

culture in magazine and newspaper cartoons. Higbie's analysis, which documents the depiction of masculinity in images and the gendered character of consciousness, is both innovative and compelling.

Images speak, but how they are received has long been a challenge for scholars of media and representation. The problem no less troubles Higbie's project. The "labor's mind" he describes is that of a class fraction of left activists. The typicality of these activists and the resonance of their position remains unclear, especially as one moves into the post-war era. Activists may have claimed "a collective subjectivity" (p. 114), but such an assertion feels less viable in a post-war era marked by events, such as the 1970 Hard Hat Riot. Still, Higbie productively tackles the ambiguity of class position. He references the post-war muddiness of class when an increasingly large percentage of working people begin to attend college and reminds readers often of the liminal position of the writer-scholar-educator as working-class cultural worker. Higbie notes, however, at the end of his third chapter, how post-war industrial labor relations countered ideas about the murkiness of class or the notion of class fractions with the notion that there were, in fact, many working classes (p. 82). One need not embrace the idea of many working classes to acknowledge workers divide into many diverse groups. In that respect, both post-war ideological pluralism and the evidence of class fractions with a solitary class both speak to limitations implicit in the notion of a single labor mind. Labor is of many minds, and with Higbie's helpful start, scholars must now move on to examine the character of the labor mind in its diverse and changing formations.

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COLE, PETER. *Dockworker Power. Race and Activism in Durban and the San Francisco Bay Area.* [The Working Class in American History.] University of Illinois Press, Urbana (IL) 2018. xiii, 286 pp. \$99.00. (Paper: \$35.00.)

The first three words of this book read: "Dockworkers have power" (p. 1). They capture the essence of this fascinating and closely researched work by Peter Cole, Professor of History at the Western Illinois University. Cole considers how, in Durban and in San Francisco, dockworkers used this power, for example, to fight for racial equality, thus revealing how the history of labour unions is also about idealism and solidarity. In contrast to the view of Sidney and Beatrice Webb, of unions as introverted organizations of wage earners set up to bargain and protect their own interests and the interests of their members, this book concentrates on the outward aspect of labour organizations. The history of how dockworkers from one continent solidarized with workers in another continent uncovers this oft-forgotten aspect of unionism. This is a book on how workers' struggles have often been conducted in the name of universal values, such as equality among mankind. Cole, the author of *Wobblies*

on the Waterfront,¹ is an expert on dockworkers' history in the United States. In his previous book, he identified the connection between unionism and idealism, unveiling the anti-racist and solidarity struggles of American workers. In *Dockworker Power*, the author takes the analysis to the next stage, and reveals the history of transnational activism between workers in the United States (San Francisco) and those in South Africa (Durban). Cole has engaged in extensive research on the transnational and transcontinental aspect of American labour unions. In 2013, an article by Cole appeared in the *International Review of Social History (IRSH)*,² and Chapter six of this book is a re-elaboration of that article. This underpins the solidity of the author's research, which is based on an extensive use of primary sources, archival documents, as well as interviews conducted both in North America and in Africa.

A comparison between two apparently distant realities always brings with it a certain number of complications. An effort at re-conceptualization was necessary in order to be able, for example, to compare social movement unionism (South Africa) and the civil rights movement (United States), two apparently similar social phenomena, but indeed not identical. These difficulties are apparent in Chapter two, where Cole puts together the two realities. Cole's crusade consists of taking American labour history outside its national borders, across the oceans, in order to de-provincialize it. This methodological approach based on connections and comparisons, and essentially non-nationalistic in character, is perhaps what makes this book a distinctive and unique example of the global labour history of unionism. It is no coincidence that the book has been endorsed by Markus Rediker, a renowned global historian and co-author of the *Many-Headed Hydra* (2000),³ a must-read for the global social history of the Atlantic.

As already hinted, a comparative methodology, especially on a global scale, invariably involves some risks concerning the comparability of the case studies. In South Africa, apartheid was an institutionalized form of racism implemented by a white minority in a desperate attempt to preserve their hegemony in a context of changing settler colonialism in the face of growing political awareness by the black majority. In the US, the black dockworkers were part of a minority whose history is of course closely connected to colonialism, but for whom the racial inequality and racism they faced was not as explicitly institutionalized as in South Africa. In responding to this, it is important to point out that the focus of the book is not so much on racism as on the intersections between change in industrial relations and workers' power. Cole uses racism as a variable to measure the level of workers' power in history.

Apart from looking at labour internationalism and international and transnational solidarity among left-wing workers' movements, the book deals with another important theme, among many, in global labour and working-class history: technological change (the port of San Francisco was the first to fully containerize) and the increasing or decreasing power of labour unions in the transport sector, crucial for capitalist expansion and economic growth. The centrality of transport and shipping for the development of global capitalism is well known. The history of transport labour was the theme of a special issue of the *IRSH* in

1. Peter Cole, *Wobblies on the Waterfront: Interracial Unionism in Progressive-Era Philadelphia* (Urbana, IL, 2007).

2. *Idem*, "No Justice, No Ships Get Loaded: Political Boycotts on the San Francisco Bay and Durban Waterfronts", *International Review of Social History*, 58:2 (2013), pp. 185–217.

3. Markus Rediker, *Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston, MA, 2000).

2014.⁴ Reducing transport time is essential to capitalist competition and, according to Cole, dockworkers are very conscious of how crucial their labour is. This is also the reason why dockworkers have been able to negotiate better conditions than workers in other sectors during the mechanization process, which did not produce the same upheaval as in other sectors, such as textiles or agriculture.

The effectiveness of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) in the San Francisco Bay Area in terms of integrating black and white dockworkers and longshore men is particularly interesting. This is especially so because the events preceded the civil rights movement. Similarly, in Durban, the dockworkers' unions represented a vanguard, if not *the* vanguard, of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa since the 1930s, well before the passing of the Freedom Charter of 1955. The Durban strikes in the late 1960s and early 1970s represent the culminating moments of dockworkers' labour and anti-racist struggles, and Cole argues that they occurred precisely because of the realization on the part of the workers of how crucial their labour power was for the South African and perhaps global economy. It is automation that made workers unionize and unite. Unlike other industries, the endogenous change produced by containerization since the 1960s changed in a few years the way ports had worked for centuries, but dockworkers managed to retain their power and use it – by striking – to smooth the changes caused by automation. This power was also used for transnational action.

The history of the effects of technological change – containerization – is a more complicated matter. The dockworker has become more akin to a crane operator sitting alone in his cabin rather than a member of a crew or gang unloading the ships. There is a difference between San Francisco and Durban. In San Francisco, dockworkers were successful in negotiating. Cole himself states “paradoxically, what financially benefitted individual members hurt the union and the larger cause”. In South Africa, containerization broke the power of the Durban dockworkers. These differences did not prevent transnational solidarity as recently as in 2008, when Durban dockworkers boycotted a Chinese cargo of weapons for the Mugabe government/regime in Zimbabwe. However, is this history a triumphant one? In this respect, Cole does not offer clarification. For example, as explained by Sam Moyo, a Zimbabwean radical intellectual, Mugabe had been an advocate of anti-racism and anti-capitalism in Southern Africa. Therefore, the question remains, what were Durban dockworkers really fighting for?

Looking at the situation in the Global North, the influence of unions seems to have diminished even further as a result of ongoing automation alongside containerization. This book, although not directly assessing the issue of what workers in transport should do to strategize their actions, invites historians to switch their perspective and revert towards the future of workers' unionism in neo-liberal times where capitalism is no longer challenged by any political, social, or cultural force, almost like a continuation of this story of dockworkers in San Francisco and Durban. In an ever increasingly integrated (globalized?) capitalist economy, can workers organize, unionize, bargain, and maintain their struggle at a sectoral or national level, or should they transpose their action to a transnational dimension? With this brilliant work on dockworkers' power, Cole implicitly invites other labour, social, and economic scholars to pick up from where he leaves off and maybe develop a new analysis

4. “Labour in Transport: Histories from the Global South, c.1750–1950”, *International Review of Social History*, 59:SI22 (2014).

of labour strategy for transnational solidarity. Hopefully, scholars will meet this challenge with the same degree of verve and insight as that displayed by Peter Cole.

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STUTJE, JAN WILLEM. Hendrik de Man. Een man met een plan. Polis, Kalmt-hout 2018. 230 pp. Ill. € 35.00.

Hendrik de Man (1885–1953) is one of the most-studied Belgian socialist leaders: since the 1970s, several books and articles have been published on this theorist of socialism. An association in Flanders (the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium) keeps his memory alive even today. De Man became famous with his Labour Plan to fight the economic depression of the 1930s in order to avoid the victory of fascism, as had occurred in 1933 in Germany, where De Man had been teaching from 1927 to 1933. In 1940, however, De Man opted to collaborate with the Nazi occupier. He was a close political advisor to the king, who decided to stay in Belgium after the capitulation of the Belgian army and was willing to play a political role in a Nazi-dominated Europe. In December 1941, by which time it had become clear that there was no prominent political role for De Man possible, he moved to France, and later to Switzerland. He never returned to Belgium, where he had been convicted for political collaboration in March 1947. De Man died in a car accident in 1953.

De Man's political-ideological trajectory moved from the left wing of the Belgian Workers Party to the extreme right. De Man started as a leftist critic of Belgian reformism, but soon became a party official in workers' education. He served as an officer in the Belgian army in World War I and made a major contribution to the revision of Marxism in the 1920s. In the 1930s, his Labour Plan marked the start of a turn to political authoritarianism after a deceptive period as a minister (De Man became Minister of Finance, which is exceptional for a social democrat in Belgium). De Man distanced himself from socialist internationalism in favour of a *socialisme national* in the late 1930s – leading to sharp conflicts with the classic reformists in the party, especially Emile Vandervelde (president of the Second International) – to end up as an ally of the Nazi occupier, who would, De Man believed, finally bring the victory of socialism. This remarkable ideological trajectory did not preclude the fact that De Man considered himself a socialist throughout his life.

In this biography, Jan Willem Stutje analyses the political trajectory of De Man in relation to his personal life story. For this well-written book, the author has consulted the relevant archives in Belgium and abroad and, remarkably, had access to De Man's personal state-security file. He has integrated the findings of the relevant literature (including older publications) written in Dutch as well as in French, avoiding the language bias often present in publications on Belgian history. Sources, especially De Man's autobiographies, are analysed critically.

Although De Man has already been researched extensively, this book is an eye-opener, revealing new facts and insights and offering keys to understand his peculiar political trajectory. De Man's authoritarianism and elitism, which has been described from an ideological