulart was never Vargas's vice-president, nor was he "forced out of the cabinet by the military upon Vargas's death", since he had been dismissed in a famous crisis several months earlier. Vargas did not serve as head of state for twenty-one years, but eighteen and a half. University entrance examinations are not *vestibulários*, but *vestibulares*. The state petroleum company, Petrobrás, created by Vargas, may have been many things, but it was not a "cartel". Nor did 120 per cent of the population live below the poverty line, as in the phrase: "From 60 to 65 percent of all northeasterners were living below the poverty line in 1994; the figure may have been double that in earlier decades."

Some of the political judgements are also odd. The attempted putsch, led by communists in 1935, is certainly not easy to explain, but to characterize it as a "popular-front insurrection" or to conclude that the incident illustrates "the sorry unworldliness of the Latin American left" hardly clarifies matters.³ Nor does Levine seem to appreciate the complex position of the Brazilian Communist Party after World War II, when the leadership was committed, for various tactical reasons, to supporting government policies against strikes and wage increases, while the rank-and-file mobilized to restore living standards that had fallen drastically toward the end of the war.⁴ More seriously, the author does not quite recognize that Brazilian populism in practice was less a paternalistic manipulation from the top downward than the basis for struggle and for hard political and economic bargaining.⁵

On the whole, the book is rather generous toward Vargas, though recognizing the limited scope of most of his social programs. Levine goes so far as to say that "to Vargas's credit, except for ferocious police repression of the left, he stressed the positive: building the nation, erasing regional inequalities, promoting unity". Since much the same could be said of Mussolini and, with small changes in wording, about some of

3. See particularly Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, *Estratégias da ilusão: a revolução mundial e o Brasil, 1922–1935* (São Paulo, 1991).

4. See Hélio da Costa, *Em busca da memória: comissão de fábrica, partido e sindicato no pós-guerra* (São Paulo, 1995).

5. For some examples, see Fernando Teixeira da Silva, *A carga e a culpa: os operários das docas de Santos* (São Paulo, 1995), and Paulo Fontes, *Trabalhadores e cidadãos* (São Paulo, 1997).

the worst dictators of the century, Levine has moved into a decidedly delicate area, though he has a certain amount of company.

A lively debate has arisen in the last few years in Brazil, primarily over the question of populism, but more broadly as an attempt to defend at least parts of the nationalist and statist Vargas tradition.⁶ This effort breaks with the dominant academic interpretations of recent decades, which have viewed that tradition as largely pernicious, and as having created serious obstacles to the emergence of more democratic political practices. In part, this re-evaluation is a response to the neoliberal enthusiasms of the current government, but it also suggests that Vargas, forty-five years after his death, continues to pose some of the central questions of Brazilian politics.

Michael Hall

CRANKSHAW, OWEN. *Race, Class and the Changing Division of Labour under Apartheid*. Routledge, London [etc.] 1997. ix, 214 pp. £45.00.

Owen Crankshaw's *Race, Class and the Changing Division of Labour under Apartheid* examines the changing labor process and racial division of labor under apartheid, focusing on the period between 1965 and 1990. Interspersed with detailed quantitative data is an insightful analysis of changes in the apartheid economy in this period, and on the implications of such changes for our understanding of the relationship between apartheid and capitalism.

The author contends that, despite apartheid's formal commitment to white supremacy in the labor market, there was a steady movement of "black" South Africans (Africans, Coloreds and Indians) into semiprofessional, routine white-collar, artisanal and semiskilled work from the 1960s onwards. At the same time, however, unskilled and menial labor – subject to relatively low wages and high unemployment – remained the preserve of Africans, who constituted eighty-seven per cent of unskilled manual laborers and seventy-nine per cent of menial service workers in 1990 (pp. 149–151). Crankshaw suggests that the result was a highly stratified African population, indicating that "class", rather than race, could become the primary determinant of inequality in the "new South Africa".

I will examine some of these findings in more detail below. It is useful first to situate Crankshaw's study within debates on the relationship between race and class in South African studies. At the height of the sanctions campaign against apartheid South Africa, some scholars were arguing that increased capitalist investment – rather than disinvestment – would undermine apartheid. According to this argument, the capitalist development would undermine apartheid by economically and socially integrating South African society.

This view was rooted in the "liberal" interpretation of South African history, which held that apartheid policies – racially-based job reservation, indenture laws, a migrant labor system in which African men left their families in the "homelands" while working in the cities, and controls over the movement of Africans through pass laws – were the

6. See, for example, Angela de Castro Gomes, "O populismo e as ciências sociais no Brasil", *Tempo*, 1 No. 2 (1996), pp. 31–58; Jorge Ferreira, *Trabalhadores do Brasil: o imaginário popular* (Rio de Janeiro, 1997); Daniel Aarão Reis, "A maldição do populismo", *Linha Direta*, 6–12 September 1997.

economically irrational result of the ingrained prejudices of Afrikaner nationalists or of the white working class. These policies undermined economic growth by creating skill shortages, low worker productivity, and high job turnover. The liberal scholars had faith that capitalism would overcome apartheid by breaking down the racial division of labor, raising unskilled wages, and advancing Africans into skilled jobs.

This view was attacked from the late 1960s by an emerging “radical” school of South African studies. Part of a vibrant upsurge of historical materialist scholarship on South Africa, the radical scholars challenged the liberals, arguing that apartheid-style policies were functional to capitalist development, providing the “super-exploited” and coerced African labor force that made the crucial mining and agricultural sectors profitable. Apartheid-style policies held African wages down, and undermined working-class organization by coercing African workers and dividing them from the mainly white skilled workers. According to such accounts, the once militant white working class was coopted into the “racial capitalist” status quo as a junior partner from the 1920s, through job reservation, union rights, and racially-biased social services.

The real driving force behind apartheid-style policies was, argued the radicals, big capital, which had fought for these policies since South Africa’s “industrial revolution” began in the 1870s with the discovery of vast diamond and gold deposits. Indeed, it was at this point – and not in 1948 with the election of the National Party – that modern apartheid emerged. Apartheid was thus entrenched by capitalist development. This coherent historical materialist analysis of racial discrimination contrasts favorably with the psychological models that mark much of the current international literature on racism such as some “whiteness” studies.

In retrospect, the “liberal–radical debate” was flawed in several ways. The exponents tended to argue past each other, the liberals focusing on manufacturing industry, the radicals on mining and agriculture. The start of a severe economic crisis in South Africa in the early 1970s – following an unprecedented boom in the 1960s – posed further problems. A number of radicals conceded that apartheid had undermined the by now dominant manufacturing sector by limiting domestic demand amongst Africans and creating a skills shortage through job reservation and unequal schooling. The relationship between apartheid and capitalism was thus now seen as historically contingent, rather than as necessary. The liberal scholars seemed partly vindicated, and could also point to some evidence of rising average real African wages and African advancement up the occupational ladder – yet not to increased social integration or markedly less racial inequality. The radicals argued that this was because a “floating” color bar reproduced the racial division of labor: African upward mobility followed on the heels of the movement of whites into even higher strata.

The debate was marred by a lack of empirical research to support each position, the liberals relying on a-historical economic models and both sides on less than comprehensive data. It is here that the real merit of Crankshaw’s work lies. Painstakingly reanalyzing government data on the occupational structure, he is able to test the arguments of both schools. Using labor process theory to understand the relationship between capitalist development and changes in the division of labor, Crankshaw allocated 600 occupations into eleven categories: top management, middle management, supervisors and foremen, professionals, semiprofessionals, routine white-collar workers, routine security workers, menial service workers, artisans and apprentices, machine operatives and semi-skilled workers, and unskilled manual laborers.

Overall, Crankshaw found a substantial African advance into routine white-collar

and semiprofessional jobs from the mid-1960s onwards, and into the skilled trades in the 1980s. Africans made up fifteen per cent of routine white-collar workers in 1965, but thirty-one per cent in 1990, twenty-four per cent of all employees in semiprofessional jobs in 1965 but forty-one per cent in 1990, and two per cent of artisans in 1979 but nineteen per cent of artisans in 1990 (p. 17). The number of Africans employed as foremen or supervisors also increased from thirteen per cent in 1965 to thirty per cent in 1989 (p. 17). In manufacturing, the proportion of African semiskilled machine operative labor rose from sixty-five to eighty-six per cent between 1965 and 1990 (pp. 39–42). There was also a rapid increase in the number of Africans employed in semiprofessional occupations, particularly as nurses or teachers in the segregated state apparatus: their numbers rose from 51,023 in 1965 to 327,000 in 1990, or 41.1 per cent of all semiprofessionals (p. 144).

At first glance, the figures seem to vindicate the liberal case that economic growth would overcome apartheid policy. The boom of the 1960s boosted demand for routine white-collar work in the tertiary sector (particularly in transport, finance and commerce) and outstripped the supply of appropriately skilled white labor in the 1970s. African employment in these categories rose from 89,425 in 1965 to 300,90 in 1990 (p. 145). The chronic shortage of skilled white labor that developed in construction, manufacturing and mining in the 1960s was met by the mechanization and the fragmentation of the skilled trades, leading to a rapid expansion of semiskilled African labor. The expansion of semiprofessional employment was itself linked to economic demands for a more educated workforce.

Yet these occupational changes do not seem to have fundamentally changed the racial division of labor. Crankshaw emphasizes that management and the professions remained almost entirely white. In 1965, ninety-eight per cent of management jobs were held by whites, declining only by ten per cent by 1990, whilst the percentage of white professionals had only declined by seventeen per cent from ninety-eight per cent by the same date (p. 18). Whites continued to be disproportionately represented in the higher levels of the job market. In manufacturing, there were 128,723 white frontline supervisors in 1990, 100,267 white semiskilled operatives and 190,100 artisans and apprentices (pp. 147–149).

Job fragmentation tended to *compensate* for the shortage of skilled white labor, rather than *replace* existing white labor, and new occupations for artisans opened up in machine maintenance and repair. While opposing job fragmentation, the white trade unions were willing to retreat on the issue in return for government-approved policies that assured their continued dominance of the skilled trades, such as preferential promotion by employers and special government retraining programs. This trade-off reflected the limited power of organized white labor, which made concession after concession on its control of skilled work, thereby further undermining its power. White trade unions in the routine white-collar sectors did not oppose African advancement, whilst the issue of job competition did not arise amongst semiprofessionals who were working in segregated institutions.

This seems to vindicate the radical scholars' notion of a "floating" color bar, at least in industry. Yet Crankshaw also argues that the radicals downplayed the extent to which African upward mobility took place: focusing on the limited *relative* size of the African semiprofessional strata, for example, they failed to note its dramatic *absolute* growth.

The implication – also downplayed by the radicals – was a rise in average real wage gains by Africans, although this was confined to those moving upwards: better pay

reflected new occupational levels, rather than a better rate for the job. Nor could the “floating” color bar rise indefinitely: whites’ movement into higher posts (combined with raises and bonuses for accepting fragmentation) did initially lead to higher average white incomes but there were only so many such posts. Once whites had become concentrated in the higher strata, their wages began to stagnate and then decline in real terms from the early 1970s (pp. 98–101). The result was some narrowing of the overall wage gap between African and white earners.

Overall, then, the result of occupational restructuring in South Africa from the 1960s onwards was a dual pattern of inequality: a continuing apartheid wage gap *between* whites and Africans as a whole, and a growing occupational wage gap *amongst* Africans.

Crankshaw’s superb work is a useful contribution to our understanding of the ongoing changes within South African society, and a critical assessment of both liberal and radical accounts of apartheid and capitalism. The implications of these social changes for South African political and social struggles remain unclear.

Crankshaw suggests that “class” divisions are becoming more salient – pointing to inequality within each race, and social differentiation amongst Africans as expressed in the emergence of homogenous “middle class” areas in African townships and movement into white districts – but does not clarify what he means by “class”. This interpretation is problematic, because it is striking that much of the African upward mobility identified by Crankshaw took place through the restructuring of blue-collar work – the growth of the semiskilled category and an increase in the number of African artisans – and through the expansion of lower-level white-collar occupations. The only exceptions may be the semiprofessional and supervisory layers, and the professional and managerial strata shown by Crankshaw to be of negligible size.

In other words, the occupational restructuring identified by Crankshaw was concentrated largely on occupations that fall *within the broad working class* (at least, as defined by writers such as Wright, who Crankshaw dismisses). Hence, whilst Crankshaw’s data clearly demonstrates an erosion of much (but not all) of the racial division of labor, it indicates not so much a *class stratification amongst Africans but a recomposition of the African working class* under the impact of capitalist restructuring. It is not insignificant that semiskilled African workers form the core constituency of South Africa’s labor movement.

That Crankshaw shies away from class categories as too crude an analytical tool is a pity, because his own conclusions draw on an unstated and problematic notion of class, seemingly centered on “income and occupational divisions” (p. 119) – a mainstream sociological notion of class division at odds with the materialist roots of labor process theory and the sophistication of Crankshaw’s analysis.

A transformation of the occupational structure set to have a far greater impact than a restructuring of mainly working-class and middle-class jobs is the rapid emergence of an African bourgeoisie in South Africa in the 1990s. This layer has grown rapidly, expanding (by some estimates) its control of South African stocks from less than one per cent in 1994, to ten per cent four years later. Some have argued that this layer now dominates the ruling African National Congress, and is a key mover for that party’s abandonment of its quasi-Keynesian economic policies in mid-1996 for orthodox neo-liberal policies, despite the opposition of its trade union allies. A follow-up to Crankshaw’s study in ten years time would be most revealing.

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