

## BOOK REVIEWS

ENER, MINE. *Managing Egypt's Poor and the Politics of Benevolence, 1800–1952*. Princeton University Press, Princeton [etc.] 2003. xxx, 195 pp. Ill. \$35.00; £22.95; DOI: 10.1017/S0020859005011879

This book is in three parts. The first deals largely with state poor relief during the first three quarters of the nineteenth century, from Muhammad Ali to Khedive Isma'il – a period marked by a change in the “politics of benevolence”. Although the inspiration was still religious, and though more traditional kinds of poor relief existed in the form of religious endowments (*awqaf*), the new institutions – the shelters for the poor of Cairo and Alexandria, state-run hospitals, an orphanage and foundling home, and insane asylums – gradually became concentrated in the hands of the emerging state, which exerted an ever-growing control over its citizens. This process of bureaucratization was best represented by the office of the Dabtiyya, which served both as centralized distributor of charity and as the main institution where the needy could apply for various kinds of relief.

Closely connected with the greater control over the poor was the changing public image of the poor. Following Europe, with which Egypt had close contacts, the poor (and especially beggars) were increasingly seen as a hazard to public health, order, and security. New ideas concerning public spaces, restrictions on the mobility of the poor, and responsibilities towards the poor emerged in the discourse on this group. Efforts were made to clean up the streets, and new taxonomies were drawn up distinguishing between the “needy poor” – who were “deserving” of assistance – and the “sturdy poor”, or able-bodied unemployed. Whereas the first were allowed access to relief institutions, the latter were systematically picked up by the police and returned to their villages, where they were forced to work the land. New regulations for institutions such as the Maristan al-Qalawun, a hospital, were also used to isolate the poor from the sick. As with other practices, the influence of medicine and new health standards imported from Europe played a role in these reforms. On the whole, concepts relating to the poor and health were increasingly based on the idea that the population of Egypt represented the wealth and power of the country, and was therefore of concern to its rulers.

In her account of the growing bureaucratization and introduction of the regime of surveillance, Mine Ener is careful, however, to steer clear of the image some scholars have portrayed of Egypt in this period as a state in complete control of its population. Rather than Bentham's panopticon, the result was a much more mixed bag. Crucial is her distinction between the intent and the outcome and the effect of the actions of philanthropists and the state. It is here that she introduces her key concept of “managing the poor”. Instead of exerting totalitarian control over the bodies of its citizens, the state was hampered in its regulation and surveillance of the poor by, on the one hand, the concept of Islamic benevolence, which meant citizens were entitled to charity, and, on the other, by the lack of funds and means to implement its policy.

Here lies the strength of Ener's research. Rather than just concentrating on the blueprints and the concepts of reformers, from which one could conclude that Egypt was transformed into a state under absolute control, she looks at how programmes were implemented and how they affected the poor. Most of her archival work concerns the

actual practice of poor relief as evidenced from the records of the Dabtiyya. Of particular interest are the data she has collected on the procedures of the largest poorhouse, the Takiyyat Tulun (now the famous Ibn Tulun mosque), on the eligibility for admission, duration of stay, and its multiple roles, as part shelter, part prison for instance. Especially revealing is the way its inhabitants never seem to have been subjected to complete control; they were able to make choices, and transgress rules and render them more pliable. Nevertheless, Ener repeatedly admits that social control was an important *raison d'être* of these new institutions, and one wonders whether she has not gone too far in condemning her Foucauldian predecessors for their efforts to demonstrate the control mechanisms implemented in Egypt at the time.

The second part of her book deals with the British occupation of Egypt from 1882 until the 1920s and 1930s and concentrates more on the discourse on poverty than on practical responses to that poverty. In an interesting chapter on the manner in which poverty was depicted in tour guides and cartoons in *Punch*, Ener demonstrates how the media and the press legitimated the British occupation of Egypt in 1882 by portraying the Egyptian khedives as unfit to rule, not because they mismanaged Egypt's finances but because they were unable to provide for their poor. Tourists were warned that everywhere they went they ran the risk of being assaulted by large numbers of beggars. In a less conspicuous form of Orientalism, these texts implied that the British had a moral duty to rule Egypt to save the population from its incompetent and morally decadent Muslim rulers, who were unfit and incapable of governing their population. An unfavourable comparison was made with Christian rulers, who *did* care for their poor and provide charity. The remarks of the English doctor William Yates are highly revealing in this context. He noted how the streets of Cairo were full of "water carriers, peddlers, beggars, saints, and women, naked children grubbing the dirt, charm vendors, [...], fakirs, lepers, jugglers and mountebanks, all passing and repassing in pursuit of their particular business" (p. 84). These depictions and the enframing of the wretched poor confirmed the tourists' moral and economic superiority, while the doctor's condemnation of lack of cleanliness as the result of Egypt's "diseased" nature, "backward civilization", and its "poverty and ignorance" justified its being occupied.

In line with the nature of the early Egyptian nationalism that was upheld by the elite at the beginning of the twentieth century, its members largely met the European challenge on its own terms. In the later chapters of her book, Ener describes the adoption of a form of poor relief that was devoid of the religious compassion of the earlier period and much more utilitarian. This new tone and content is represented in the papers and proposals behind private initiatives for poor relief, such as those of the Royal Society. Science and societal concerns predominated over moral obligations. Social engineering was geared to enhancing the productive capacity of the citizen – a term that, for the first time, took on a much more modern meaning, in the sense that individuals had become part of a nation. Meeting the imperialist discursive challenge, the new elite tried to assume responsibility for the poor, thereby creating new relationships of mutual responsibility. However, these new relationships were directed against the British, as it was considered a national duty to teach the poor the rudiments of health care and hygiene in order to build a stronger nation – one that could be independent. In the third and final part of her book, Ener shows how the trend towards the creation of a civil society was reversed and the shadows of a new authoritarian state revealed when the Ministry of Social Affairs was

established in 1939. From then on, private initiative was discouraged and the state regained control of those private initiatives that had sprung up during the previous thirty years.

Ener's book is undoubtedly a major contribution to our understanding of the politics of poor relief in the nineteenth century. She has resurrected the poor from amid the enormous diversity of sources under which they had been buried. Through her detailed accounts of individuals, she has also succeeded in bringing them to life in a more literal sense. Finally, her colonial discourse on poverty also rings true and gives new insights into how imperialism justified its colonization of Egypt. There are, however, serious flaws too. One of the most serious is the fact that the last part of the book is too cursory and fails to do justice to the subject. In effect, Ener's study really only covers the long nineteenth century, from 1800 to 1919; the post-1919 period is addressed in less than a chapter. Her book totally neglects even the secondary literature on the interwar years, let alone that for the period between the end of World War II and Nasser's coup d'état.

Secondly, though she refers throughout her book to a rhetoric of poverty since the rise of the new elite at the end of the nineteenth century, she scarcely analyses it. It is regrettable that she makes so little reference to such well-known Arabic newspapers as *al-Liwa'*, *al-Jarida*, or *al-Mu'ayyad*, or to other famous pamphlets or books written in the period, to illustrate how the "politics of poverty" was played out in the increasingly popular nationalist press. A third omission is that Ener does not really trace the gradual transformation of the traditional Islamic discourse on benevolence into a more rational and utilitarian discourse on poverty. Finally, although her concept of "managing" the poor is an interesting substitute for the more totalitarian one of surveillance, one does have the feeling that this concept is still too loose and ambivalent. Although the great strength of her work is that it includes the intent as well as the effect of reformers, in many cases, such as that of the juvenile delinquents described in one of the final chapters, she should give more credit to the scholars she criticizes. When she does come across examples of surveillance and control in both intent and practice, she would do well to acknowledge their existence and incorporate them into her conclusions and theoretical framework.

Roel Meijer

MARTEN-FINNIS, SUSANNE. *Vilna as a Centre of the Modern Jewish Press, 1840–1928. Aspirations, Challenges, and Progress*. Peter Lang, Oxford [etc.] 2004. 197 pp. € 37.10; DOI: 10.1017/S0020859005021875

The ultra-conservative Tsarist regime was well aware of the dangers of freedom of the press and speech during the nineteenth century. Despite the need to modernize the backward Russian economic and social structures, the authorities' fear of new political ideas and foreign influences retained the upper hand. Censorship of books, journals and newspapers severely hampered new developments and drove enlightened writers abroad.

Within the multi-ethnic framework of the Russian Empire, the Jews constituted an exception. They had been absorbed by Russia during the three partitions of Poland in the second half of the eighteenth century, but they could not find a place within the Russian social scene. They were neither nobles nor peasants, neither of the Orthodox Church nor of the Catholic Church, and they lived within their own religious and social confines. For a long time the repressive policy of the Russian government thwarted the wish of enlightened Jewish intellectuals to publish books and journals in Hebrew. There were

some abortive endeavours to publish cultural journals, but due to censorship and lack of financial backing these journals lasted just a few years.

Vilna, the capital of Lithuania, was an old and important centre of Jewish learning, and its Hebrew presses continued to produce traditional Hebrew religious works throughout the nineteenth century. However, thwarted by censorship and lack of funds, only two new Hebrew journals appeared. The first was published in 1841, but had to cease publication after just two issues. The second journal, *Ha-Karmel* (Vine Leaf), also had Russian and German supplements and was planned as a weekly and later as a monthly magazine. Between 1860 and 1880 fifty issues appeared. Several other endeavours came to nothing.

It was only at the end of the nineteenth century, after the foundation of the Jewish Social Democratic Party (Bund) in Vilna in 1897, that the cultural and political inertia of the Jews was transformed into feverish activity. In the early days of socialist propaganda among the Jews in the Russian Empire, the Jewish revolutionaries (mostly students at Russian universities) had become aware that the mass of the Jews could be reached only if they were addressed in Yiddish, their own language. From 1897 onward, the Bund therefore launched a propaganda offensive by publishing Yiddish newspapers, political and cultural journals, and brochures, many of which had to be printed outside the Russian Empire and smuggled into the country. Bund publications were also printed in Vilna, but the Bundist presses were seized by the secret police in 1898 and many of the collaborators were exiled to Siberia. It was not until after the outbreak of the Russian revolution of 1905 that the modern Jewish press could be established in Vilna.

From 1905 to 1928, eighty-nine journals were published in Vilna, most of them in Yiddish. Within a few years, the Yiddish language, which eastern European scholars had considered unfit for intellectual intercourse, had become an accepted vehicle, not only for political propaganda but also for literary and scholarly publication. Alongside the modernization of Hebrew, Yiddish changed from being a despised “jargon” into an acknowledged Jewish language. Even the Zionists, who favoured Hebrew as the language of a modern Jewish nation, had to acknowledge the importance of Yiddish as a language for political propaganda. At the Czernowitz conference in 1908 the cultural importance of both languages for Jewish life in general all over the world was officially recognized. Also, Zionist political propaganda had to use Yiddish, and at least seven Zionist journals appeared in Yiddish in Vilna up to 1928. The Bund was by far the most important organization in Jewish publishing in Vilna. It continued to publish even during World War I. But once Vilna had been incorporated into the new independent Republic of Poland in 1920 and the Jews officially recognized as a national minority, the number of Yiddish periodicals increased.

Marten-Finnis’s intensive research in libraries in Vilna, Kiev, Moscow, Paris, London, and New York has yielded a bibliography of ninety-five publications, many of which are rare or were even previously unknown. In her analysis, she describes the development of the Yiddish written language alongside that of the Bund’s socialist propaganda. The new political and social movement had to create a completely new vocabulary in Yiddish to explain its aims and ideals. Using a wealth of examples, the author shows how the idiom of Bundist publications was influenced by the Russian underground press as well as by the traditional Hebrew method of exposition through dialogue. After the Russian revolution of 1905, the Jewish socialist press could develop more or less unhindered. Consequently, the Bund was able to publish new literary journals in Vilna, in which young Yiddish writers presented their work.

Susanne Marten-Finnis has opened up a hitherto unknown field. She has not only brought to light the importance of Vilna's Jewish press for the modernization of Jewish life in eastern Europe, she has also set out new ways to study the origin and development of Yiddish as a modern language. Her book is an excellent introduction to a fascinating subject.

*Rena Fuks-Mansfeld*

HOFMEESTER, KARIN M. *Jewish Workers and the Labour Movement. A Comparative Study of Amsterdam, London and Paris, 1870–1914.* [Studies in Labour History.] Ashgate, Aldershot [etc.] 2004. xv, 346 pp. Ill. £57.50; DOI: 10.1017/S0020859005031871

This book is a welcome contribution to the little researched subject of Jews and the labour movement in western European cities. We learn a lot about Amsterdam, London, and Paris, their Jewish workers and their efforts to improve material and political conditions. Each case is set within the framework of a multi faceted analysis: (1) the origin and status of the Jewish community and the workers within it; (2) general socio-economic conditions and labour movements within the “host” societies; (3) general and labour attitudes toward Jews and Jewish workers, and the presence/absence and/or character of anti-Semitic hostility; (4) trade union and political activities of Jewish workers.

In contradistinction to London and Paris, the presence of Jewish workers in Amsterdam was not mainly the result of recent migrations. The Jewish community was an old ethno-religious minority and recognized as such. Anti-Semitism contributed little to the self-awareness of a distinct Jewish “ethnicity”. This distinctiveness was strengthened among workers due to their concentration within the diamond industry. But such peculiarities and others did not constitute a barrier to the gradual integration into general trade-union and political (social democracy) activities. Two processes were particularly helpful in this respect: the recognition of Jewish holidays by the general unions and the decline of religiosity among Jewish workers.

Massive Jewish migration to London at the end of the nineteenth century produced more problems and hostility than in Amsterdam. This contributed to the development of separate Jewish trade-union and political movements. Nationalism and anti-Semitism (especially during the Boer War) contributed to this development. But after 1904 relations with the general English trade unions and labour movements improved. When anti-alien bills and acts resurfaced in 1911, Jewish workers were sufficiently integrated into the British left to demand equal treatment.

Before 1914 (the scope of the book) eastern European Jewish migration to Paris was not as massive as to London. However, it was sufficient to scare the native community, who were involved in efforts to direct the Jews elsewhere. This contributed to the creation of a separate Jewish labour subculture. General ambivalence toward immigration as well as the Dreyfus Affair had a similar impact. After the affair, Jewish workers and the general leftist movements could grow closer. The figure of Bernard Lazare was prominent in this rapprochement, leading among others to the creation in 1911 of the first Paris labour paper in Yiddish – with the help of the CGT.

Karin Hofmeester has done a good job in highlighting the similarities and differences between the experiences in the three cities. Although starting from different points of

departure, all cases lead to specific forms of integration into general trade unions and – to a lesser extent – political labour movements. Differences concern language skills, legal status, political cultures, religion and group culture, prejudices, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, different working conditions, and corresponding strategies.

It will come as no surprise that, with the pace of integration, Zionist or other “separatist” strategies became less relevant. In this and other respects comparisons with other cities might prove useful. I myself did a study a long time ago (1978) on the “Jewish” district of Vienna (the Leopoldstadt), but with more focus on the interwar period.<sup>1</sup> Although there existed previous Jewish communities in the imperial capital, the object of my study was of relatively recent origin. Only after 1848, and especially after 1867, a new community came into being through migration from different parts of the Habsburg monarchy. While migrants from Bohemia and Moravia were assimilated within a relatively short time, due among other things, to their German language skills and their association with German culture, Jews from Galicia remained more traditional and continued to use Yiddish to a certain extent. Hungarians were somewhat in between those two categories.

Geographical origin and class status was also reflected in residential patterns – lower-class, Galicia-born and Yiddish speakers concentrating in the district of Leopoldstadt, which was in general not a typical working-class but rather a middle-class district. In 1910, Jews constituted some 34 per cent and in 1923 almost 39 per cent of the population. While assimilation progressed in other districts, in the Leopoldstadt, due to its concentration and continued immigration of traditional Jews, the identity of this community remained more visible. Although the population was only partly proletarian, because of the social force of anti-Semitism many Jews voted for social democracy and became involved in trade unions. Even if Austrian social democracy was not free from anti-Semitic currents, the party as such never raised anti-Semitic demands in its programme. And as liberalism waned at the end of the nineteenth century, social democracy remained almost the only option, since all other parties (Christian Socials, and German Nationalists in particular) engaged in anti-Jewish policies.

In spite of these difficult conditions no relevant specifically Jewish labour movement emerged. This was mainly due to two factors: (1) even those immigrants who spoke Yiddish acquired sufficient German language skills in quite a short time, due to the strong similarity between the two languages; (2) unlike in eastern Europe (or perhaps in Amsterdam) no specifically Jewish economic sector emerged in the sense of Jewish ownership and workforce. Within social democracy, assimilated Jews played a prominent role on the leadership level. As a rule they lost any affiliation with Judaism, some converting to Christianity. For more traditional newcomers, involvement in social democracy implied not only participation in a general struggle against exploitation (and anti-Semitism) but also starting a new life beyond their religious origins.

This was the general trend. In the Leopoldstadt, however, there were short periods of Zionist activism within and without the labour movement. With the beginning of World War I, masses of uprooted Jews arrived from Galicia, fleeing from advancing Russian troops. For a short while Poale Zion became part of the revolutionary wave that followed the October Revolution. Bourgeois Zionist parties proved more durable, but in the face of

1. John Bunzl, “Arbeiterbewegung, ‘Judenfrage’ und Antisemitismus. Am Beispiel des Wiener Bezirks Leopoldstadt”, in G. Botz (ed.), *Bewegung und Klasse. Studien zur österreichischen Arbeitergeschichte* (Wien [etc.], 1978), pp. 743–763.

the increasing fascist and Nazi threat other parties appeared as a better defence force. Zionism remained strong only within the Jewish community structures.

I hope that this example will stimulate further research. We should thank Karin Hofmeister for her contribution, and hope that she will pick up similar subjects in the future.

*John Bunzl*

PUSCHNERAT, TÂNIA. Clara Zetkin: Bürgerlichkeit und Marxismus. Eine Biographie. [Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für soziale Bewegungen, Schriftenreihe A: Darstellungen, Band 25.] Klartext Verlag, Essen 2003. 463 pp. Ill. € 29.90; DOI: 10.1017/S0020859005041878

Was Clara Zetkin a feminist by today's standard? Probably not. But was she deeply concerned about women's lives? Most definitely. Was Clara Zetkin a committed social democrat and communist? Yes. But was she free from bourgeois influence and immune to its milieu? No. The life of Clara Zetkin, including her Marxian legacy to feminism, often straddled this line of demarcation between "yes" and "no". In her biography of Clara Zetkin, Tânia Puschnerat places the avant-garde socialist precisely in the border zone between gender and class, bourgeois habitus and Marxist ideology, Marxian democracy and disciplined authoritarianism, and Stalinist culpability and victimhood. In the process, she rescues Zetkin's life from both rightist demonology and leftist heroes' cult. By suspending moral judgement and locating Zetkin's life in the historical context of social milieu and cultural tradition, Puschnerat gives an account of a life that, because of its ebbs and flows, is more compelling than that of a "great man" who resolutely pursued a unilinear path (pp. 10, 12).

If the history of mentality is the methodological underpinning of Puschnerat's study, enriching details are provided by the eastern archives opened up to western scholars after the "Fall". The direct use of the documents "as they are" in the archives of real socialist regimes reveals intentional omissions and petty forgeries pardoned in the name of the socialist cause. In Zetkin's case, the writings with strong Luxemburgist and pacifist tendencies, which are vital to understanding the late Zetkin, are intentionally omitted by the red-court historians. It is interesting to speculate on how Zetkin would have responded to the Party's posthumous censorship of her works. Would it have led her to a critique of her own role in the communist inquisition of the early 1920s, and necessarily to both the advocacy of the freedom of press and the negation of the orthodoxy-heresy dualism in Marxism? Or would she have endeavoured simply to make her own line the orthodox one in the Party and thereby repossess the sceptre of the communist inquisitor from the heretics of GDR communism? One can find answers to such questions between the lines of Puschnerat's biography.

Puschnerat shows that the socialization process of Clara Zetkin during her childhood and adolescence (1857–1878) was dominated by Lutheran Christianity and the bourgeois liberalism of 1848. Social democracy came relatively late to her life, by way of Lassalle's popular democracy and Russian populism. The legacy of Lutheranism and bourgeois liberalism imprinted in the adolescent Zetkin lingered even after her conversion to Marxism. These old footprints can be seen in Zetkin's Marxist discourse, tinged with religious metaphors, and in her emphasis of education as a means of perfecting individual



personality (pp. 22, 25ff). Once conjoined to the ascetic purist model of Russian populism, Zetkin's Lutheran legacy developed easily into a sort of maximalism of the Russian intelligentsia. Her conception of the Party as an educating organ of the proletarian mass can be traced back to the bourgeois pedagogy inherited from Auguste Schmidt. According to Puschnerat, it was not only social democracy but also Lutheran Christianity, bourgeois liberalism, and Russian populism that lay at the root of Zetkin's political thought.

This strange symbiosis of Lutheranism, bourgeois liberalism, Russian populism, and social democracy covered the formative years of social democratic thought in her life (1882–1890). Here, the author never fails to spot the continuity of religious puritanism and the bourgeois liberal's ideal of education in Zetkin. In Zetkin's scheme of education socialism, the educator proved to be a socialist elite with revolutionary vision and scientific knowledge who would lead the proletarian masses to become "new human beings" by teaching them the Christian-bourgeois virtues of education, will, discipline, self-sacrifice, and brotherhood, etc. Puschnerat thus finds a political religion in Zetkin's conception of scientific socialism; with its stress on antireligiosity and on material and technical progress, positivist Marxism bases itself paradoxically on quasi-religious political beliefs (p. 68). But it is little wonder that scientism as a re-enchanted belief system is different from scientific thought as disenchanting reasoning. The author might have broadened her analysis of the political religion in Zetkin's Marxism beyond Eric Voegelin to Max Weber. When one analyses Zetkin's Marxism as a political religion in the broader context of what Max Weber saw as modernity's disenchantment/re-enchantment, one can comprehend more coherently the voluntary Bolshevization and Stalinization of socialist intellectuals in the 1920s.

The "Party", "mass", "women's movement" and "education" were the central themes that occupied her thoughts in the heyday of Zetkin's socialist career (1890–1914). It is noteworthy that we can already see in the Zetkin of this period the germs of her later turn to Leninism after 1914 (p. 74). Besides the "ideological intransigency" and "dogmatic political purism" inherent to Russian maximalism, the authoritarian tenor of Zetkin's personality adumbrated the particular topography of her Marxism: the strange combination of Leninist authoritarian leadership and a Luxemburgian mystical conception of the masses (p. 88). Zetkin's preference for "Gemeinschaft" over "Gesellschaft", and her religious metaphors such as salvation, reveal her indebtedness to the various discourses about the crisis of modernity in *fin-de-siècle* Germany, such as those put forth by Wagner, Nietzsche, Le Bon, and Bergson. Even when Zetkin invented the idealist conception of "the proletariat for itself", she never abandoned her expectation of charismatic leadership. Zetkin saw no contradiction-ridden relationship between the proletarian mass and the leading elite insofar as the Party's leader incarnates the collective will of the proletariat.

The positing of the "ideal proletariat" is a typically elitist strategy of representing the masses. In a similar way, Zetkin constructed the proletarian femininity at some distance from the everyday lives of proletarian women. Influenced by bourgeois feminism, Zetkin emphasized women's economic independence, voting rights, and education. Incorporating traditional views of motherhood and wifeliness, Zetkin's discourse of femininity relied on metaphors of eugenics, social hygiene, and social Darwinism. What distinguishes Zetkin from bourgeois feminists, however, is her subjection of gender to class: "the emancipation of women as well as that of all men will be achieved only by emancipating labour from capital" (p. 132). Thus, traditional motherhood turns into proletarian motherhood, charged with the task of bearing and bringing up proletarian fighters. Puschnerat is right to point out that, in today's terms, it is hard to regard Zetkin as a feminist. Insofar as class



essentialism remains integral to Marxism, Marxism has difficulty accommodating contemporary feminism. A post-Marxist perspective could have strengthened the persuasive power of Puschnerat's argument over a broader terrain.

The outbreak of World War I signalled Zetkin's turn to communism. What fuelled her anger was not only the SPD leadership's betrayal but also the proletarian masses' voluntary mobilization under the banner of nationalism. These circumstances revealed the illusory nature of Zetkin's faith in the German proletariat and demanded a new orientation in theory and praxis. Leninist success in Russia led Zetkin to a socialist *realpolitik* justifying the irrelevance of the subjective will of the proletarian masses to the success of the revolution. Since the Party represents the collective will of the proletariat, which it then realizes through military discipline, the masses are obliged to obey the Party. She advocated this discipline to such an extent that she was prepared to argue that the illiteracy of the Russian masses was advantageous to the revolution since it allowed them to be tied to discipline imposed from above (p. 229). Given that this Leninist kernel could already be found in the young Zetkin, this was less of a radical turn than a "metamorphosis" attuned to new historical conditions (p. 198).

By the time Zetkin felt she was being fettered by this Leninist discipline, in the 1920s, it was too late for her to make another turn. Zetkin's success and failure, communist inquisitor and rightist convict, Stalinist guilt and victimhood, were head and tail of the same coin of the militaristic Party discipline. Zetkin was disciplined to such an extent that she herself supported a resolution of the Party prohibiting political activity on her part (p. 302). Once the hierarchical order of the communist parties had been established, with the Comintern at its top, the organizational discipline chained the KPD to the Comintern. Thus Zetkin's position fluctuated with the changing political tide in the socialist motherland. As corridor politics and secret diplomacy in the Kremlin gained importance, she was to lose the battles with the "Turkestans" of Bela Kun and Karl Radek, and the KPD's leftists. Zetkin's final struggle with the Comintern's leadership and the KPD leftists was also the swansong of this veteran revolutionary conservative, before her "inner emigration".

The most interesting theme in the final part of Puschnerat's study is the author's claim of a parallelism between Clara Zetkin and Carl Schmitt. Puschnerat points to antiliberal democracy, antipluralism, totalitarian tones, and communalism, etc., as attributes binding these two politically antagonistic thinkers. From the viewpoint of the history of mentality, she recognizes the affinity between Zetkin's image of the Soviet Union and Schmitt's ideal state (pp. 332–333). As she traces this affinity back to Rousseau's "organic democracy" and "general will", it goes beyond the history of mentality. It reveals a certain ideological limitation or danger inherent to modernist republicanism. According to Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, the "abstract machine of national sovereignty" underlies the cliché of "two extremes (communism and Nazism) [that] meet". It makes us rethink the people's sovereignty, republicanism, communist de-territorialization and re-territorialization, and totalitarianism. In fact, Zetkin's proletarian dictatorship and Schmitt's sovereign dictatorship could be transmuted reciprocally in the terrain of the nation-state.

A fifth wheel to the cart: neither Karl Radek nor Bella Kun was a "Turkestan". Clara Zetkin's "Turkestan" seems to be the equivalent of Rosa Luxemburg's "Tatar Marxism". Was it not perhaps something of a red Orientalism?

*Jie-Hyun Lim*

ALLEN, ROBERT C. *Farm to Factory. A Reinterpretation of the Soviet Industrial Revolution.* [The Princeton Economic History of the Western World.] Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J. [etc.] 2003. xv, 302 pp. £29.95; \$45.00; DOI: 10.1017/S0020859005051874

Historiography's assessment of the Soviet economic system has always drawn strongly on comparisons. Compared with the West, Soviet performance lagged behind, and the failure to bridge this gap has been seen as symptomatic of the system's lack of viability in the long run. Central to Robert Allen's reinterpretation of the Soviet industrial revolution is his argument that these comparisons reveal little because they take the wrong reference group. In terms of variables such as gross domestic product per capita, literacy rates, marriage patterns, and urbanization rates, early twentieth-century Russia had virtually nothing in common with the countries of western Europe, North America and their offshoots. Instead, its peer group included the countries of Latin America, south Asia, and south-east Asia. Viewed within this comparative framework, Russia's economic performance during the twentieth century looks much more impressive. Comparing 1989 data on GDP per capita, Allen comes to the somewhat unsettling conclusion that by the end of the century all other countries from Russia's peer group in the early twentieth century had ended up firmly in the group of underdeveloped countries, the only exception being Japan, which had joined the developed countries of the West. Though it did not attain quite this level, the Soviet Union nonetheless came near, and Allen ascribes this "success story" to the Stalinist industrialization strategy of the 1930s and beyond.

His argument combines two approaches – a counterfactual and an empirical one, both of which rely heavily on modelling and simulation. The counterfactual argument examines the prospects for future growth and economic development within the parameters of the pre-revolutionary Russian economy and the New Economic Policy of the 1920s. Allen's conclusion is that neither of these two systems would have equalled the Soviet record in terms of GDP and economic development. Though impressive, Tsarist economic growth since the late nineteenth century can to a large extent be ascribed to processes specific for the time and period (notably the integration of Russian wheat producers into the world market), which in the long run would have stopped generating further growth, as in fact happened in the wheat-exporting countries of Latin America, such as Argentina. The agricultural sector of the 1920s offered even fewer prospects for generating economic growth. The extremely fragmented landholdings that emerged from the land redistribution of the agricultural revolution were a major barrier to improvements in productivity, and they contained considerable surplus labour which farm concentration or enclosure would throw on to the nonagricultural labour market, pushing up prices for agricultural products and choking off industrial growth.

In explaining the success of Stalinist industrialization amidst these pitfalls, Allen draws on two theoretical concepts. The first is the model of capital accumulation developed by the economist G.A. Fel'dman, one of the participants in the Soviet industrialization debate of the 1920s. The Fel'dman model attempted to show that a strategy of sustained investment in the producer-goods sector would lead not only to an increase in the output of producer goods, but also of consumer goods, and thus of consumption. This is because of a spillover effect, in which part of the increased output of the producer-goods sector is diverted to consumer-goods production. What is more, this effect occurs irrespective of the proportion of producer-goods output which is reinvested in the producer-goods sector itself: only the speed of the transformation is affected. This, Allen claims, is exactly what

happened during the 1930s, and he documents his claim with data showing a rise in both producer-goods output and consumption by the end of the decade, after an initial slump in consumption during the First Five-Year Plan.

A second source of inspiration for Allen's analysis is the insights of Ragnar Nurske concerning the role that rural surplus labour can play in economic take-off when transferred to productive urban jobs, irrespective of the marginal productivity of each added worker (which in any case compares favourably to the zero marginal productivity of that same worker remaining idle on the land). Crucial in bringing about this effect during the Soviet industrialization of the 1930s were the soft budget constraints under which the urban economy operated. They made it possible to put to work all of the vast masses of peasants who migrated from country to town following the start of the First Five-Year Plan, thus lifting production to a new, higher level than it would ever have attained under capitalist cost-accounting.

It was these two effects in conjunction which accounted for the rapid economic growth of the 1930s, Allen argues, whereas the collectivization of agriculture, which has been seen as an essential corollary to the spurt of industrialization both by contemporaries and by historians, contributed little to economic growth. Indeed, Allen argues that the collectivization of agriculture probably did more harm than good, primarily because of its downward effect on levels of consumption during the first half of the decade. Perhaps the only beneficial effect of collectivization was that it made rural-urban migration occur even more rapidly than would otherwise have been the case.

Returning to the grand story of development versus underdevelopment in the course of the twentieth century, an added beneficial effect of the economic spurt of the 1930s for the Soviet Union was that it caused a demographic transition to occur which prevented a population explosion similar to the one experienced by most of the countries in Russia's peer group at the start of the century. Characterized by Hajnal's famous non-European marriage pattern of near-universal marriage at an early age, resulting in high fertility rates, early twentieth-century Russia and the Soviet Union were slated to experience such a population explosion. However, the demographic transition of the 1930s set in, bringing down the birth rate. Testing various models and simulations, Allen concludes that this reduction in the birth rate was a direct result of economic development, as more women received education and entered the workforce, thus raising the opportunity costs of childbirth.

Although *Farm to Factory* falls short of offering a fundamentally new interpretation of the Soviet industrial revolution, it does provide new insights on several key issues and presents a stimulating and wide-ranging perspective on twentieth-century Soviet social and economic history. Perhaps most important is Allen's claim, underpinned by solid quantitative analysis, that consumption actually rose during the 1930s rather than declined. This finding appears at odds with existing knowledge of falling rural living standards and the decline of urban real wages, but Allen convincingly shows that it is not. Although rural consumption fell, rural-urban migration was large enough to offset this effect and produce an average rise in consumption per capita for the population as a whole. In order to assess the impact of industrialization on urban living standards, the average wage-earner of the late 1930s should not, Allen argues, be compared with the average wage-earner of the late 1920s but with the average peasant of the late 1920s, and from this perspective the 1930s brought material gain rather than loss. Meanwhile, established urban residents offset the decline in real wages by increasing household labour-participation rates.

In terms of its grand perspective and counterfactual argument, perhaps the most fundamental criticism one could make of this book concerns its reliance on GDP per capita for international comparisons between the Soviet economy and capitalist economies. As an indicator of economic performance, GDP per capita says nothing about the quality or usefulness of the goods and services produced. For capitalist economies this is not a problem, because the market ensures that, with some minor fluctuations, poor-quality or useless production gets eliminated from the pool. This is not so in Soviet-type economies, where consumer demand does not influence production decisions, and poor-quality production goods get reinvested in the production goods sector to produce even worse quality goods and services.

This raises the broader question of to what extent a purely economic perspective is the right one for assessing whether the Stalinist development strategy put the Soviet Union on the road to progress or a dead end. Although Allen acknowledges the social costs of Soviet industrialization in terms of the suffering it entailed for many, these costs fail to find their appropriate place in his model. Being forcefully led by the state in the “necessary” direction might historically have been the “right” thing to do, but it deeply alienated the population from the state, something that was to be a major factor in the fall of the Soviet system, and is a formidable barrier to social and economic development in modern-day Russia and the other successor states to the Soviet Union. This implies that, ultimately, it will be the next ten or twenty years that will show the validity of Allen’s counterfactual argument, because as yet it remains to be seen whether Russia might not rejoin the peer group of which it was part at the start of the twentieth century.

*Gijs Kessler*

BARANOWSKI, SHELLEY. *Strength Through Joy. Consumerism and Mass Tourism in the Third Reich*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 2004. xvii, 254 pp. Ill. £40.00; \$65.00; DOI: 10.1017/S0020859005061870

“Strength through Joy’ is perhaps the most succinct way that I can really express the National Socialist aspiration.” This dictum by the head of the German Labor Front, Robert Ley, was meant as propaganda, but it contained a grain of truth. The fact is that his leisure organization “Strength through Joy” (*Kraft durch Freude*, KdF) developed into one of the, if not the most popular organization of the Third Reich. The influence it exerted survived the Third Reich itself, and the idea that the KdF introduced mass tourism and thereby ultimately improved the German living standard was widely believed in the country for a long time. Therefore, it is all the more astonishing how relatively few studies exist about this organization and its impact. Shelley Baranowski’s book is an attempt to present a general overview. The author organizes her work into six chapters: the debates on mass consumption in the 1920s; the establishment of KdF; the efforts to improve and embellish the workplace; the development of tourism from the viewpoint of the organization as well as the tourist; and finally the role of the KdF during the war.

“Strength through Joy” was established in November 1933 primarily to compensate workers for stagnating wages. The organization was supposed to supervise the leisure time of the employed, provide them with relaxation and entertainment, and thereby strengthen them so that they could better handle the demands of rearmament. In addition, the KdF was meant to contribute significantly to the development of the envisioned *Volksge-*

*meinschaft*, a concept of a national community in which class divisions were obliterated: “Strength through Joy joined the self-improving high-mindedness of middle-class travel with the promotion of the racial community through package tours” (p. 6). In her study, Baranowski concentrates on vacation travel and the activities of the KdF-office *Schönheit der Arbeit* (Beauty of Work), the two most ambitious projects. All of these activities were based on the concept of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, which Baranowski translates rather one-sidedly as “racial community”. This model of social organization promised upward mobility to anyone who accomplished the necessary level of achievement, regardless of social background. In this respect, as well as in the area of mass consumption, something resembling a German *Sonderweg* or special path flourished during the 1930s and 1940s as competition for the existing models of socialism and Fordism. The distinction between *schaffendem* (productive) and *raffendem* (greedy-speculative) capital indulged anticapitalist sentiments. State investment insured full employment, and the expansive foreign-policy course of the Nazi regime promised future wealth at the cost of conquered peoples and territories. For these tasks, Hitler needed – as he expressed it – a “people with strong nerves” (*nervenstarkes Volk*).

Thoroughly in line with efforts to pacify the working class and increase productivity were the activities of the KdF organization, *Schönheit der Arbeit* (SdA). The organization strove to beautify the workplace, sanitary facilities in plants and factories, and places of recreation: “The workplace was central to Strength through Joy’s ambitions to increase productivity, restore the ethical meaning of labor, and purge workers of ‘Marxism’” (p. 75). Since the ownership structure remained intact, the SdA could only pursue policies of a symbolic nature. First and foremost, the “honor” of workers was to be enhanced. From the perspective of the history of ideas, the SdA acted as a continuation of the domestic rationalization movement and the plant social policies of the 1920s.

Baranowski correctly points out that modern tourism was already bolstering nationalism in the period preceding National Socialism. The extreme chauvinism propagated by the National Socialists intensified this trend. Thus, the foreign excursions organized by the KdF always took place against a clearly political backdrop, whereas the domestic trips implemented structural policy and aided economically weak regions. This resulted in a new symbiosis: “Thus to maintain its position as a key pillar of the regime’s social policy, Strength through Joy promoted its noncommercial consumption while simultaneously marketing its tourism as a desirable consumer good. The final product, an array of low-cost domestic package tours, overseas cruises, and resorts under construction and in the planning stages, supported Nazism’s claims to have improved the quality of life for ordinary Germans” (p. 119). It was inevitable that this policy would come into conflict with the traditional tourism industry. The herds of KdF vacationers – perhaps comparable to modern back-pack tourists – were welcome neither by other vacationers, who feared their leisure travel would lose its exclusiveness, nor by the hotel and resort business, whose prices were being ruined. The majority of the excursions offered in the KdF program were one-day and two-day trips. This ran contrary to the depiction offered by KdF propaganda, which highlighted cruises as a symbol of Germany’s “world politics”.

The KdF assumed a mediating role in the conflict between consumption and armament. In order to avoid endangering more far-reaching aims, it was necessary to convince the people that greater consumption would be achieved. The consumption offered by the KdF oscillated between the extremes of luxury and spartanism: “Partly a reflection of Strength through Joy’s diverse social bases and partly a mirror of the Nazi regime’s priorities, KdF’s

tour programs straddled the boundaries between spartanism and luxury, materialism and antimaterialism, combining its appeals to self-sacrifice with its willing capitulation to the hedonistic purchase and consumption of pleasure” (p. 142).

Apparently there were numerous complaints by vacationers about the trips with KdF, but these complaints did not undermine its positive image because, more often than not, the KdF satisfied the expectations of its clientele. The reports written by members of the security forces accompanying each trip offer a comparatively objective account of what really happened during such excursions. Their accounts of the itinerary and events, the behavior and reactions of the tourists prove that workers were clearly under-represented on these trips and that class differences were not obliterated – as was evident in the small but telling differences in types of accommodation, clothing, purchases, and so forth.

Discontent was to be found everywhere, whether due to poor accommodation as compared with other tourists, to the unfriendly reception in Catholic regions, or to tension caused by rivalries between the various regional populations. Many KdF vacationers particularly disapproved of the arrogant and high-handed behavior of party functionaries on such trips. Still, the public continued to view the KdF activities with favor. These trips convinced many Germans that their standard of living had indeed improved. Cruises had the greatest impact in this regard – even though the number of participants was the smallest – because they best symbolized the dreams and hopes shared by many Germans. Cruises, like other trips, offered people a chance to live out a more uninhibited individualism. This can be related to the increase in alcohol consumption, the avoidance of political topics, and not least the indulgence in sexual promiscuity. The trips to more under-developed European countries, such as Italy and Portugal, strengthened the feeling among vacationers that Germans were indeed the “master race”, and threw a more flattering light on their own standard of living. Strength through Joy turned out to be more skillful at applying the techniques and conveying the hedonistic messages of commercial leisure on a larger scale than the labor parties of the Weimar era or Italian fascism ever were.

Baranowski devotes an entire chapter to the work of Strength through Joy during the war. She is the first to treat this aspect seriously and to present it adequately. Starting in 1939, KdF cruise liners were used to transport troops, the wounded, and ethnic Germans living outside the Reich (*Volksdeutsche*). All leisure trips were canceled. Instead, short excursions and hikes within Germany became the predominate types of activity offered to the public. In general, the organization clearly shifted its primary focus to entertaining the troops and expanded this area significantly after the war started in September 1939. Portable stages and small groups of performers provided entertainment to the soldiers, offering them a rather folkloric program. Quickly the demand for such entertainment surpassed the reservoir of entertainers of any quality, and complaints about the standard of performance increased. In addition, entertainment on the “home front” during the war was important, since the National Socialists sought at all costs to avoid a repetition of the situation as it existed within Germany in 1918. At the same time, the KdF promised a supposedly better future once the war ended victoriously, leaving Germans with much more “living space”.

Baranowski’s study is based on a broad spectrum of sources and includes material from company and regional archives previously unused in connection with this topic. In this way, the author draws an interesting picture of regimented leisure in the Third Reich – a facet of still underexposed history of daily life during this period. By concentrating on two

areas of activity within Strength through Joy, the author runs the risk of losing sight of the entire spectrum covered by this organization. After all, the KdF attempted to bring all facets of leisure activity under its control. It took over clubs and associations, founded its own theaters and orchestras, and entered the field of adult education. Therefore, it would have been good to include a few critical passages, for example, on the *Deutsche Volksbildungswerk* (German People's Education Foundation), the highly ideologized version of the *Volkshochschule*, or on KdF factory athletics, which used more informal ways of organizing sports than the rigid one of club membership. Just as important would have been to place Strength through Joy within the overall context, aims, and impact of its mother organization, the German Labor Front. The Labor Front discovered early how to use prestigious forms of leisure as comparably cost-neutral compensation for stagnating wages, over which it had no influence anyway. Such criticism of the present study does not diminish its achievements: it offers a very readable introduction to an exciting chapter in the history of daily life during the Nazi period and of consumption in Germany in general.

Karsten Linne

MALOKA, EDDY TSHIDISO. *Basotho and the Mines. A Social History of Labour Migrancy in Lesotho and South Africa, c. 1890–1940*. Codesria, Dakar 2004. 259 pp. Maps. £14.95; \$20.95; DOI: 10.1017/S00200859005071877

This work contributes to the vast corpus of studies that has been produced on the consequences of South Africa's mineral revolution. Studies that examine and analyse the influence of mining capital on South African society in its totality during and since the mineral revolution of the late nineteenth century became characteristic of the productive revisionist or radical historiographical tradition in South Africa during the 1970s and 1980s. Maloka's study is an addition to the growing field of work on the social history of Lesotho, in particular the history of labour migrancy.<sup>1</sup> In this context it builds on the works of Kimble and Eldredge, whose studies on the preceding decades provide an insight into Basotho migrancy to South Africa.

Maloka examines the "everyday" cultural aspects of labour migrancy and life on the South African mines, and demonstrates the centrality of culture as a resource from which

1. See also e.g. Colin Murray, *Families Divided: The Impact of Migrant Labour in Lesotho* (Johannesburg, 1981); Judy Kimble, "Towards an Understanding of the Political Economy of Lesotho: The Origins of Commodity Production and Migrant Labour, 1830–1885" (M.A. thesis, National University of Lesotho, 1978); Elizabeth Eldredge, *A South African Kingdom: The Pursuit of Security in Nineteenth-Century Lesotho* (Cambridge, 1993); Phil Bonner, "Desirable or Undesirable Basotho Women? Liquor, Prostitution and the Migration of Basotho Women to the Rand, 1920–1945", in C. Walker (ed.), *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945* (Cape Town, 1990); Jeff Guy and Motlatsi Thabane, "Technology, Ethnicity and Ideology: Basotho Miners and Shaft-Sinking on the South African Gold Mines", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 14 (1988), pp. 257–278; David Coplan, *In the Time of Cannibals: The Word Music of South Africa's Basotho Migrants* (Chicago, IL, 1994); and Belinda Bozzoli (with M. Nkotswe), *Women of Phokeng: Consciousness, Life Strategy and Migrancy in South Africa, 1900–1983* (Portsmouth, 1991).



Basotho migrants drew to devise their own responses and strategies to survive in an alien urban environment. Pre-existing socio-economic and political conditions in the rural areas mediated the process of the integration of peripheries into the regional capitalist market as suppliers of cheap labour. These factors determined which gender group, age group, and class would be the first to migrate to the labour centres and they even mapped the pattern of migration. Individual Basotho migrants struggled to take control of their own lives in order to shape their own experiences and determine the outcome of their endeavours.

Maloka focuses on the formative period of Basotho migrancy spanning the period from immediately after the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886 to the eve of the outbreak of World War II. This period not only saw Lesotho decline from her position as a granary to meet South Africa's needs to become its labour reserve; it was also during these five decades that the Basotho social fabric collapsed in the face of a series of economic crises and measures undertaken by the British colonial government. During these decades the balance of power increasingly shifted in favour of the colonial state, as well as towards chiefs, traders, labour recruiters, and mine employers. Maloka's approach is informed by a materialist conception of culture. According to him, African migrants' rural heritage was not only made up of aspects of their pre-industrial society, but was also marked by decades of colonial, mercantile, and missionary encounters. Not only were Basotho migrants aware of the dynamics of the "white man's world" and its difference to their own, but they also developed a whole variety of complex and creative ways of dealing with their experiences in the mines.

The conceptual basis of the book, organized thematically as it is, is the itinerary of a Basotho migrant from "home" (Part 1), to "work" (Part 2), and back to "home" (Part 3), and examines the dynamics of colonial Lesotho's dependence on the export of its men to South African mines and the experiences and life strategies of these Basotho migrants.

Chapter 1 examines the processes leading to the concentration of Basotho on the Rand gold mines as opposed to other possible employment frontiers. Maloka analyses the dynamics of labour migrancy in Lesotho as well as the making of the Basotho migrants' identity during the period 1890–1940. The weakening of the bargaining power of Basotho migrants and their growing dependence on the gold mines are traced to the worsening economic situation in Lesotho during the course of the 1920s and 1930s. Maloka explains how labour-recruiting agencies vied with one another, in the interest of mining capital, to obtain the maximum amount of "Basotholand ebony" for mining operations. This coincided with the efforts of the South African Chamber of Mines to expand the geographical area from which to recruit labour in order to keep the cost of African labour power low. Natural disasters such as drought and economic depression that exacerbated conditions of famine, but even also favourable contracts concerning piecework on the mines, were major determinants in promoting the recruitment of Basotho labour migrants.

Chapter 2 discusses the implications of dependence on migrants' earnings by focusing on struggles within Basotho homesteads and between chiefs and the colonial state on the one hand, and migrants on the other. The wages of Basotho migrants in the form of taxes provided the colonial state with revenue. Hence it was important that mechanisms were put in place to facilitate the deferment of migrants' pay to their families and to trace tax evaders and labour deserters. Maloka explores how the attempts by chiefs and white colonial authorities as well as family pressures to induce Basotho mineworkers to channel their earnings to their homes through remittance schemes and deferment of pay were

effectively resisted by the migrant workers, who wished to exercise personal fiscal control over their earnings.

Chapter 3 puts migrants at the centre of the narrative, showing how these Basotho men travelled to the labour centres and the cultural responses they developed in the process that helped them to cope and deal with the dangers and difficulties associated with oscillating between their homes and South African mines. Their own notion of space and time was transformed not only by their travels from “home” through the “wilderness” to the mines, but also by the introduction of trains and motor transport, which compressed the length of time that these men used to spend on the road. Maloka looks at provisions traditionally made for these journeys, the Basotho migrants’ musical heritage, and the practice of visiting diviners to be “strengthened” for the journey to the mines. He also describes the difficulties and dangers migrants experienced on their way to and from the mines, e.g. theft of their savings. The entrenchment of labour migrancy in Lesotho resulted in the extensions of railway lines and motor transport to points of recruitment inside Lesotho and therefore also in the improvement of travelling and transport conditions and the establishment of 168 shelter facilities in the country. In their turn, these facilities affected trading hours for shops doing business with migrant clients. The encirclement of colonial Lesotho by railway networks and the construction of roads and bridges inside the country to a large extent facilitated the flow of labour to the gold mines.

Chapter 4 focuses on aspects of Basotho experiences in the mine compounds. It discusses the struggles over the meaning and content of leisure, particularly against the background of rapid black urbanization in the period 1920–1940. By the late 1920s most Basotho men spent a significant part of their lives on the mine compounds. Maloka describes the adverse conditions and poor housing of the compounds as part of mining capital’s attempts to reduce the cost of labour. He also discusses the dynamics of migrant life on the mines, e.g. the role of chiefs in the compounds, Sunday leisure time, mutual aid associations, gambling, sport and recreation, film entertainment, etc. Paternalistic whites, especially missionaries, aligned themselves with the mine authorities and tried to use leisure activity to control and discipline the African labour force. The introduction by mining managements of recreational facilities in the compounds was primarily intended to keep African miners away from the slums and locations where they drank beer, interacted with women, and were exposed to political and labour activists. These measures, however, did not succeed, as the African miners accepted new recreational facilities without abandoning those aspects of their cultural and social life which they valued most.

Chapter 5 investigates the influence of the Christian religion on the migrant workers and missionary activities, such as the establishment of night schools to advance the literacy that was essential for studying the Bible and Christian literature. In particular, Maloka focuses on the activities of the Lesotho-based Paris Evangelical Missionary Society. Maloka indicates that, for a significant number of Basotho miners, conversion to Christianity was an important aspect of coping with compound and mine life.

Chapter 6 examines the various ways that Basotho migrants handled industrial forms of death, sickness, destitution, and grief in the mine compounds within the context of their culture. Not only did they form mutual-aid associations, but they also created their own cultural space for mourning their dead and treating them with dignity. Maloka investigates the types of diseases contracted by miners such as silicosis, the mining conditions prevalent that led to the contracting of diseases, mining accidents such as rockfalls and rockbursts, explosions, and shaft accidents. Lastly, he discusses burial practices on the mines.

Chapter 7 returns the book's focus to Lesotho, showing how the combination of economic collapse and dependence on labour migrancy pushed a number of Basotho women to opt for commercial beer-brewing and prostitution, and how the latter phenomena became an essential part of migrants' lives. As more and more Basotho men became migrants in the 1920s and the 1930s and signed on for longer contract periods, many homesteads effectively fell under the control of women. Such women, especially those whose husbands were not sending money home, as well as widows and single women, turned to beer-brewing and prostitution as their only means of survival. Maloka analyses the distribution, use, and misuse of liquor in Lesotho as well as official efforts to quell these practices. The spreading of prostitution coincided with the proliferation of beer canteens. Beer-brewing and commercial sex were not only symptoms of the breakdown of Basotho society, but for many women were also a way of escaping poverty and deprivation, and challenging patriarchal control.

From a critical point of view, the absence of a copy editor in the final publication process of the book is evident, as the text is marred on numerous pages with irksome typing errors, e.g. the erroneous spelling of "Banjtes Mine" instead of Bantjes Mine (p. 118). On p. 140 the numbering of endnote 21 is repeated twice, which means that all ensuing endnotes from numbers 22 to 113 do not correspond with the numbers in the text.

In terms of the existing literature on the history of Southern African labour migrancy this work does not provide labour scholars with revealing new insights into the influence of mining capital in controlling and organizing its rural labour reserve. However, its value lies in the fact that it goes beyond both the political-economy school and cultural studies by focusing on labour migrancy as a human experience without disappearing into the labyrinth of discourse analysis.

Wessel P. Visser

GOOPTU, NANDINI. *The Politics of the Urban Poor in Early Twentieth-Century India*. [Cambridge Studies in Indian History and Society, 8.] Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 2001. xxiii, 464 pp. £55.00; \$80.00; DOI: 10.1017/S0020859005081873

This study focuses on the politics of different segments of the urban poor (namely the untouchables, the *shudras*, and the Muslim poor) in northern India, particularly between 1920 and 1930. This was a period of heightened political activity, marked by an expansion of representative politics leading to the penetration of politics into the lives of wider social groups. Gooptu provides a sophisticated analysis of processes of political alignment and contestation, of both elite incursions and ideological preconceptions regarding the poor, as well as of responses by the urban poor. She combines this with a profound theoretical understanding of historical processes based on impressive archival work covering national archives as well as the local archives of four cities, namely Allahabad, Benares, Kanpur, and Lucknow.

This rich empirical material is framed within her reading of historical processes. On the one hand, Gooptu moves away from conventional urban labour studies by arguing that consciousness and identity must be placed within the broader political context and that one should not just focus on what happens within the workplace or on strikes. She argues that the political identities and actions of the poor have as much to do with the politics of caste,

religion, and nation as the politics of class. On the other hand, Gooptu criticizes both earlier studies on religion and politics in India – where segmentation in the labour market is seen as operating along caste or religious lines – and subaltern approaches, where the notion of community consciousness is linked to an “essentialization of subaltern mentality”. Both approaches are considered determinist in the sense that the first reduces questions of religion and politics to material conditions, whereas subaltern approaches reduce rituals and cultural discourse to pre-capitalist notions of discourse, thereby rejecting the notion of class distinctions.

As an alternative, Gooptu argues that “past traditions and notions [were] selectively chosen, given new content and significance, and then reconfigured and deployed in new forms” (p. 189). She shows how in dealing with political institutions the urban poor used different symbols, public events, and strategies mainly to legitimize their activities, while at the same time claiming the political space. The ways in which each group expressed their discontent also reflected their structural and ideological positioning within the fabric of society. The structures that help to construct the identities of the urban poor are not only the developmentalist policies that politically and economically marginalize the poor but also the languages of discrimination and homogenization of the national and local elite. Gooptu’s study is therefore not just a history from below but also from above. This is manifested by the fact that policies and sensibilities concerning the poor take up the first four chapters of her book.

Discourse on the poor had as much to do with the economic reconfiguration of society as with urban policing. Not only were the urban masses direct targets for the mobilization of arms and men, they were primarily seen as “dangerous” elements, and this had many dimensions relating to urban planning. Gooptu very adroitly shows us the contradictions, both in the way politics about the poor were framed but also in the effect on local politics. On the one hand, there was a narrative of homogenization; on the other, local policies did not affect all groups of the poor equally. Force and coercion by local authorities, which was intended to create and maintain order, simultaneously sowed and contributed to political unrest. She argues that rituals are no longer seen primarily as reinforcing or reproducing social cohesion but as “encompassing different, often contradictory, initiatives of diverse groups” (p. 190).

In her chapter on the untouchables she shows that, as urban expansion slowed down, this group, which in the earlier part of the century had initially found jobs in cantonments and with the municipalities, faced increasing restrictions on their economic activities after the 1920s. Because the slowdown hit the untouchables directly, they quickly rallied around certain symbols and rituals – one of them being the *Adi Hindu* movement. This movement emerged in the early 1920s and advocated greater social egalitarianism (through the denial of religious rituals prescribed by the higher castes for the untouchables), avoided indebtedness to the higher castes, and supported a general refusal to accept any type of indebtedness to the local elites. This denial of elite authority did not imply a rejection of state institutions, however. The willingness of these untouchables to be employed by the municipality was consistent with their decision to enter into political bargaining within representative institutions and to concentrate on public policy-making (p. 168). This approach was embraced by the Gandhian movement and by Congress, in line with their attempt to dignify the work of the lower castes and to erode the stigma attached to this. However, as Gooptu points out very convincingly, the patronizing philanthropy of the political elite did not reverse the low position of the untouchables (p. 177).

In her chapter on Hindu militancy, Gooptu stresses that not all sections of the Hindu poor were behind the Hindu militants – only the *shudra* labouring poor who were competing for jobs with the untouchables and the Muslim poor. Unlike the untouchables, the Hindu poor did not use formal institutional channels, nor did they symbolically reject elite symbols and rituals to express their political sentiments; instead, this expression took place within the Hindu environment and in the midst of Hindu revivalism. Therefore, their politics was framed not only as a response to the colonial politics of exclusion, but as an attempt to claim their political space vis-à-vis what they regarded as Muslim incursions – reflected inter alia in the *sangathan* movement.

This movement was initially a response to the “demilitarization and emasculation” that was seen to have been perpetrated by the British on the Indian people. In other words, physical strength, masculinity, machismo, and militarism were the main symbols of this movement. And through male virility and prowess the *shudra* poor emphasized their suitability for manual work in the bazaars. Eventually, as Muslims were increasingly seen as the source of their economic deprivation, *shudra* assertion in the form of self-defence corps gradually became more focused on antagonism towards Muslims. In her illustration of how Hindu symbols were used by both the elite and the poor, Gooptu adroitly avoids collapsing these two different groups into one community. She shows how the elite focused more on the expression of Hindu power within the context of Indian nationalism. At the same time, they constructed the “purer” form of Hindu practices, thereby setting the boundaries of acceptable public behaviour and morality. In contrast, the Hindu poor rejected such constructions.

In the same way that the Hindu community was not cohesive and united in its political ideals and principles, in her chapter on the Muslim poor Gooptu also shows not only the different tendencies within Islamic communities but also the different ways in which intellectuals have looked at Islam in India. She shows the uneven spread and stratified nature of revivalist or reformist ideas in Islamic groups. Indeed, she shows the material basis for the discontent of the Muslim poor by arguing that those at the forefront of urban Islamic resurgence were members of artisanal communities and in service occupations. However, by the late nineteenth century, with the import of cheap manufactured goods, the demand for their products began to decline, affecting around 40 per cent of the population of several districts in northern India.

Since bazaars and small-scale industries were dominated by Hindu merchants, this also meant that the poor urban Muslims, who Gooptu claims were more urbanized than Hindus, became extremely marginalized and economically deprived. Gooptu argues that religion was used as a means to express this sense of deprivation, and in such a way that past superiority and respectability were highlighted. However, the author is quick to point out that this did not result in an alliance between the Muslim poor and the elite; she argues that, especially in the 1920s and 1930s, the Muslim leadership found it increasingly difficult to exercise control over their followers. It was these lower classes who began to adopt ideas derived from the Khilafat movement, which embraced radical Islamic egalitarianism, nationalism, and socialism. In fact, while the elite Muslim community emphasized notions of purity, the Muslim poor highlighted expressions of lower-class identity.

Gooptu has shown considerable intellectual skill in writing a social history of the urban poor. She avoids the theoretical traps that scholars are prone to fall into when writing a history from below. Two points in her study are particularly worth mentioning though, because they warrant further discussion. First, the framework within which the urban poor

perceived their position, and based on which they expressed their religious sentiments, was unmistakably one of material deprivation and exclusion. In the final sentence of her book, she writes that “the full potential of interpreting the evolution of Indian democratic politics through the analytical framework of class conflict is yet to be realised”. This is an important dimension to underline, and Gooptu does not frame this in a static and determinist manner. Nevertheless, examining group identity through its manifestations in public symbols and rituals might overlook much of the internal tensions related to how these same symbols might be used and interpreted differently. However, this issue is not easy to uncover from historical sources and is a question, therefore, that should be asked of historical writing more generally.

Secondly, although she shows clearly the tensions between the classes of the different segments of society, her silence on gender relations is particularly strange. This is not just a question of “where are the women?”; it also raises the methodological question of studying “silences”, or studying those who have been silenced in history. Much has been written on the role of women in initiating and maintaining social networks, and on their role in ceremonial events or rituals. Given Gooptu’s sensitivity in dealing with archival material, her silence on gender relations is therefore rather surprising. Nonetheless, there is much we can learn from this study – and, as she herself notes, this book does much to highlight the significance of social construction in the writing of social history.

*Ratna Saptari*

LANGE, LIS. *White, Poor and Angry. White Working Class Families in Johannesburg*. [Race and representation.] Ashgate, Aldershot [etc.] 2003. viii, 186 pp. £45.00; DOI: 10.1017/S002085900509187X

Lis Lange provides that rarity in African studies: a monograph on the social history of white yet working-class South Africans. This nuanced study looks at the emergence, social conditions, and social and political responses of the white working class in its formative period: roughly from 1890, when the new Witwatersrand mining industry came under the control of the monopoly capitalists christened “Randlords,” to the 1922 general strike and armed uprising that famously demanded “Workers of the World Unite and Fight for a White South Africa”.

While the 1922 Rand Revolt must be understood as part of an international wave of popular insurgency that swept up from Ireland and Mexico in 1916, and crashed down in Bulgaria and Germany in 1923, its particularities cannot be fully grasped without the details of daily life provided by writers such as Lange, who pays particular attention to the role of family, housing, and state policy in shaping white workers’ identities and communities, which she stresses were not always “clearly defined, homogenous and coherently expressed” (p. 166). Lange’s focus is Johannesburg, the heart of the Witwatersrand complex. Beginning as a diggers’ tent city in 1886, the city had over 82,000 white inhabitants by 1904, out of a population of 155,462, spread over 82 miles (pp. 12, 39, 84). Many were drawn from abroad by the lure of good wages and “cheap steamship travel” (p. 13); others were local Afrikaners proletarianized by changes in rural South Africa. Settled white working-class communities were soon evident – partly a function of growing confidence in the future of the mines – with 80.16 per cent of whites overall living

in families by 1904 (p. 12), although, even eight years later, 49.31 per cent of white miners were unmarried (p. 79).

While South Africa was a “racially organized colonial society” (p. 64), and cheap, unfree, migrant African labour formed the bedrock of the mining industry, conditions for the white working class were generally grim. Residential land was controlled by the great mining houses, which engaged in speculation and rack-renting; the Johannesburg municipality, proclaimed in 1897, lacked revenues and power; ongoing instability in the dominant mining sector expressed itself in waves of lay-offs and industrial contractions, impacting heavily on a white working class often resident in unsanitary, overcrowded, and multiracial slums, and facing the highest living costs in the country; underground white miners faced the “White Death”, silicosis, affecting nearly 20 per cent at times (see especially pp. 50–58, 102–110, 165). Further, there was a high rate of unemployment and underemployment amongst lower-waged, less skilled whites: officials attributed this “poor white” problem to irrational prejudices against manual labour, but it resulted equally from employer preferences for cheaper Africans (pp. 146–149). If conditions were not necessarily comparable to the very worst in Europe (p. 58, but cf. p. 89), they were often dire, as Lange shows through statistics and very vivid reconstructions of daily life.

Change, Lange argues, came from two sources. First, there was a growing official interest in the racial hygiene of the lower orders of white society. State officials drew both on British expertise in the management of the poor to reconstruct the Johannesburg municipality after the Anglo-Boer war (pp. 48–64), and on Social Darwinist ideas of class, degeneration, and miscegenation in designing social services and introducing urban planning, slum clearance and state employment schemes (pp. 59–67, 81–97, 102–110, 143–145, 157–159). The problem of racial order in the 1910s was “certainly about governability”, but it was, strikingly, “not so much of the Black ‘race’ as of the white”, and, particularly, the poor whites (pp. 5, 133–159), regarded with a mix of condescension, contempt, and fear. From the start, state reforms included a large dose of segregation, given a growth in Johannesburg’s African population from 59,605 in 1904 to 101,971 in 1911 (p. 83). Their scope was, however, initially tempered by the power of the mining houses and a respect for market forces unusual in a settler colony. After the unification of South Africa in 1910, such *laissez-faire* was replaced by systematic social engineering and an early welfare system, emphasizing relief works and industrial education (pp. 153–157).

The second pressure for change was the dramatic rise of the white working-class movement after 1907. This was expressed in the victories of the Labour Party, which won control of the Transvaal provincial government in 1914, and of the Johannesburg municipality in 1915 and 1919, where it promoted social reform (pp. 47, 80–81, 91, 140). It was also shown in the militant, but sectional, trade unionism that shook the country in 1907, 1913, and 1914, and most dramatically, in 1922, where over 200 deaths purchased a mixed set of reforms in labour and industrial policy (pp. 80, 88–89, 139–140). The “white labourism” that dominated this movement – a mixture of class struggle and racism – coincided in some respects with official segregation, but added a sharp dash of radical opposition to the state and big business.

Overall, Lange’s work is an evocative and important contribution to our understanding of South African labour and social history. The experience of the white working class shown here is difficult to reconcile, for instance, with Frantz Fanon’s assertion in *The Wretched of the Earth* that colonialism was neatly split between native and settler, “into compartments, a motionless, Manichaenistic world”, where race alone was the determinant



of power, consciousness, and struggle. And yet there is no doubt that race played an absolutely central role in the South African working-class formation, a role that is not always effectively explained by Lange.

One of Lange's key arguments is that ethnic differences amongst white workers have been exaggerated: citing a significant rate of intermarriage between immigrant English and local Afrikaner, and a "comparatively large" and unexpected Afrikaner adherence to the Anglican Church, she concludes that "national distinctions" were "superseded by the common experience" of widespread poverty, job insecurity, fear of replacement by Africans, and an unsympathetic state (pp. 9–26, 30–32, 111–126, 167–169). What is *not* very clearly explained is why this "withering" of "ethnic solidarity" (p. 31) was not coupled to a "withering" of *racial* solidarities in the slums of Johannesburg, where whites lived alongside Africans, Asians, and coloureds. Official obsessions with "miscegenation" aside, such racial integration was, as the rise of white labourism indicates, rare and unpopular.

While the "ideological construction of the poor white problem" is extensively discussed, the potency, and shifting meanings, of the notion of "poor white" itself, and the manner in which the term acquired ethnic connotations, is not. Lange suggests, as noted, that ethnic divisions within the white working class were relatively unimportant and often permeable, and she also provides data that indicates the traditional view of poor whites as newly urbanized and unskilled Afrikaners is problematic: for example, the low-wage and marginal occupations traditionally regarded as poor Afrikaner preserves, such as cab drivers, labourers, and railway workers, were dominated by the English between 1890 and 1906 (p. 19). While a case can be made that there is need to re-examine the composition of the poor whites with a fresh eye, Lange consistently falls back into traditional references to the "ethnic character" of the lower strata, the "unskilled workers, largely of Afrikaner descent" (pp. 66, 72, note 86, p. 66, 157).

Lange does make some passing references to the emerging, problematic, literature on "whiteness" – a literature that does, at least, provide at least a potential route into issues of racialization – but this is not really integrated into the study. This is a pity, because her painstaking research provides an immanent critique of that form of "whiteness" studies associated with writers such as David Roediger and the self-described "new abolitionist", Noel Ignatiev. Both writers tend to collapse white identity into "white privilege," reducing the former to a vehicle for the latter. Further, they typically characterize the former in the narrowest manner – as an arbitrarily demarcated, rather flat, and quintessentially modern social category – while failing to provide any rigorous and consistent definition of the latter.

Lange's data suggests, however, that in South Africa, white identity was pervasive even in the absence of evident "white privilege", as the situation of the poor whites indicates, and that white identity existed outside of capitalist relations, for the Afrikaner hinterland was quasi-feudal at most. Furthermore, the boundaries of "whiteness" were far from fluid, given a general and unquestioned acceptance of Afrikaners as white, despite pervasive Imperial hostility (cf. pp. 26–30, 102–103), and given that the "whiteness" of the poor whites was never in question. If the couplets of white identity/white privilege and white identity/modernity can break in this manner, questions must be raised about the "new abolitionist" project, and about its understanding of race, and it is perhaps here that Lange's findings are most useful.

*Lucien van der Walt*

GRAHAM, HELEN. *The Spanish Republic at War 1936–1939*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 2002. xiv, 472 pp. Ill. Maps. £50.00; \$70.00. (Paper: £19.95; \$26.00.); DOI: 10.1017/S0020859005101874

Stating it right from the start, this work is an absolute must for all who want to look beyond the simple events and varying accounts of the Spanish Civil War. Helen Graham, one of the main specialists in the topic, has produced a work which concentrates on the structures of the republican state, the strategies and petty calculations of the main actors, and the final defeat of the republic. Graham's strengths are her knowledge of partisan politics, her understanding of the internal logic of the actions of political groupings, and, not least, a clear way of expressing her views, thereby touching taboos and challenging widespread myths and legends in relation to the political forces of the Spanish republic.

The main responsibility borne by the republican forces was for the fragmentation inside the labour movement as well as between the liberal parties. This remained a major problem for political coordination throughout the Civil War. Additionally, the republican years before the war saw a mobilization of new sectors of Spanish society on the one hand, and the ineptitude of most political organizations in dealing with these newly mobilized masses on the other. Only the Communist Party, after the turn of 1935, showed itself ready to deal with this mass mobilization, even trying to enhance the activity of the masses in order to put its political allies under pressure and improve its own political position. By this means, it became a mass party within a few months, succeeding in absorbing new political activists rather than competing for members of other parties, an accusation frequently found in historiography and rooted in the conflict with the deeply split Socialist Party.

In contrast to a widespread view of the left, Prime Minister Largo Caballero was not following a clear revolutionary strategy. On the contrary, he was not following any strategy at all. Graham even questions his physical and intellectual capability in dealing with the problem of the republic in a state of war: "To Largo's suspicious narrow-mindedness, we also have to add the massively debilitating consequences of his extremely bureaucratic approach. [...] Largo's particular inability to evaluate the bigger picture, or to discriminate between the issues on which he really needed to focus as wartime premier and those more trivial matters which could be delegated to others, seriously inhibited the Republic's recovery capacity. Some sense of being out of his depth seemed to convert itself into an exaggerated doggedness (if Largo didn't understand the point, everything stopped in its tracks until he had) which only magnified the effects of his inefficiency. This already difficult situation was made worse by certain other understandable physical limitations. At sixty-seven years of age, and in less than robust health, Largo apparently saw no reason why the larger crisis should cause him to modify his night-time routine and regularly retired between eight at night and eight in the morning – during which time he was rigidly *incomunicado*" (pp. 141–142).

Another myth which Graham deals with is the Barcelona uprising during the first days of May 1937. As a leading historian in this field, she is able to give a detailed account of the events *and* the reasons for the uprising. Graham analyses how the attempt of the central government to re-establish its control over Catalonia interfered with internal conflicts in the region. Against the background of the revolutionary and military developments of the previous months, the strong Catalan anarchist movement had become even more diversified and split over the question of supporting the war effort or reinforcing the revolutionary drive. Meanwhile, the competition between the several forces of the left, the anarchists, the PSUC, and the POUM, became even more violent than in previous years,

finally leading to mutual political murders in April and May. At the moment that the government tried to re-establish bourgeois order in the city, the political pressure in the city liberated itself in a violent outburst, which was then beaten down by massive armed violence from the Valencian and Catalan governments.

In this analysis Graham denies that the anarchists and POUM were fighting together against the communists, since POUM was the only major political group to take a formal decision in favour of the uprising. She shows that the anarchists and POUM were competing for political authority in Catalonia, and thus the relationship between the groups was far from warm. Additionally, she is able to show, through the genealogy of the conflict, that the Barcelona May Days were anything but a Stalinist conspiracy against the libertarian achievements of the anarchist movement.

Finally, a myth uniting the radical left, as well as the political right, since the heyday of the Cold War is the idea of Juan Negrín being a Communist puppet. Graham explains that Negrín mainly followed a political strategy of his own which only partially coincided with the political aims of the Communist Party. Thus, on the one hand, he certainly was in favour of strong state structures, and in this sense he fought the interests of those debilitating the war effort, which made him an ally of the PCE. But, on the other hand, he emphasized individual fundamental rights even in a state of war. Negrín, in this sense, is more appropriately depicted as a progressive liberal rather than a camouflaged Stalinist.

Summing up, this is not one of the usual books on the Spanish Civil War, giving a straight account of the events of some of the bloodiest civil strife of the twentieth century. Graham is the author of a brilliant analysis that is both highly interesting and highly readable. Even those who already know a great deal about the Spanish Civil War will be able to draw new knowledge from this work.

*Frank Schauf*

BREMAN, JAN. *The Making and Unmaking of an Industrial Working Class. Sliding Down the Labour Hierarchy in Ahmedabad, India.* Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam 2004. ix, 315 pp. € 32.00; DOI: 10.1017/S0020859005111870

Jan Breman, a renowned expert on the history and contemporary society of Gujarat, that ancient hub of commerce and industry of west India, presents us with a profoundly researched and intellectually provocative study of the social and political ramifications of the de-industrialization of the once vibrant cotton industry of Ahmedabad, a sprawling city of 3.3 million people. Because of his long years of archival research and anthropological fieldwork in the region, he speaks in this book with an authority few can match. And his message is not one that the current policy-makers of Gujarat, India, or indeed of most of the centers of globalizing capitalism will want to hear.

On the surface, Ahmedabad seems to be a poster child for free-market economics. Yes, a traditional sector of highly integrated, composite production has declined drastically due to international competition, and 85,000 workers have lost their jobs over the last two decades. But, the argument goes, it has been replaced by new businesses, many in the high-tech tertiary sector; the cotton industry itself still operates, especially decentralized weaving contract shops; and thousands of new jobs have opened up in the “informal” labor market where “entrepreneurship” flourishes for those willing to seize the opportunity.

Promoters of this vision, whether the World Bank or local officials, say statistics don't lie: the city has grown in population by over a half million in the last decade, per capita income has increased, unemployment is down to 2 or 3 per cent, and poverty rates have declined. These figures are based on the studies of the National Sample Survey, India's official statistical agency.

Far from lamenting the passage of formal sector employment (union representation, stable labour contracts, breadwinner wages, health and retirement benefits, etc.), the new economics trumpets "flexibility" and the pleasures of being on one's own. In this, its proponents are not disappointed: since the mid-1970s, such jobs (then mainly associated with catch-as-catch-can work in common labour, street-vending, rickshaw driving, and the fringes of criminality) have increased from one-half to over four-fifths of the gainfully employed population of Ahmedabad. No longer stigmatized, the informal labour market provides the pathway to an ever-prosperous future. It looks as if Ahmedabad is just another example of capitalist resiliency: lose one, win one, Gerschenkron's "creative destruction".

Ahmedabad, however, is probably best known to the rest of the world as the scene, early in 2002, of ghastly massacres of hundreds of Muslims by Hindus with the inevitable responses from the other side. This "communal violence" seemed almost promoted by nationalist politicians. Was there a connection between economic change and this recurrence of ethno-religious violence at a level never before experienced? Jan Breman says there was indeed. Whatever one thinks of the picture of the progress depicted above, and Breman's main theme is to debunk it, the changes in the lives of Ahmedabad's masses over recent decades have been swift and dramatic. Their working lives, even for those who have benefited from the rise of the new economy (and Breman could strengthen his argument by paying more attention to them), have become more harried, their security more fragile. For the one-fifth of the working population affected directly by the collapse of cotton, either as workers or tradespeople in the industrial neighborhoods, the transformation has been truly traumatic.

Laid-off Ahmedabad workers are typical of the millions who have suffered the ravages of de-industrialization since the very dawn of industrial capitalism (see Bert Altena and Marcel van der Linden (eds), *De-industrialization: Social, Cultural, and Political Aspects, International Review of Social History*, Supplement 10, 2002). Mostly married males, they were accustomed to stable, secure, decently paying jobs, with family health care and a union to defend their interests, lived in homes purchased with cheap credit from union-connected banks or in subsidized rentals, commanded sufficient funds or credit to pay for their children's secondary education and traditional celebrations, had enough leisure time to expand their horizons, and enjoyed the respect of their peers and themselves. Suddenly they were plunged into a world negating all this, where the scramble for existence came all the more rapidly because companies reneged on severance agreements and the state failed to enforce their rights or to provide even the minimum relief required by law.

Retraining programs were a joke. The lucky ones ended up as rickshaw drivers, while most went to common labor, security work, and petty vending. Most were between thirty and forty-five, but one-third still dropped out of the job market altogether. For the latter and most of the others, family members went to work to fill the gap. Their wives proved more resilient than they and children quit high school to work, but abuse, drink, suicide, petty crime, and all the rest became permanent features of a life at half the previous income. What did the vaunted Textile Labour Association – founded by Gandhi, organized around

the principles of non-violence, believing in harmonizing to the mutual concerns of labour and management, led by non-workers of generous heart whose “righteous struggle” had indeed accrued many benefits for its members – do for its sacked working men? Nothing. After all, “they were no longer members”. Although put less bluntly by their counterparts worldwide, this too was not untypical.

Breman’s documentation of all this is overwhelming. Most important, however, he and his associate, B. B. Patel, scientifically selected 600 households to investigate in detail and 60 of these to draw into virtual participant observation. It was here that they were able to move to the psychological level, to try to gauge their subjects’ sense of identity. Needless to say, self-confidence and self-respect had declined enormously. Their image of themselves as skilled and well-regarded workers and as proud union men had disappeared. As fathers and husbands who had fulfilled gender expectations in an extremely patriarchal culture, they now felt seriously diminished, no doubt the main source of the pathological responses noted above.

The one thing that had not been altered was their caste status and their religion. The vast majority were lower caste Hindus, many of them untouchables. Although neither companies nor the union (despite Gandhian principles) were particularly caste-tolerant, the lower expectations and willingness to work of this group made them ideal factory hands, and they clearly benefited more than most of their kind outside the industry. For them, the return to poverty and degradation was all the harsher. The other vilified group in Gujarat society were the Muslims. They tended to dominate the weaving rooms of the composite industry and, with closure, more readily found work in the independent subcontracting weaving shops that survived the collapse. Their conditions of work, however, firmly placed them in the informal sector. Still, they were the envy of those displaced entirely from the cotton industry.

Altogether, but in particular for low-caste Hindus, de-industrialized workers have tended to “fall back on the only identity they have – membership of a caste or religious community” (p. 230). Increasing segregation and deteriorating living conditions in the slums of the city, the fragility of life and hence of psychological integration: here was the tinder for the explosions of 2002. But not only the de-industrialized participated. The very nature of informal sector work, even for those whose livelihoods may have improved from it, means that one’s job is left open to the vicissitudes of the market, and hence is less stable and secure. Health care and retirement planning are often one’s own responsibility, and temporary lay-offs can occur at any time, making it difficult to keep up payments. Permanent indebtedness at high interest rates is almost assured. The number of days actually worked every month is uneven and, as Breman demonstrates in detail, much below the assumption made by official statisticians in creating their optimistic estimates of living standards outlined in the first paragraph.

Breman’s detailed account of these realities and the contrast with the disappearing world of labourers in formal sector, the growth of which comprises the historical first part of the book, lay to rest the glowing visions of the economists. His discussion of why social-historical and anthropological methodology, more sensitive to the nuances of lives lived, is superior to that of statistical economics (pp. 271–275) is convincing, especially when he notes that earlier studies of village poverty in Gujarat found the anthropologists more optimistic than the economists.

If Breman’s main goal in this book is to challenge the rosy view of the new economy, the link he makes between de-industrialization and ethno-religious identity politics and its

often violent expression is even more important for our times. Although much research would be required to prove it definitively, the virulence of ethnic antagonism in the former Yugoslavia was undoubtedly exacerbated by the extreme economic dislocation that followed the collapse of Tito's formal system of worker-council production. Closer to home for me, the city of Detroit's rapid de-industrialization in the 1950s and 1960s – brilliantly analyzed by Thomas Sugrue in *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, NJ, 1996) – was followed almost immediately by the city's worst racial upheaval ever and the emergence there, and in de-industrializing cities everywhere, of Black Power movements along with a vast widening of the racial divide. And as in Gujarat, industrial unions such as the United Auto Workers that had previously pioneered in creating formal-sector stability and placating race/caste antagonisms, now, in their post-closure impotence, found themselves under attack by African-American revolutionary nationalists. (On this, see Heather Thompson, *Whose Detroit? Politics, Labor, and Race in a Modern American City* (Ithaca, NY, 2001).)

Finally, is it possible that the contemporary flowering of US religious-identity politics, especially right-wing Christian fundamentalism, may be linked to the triumph of postindustrial economic “informality”? This new activist element of the Republican Party – its first mass base since the 1920s and critical to its current hegemony – are socially and economically average Americans, that is, people with irregular work lives, a lack of adequate medical coverage, threatened social security, and serious concerns about affording higher education for their children. But they find these insecurities of the new economy duly compensated by the thrill of God's immediate presence each Sunday. The internal violence associated with the Christian right is limited to occasional gay-bashing and abortion-clinic bombings, but internationally, it serves as the main force supporting the Bush administration's radical new policy of American unilateralism, and its unprecedented willingness to use massive military violence without provocation.

The economics of “communal violence” is indeed a subject well worth studying. We are in Jan Breman's debt for having shown us so clearly how it is done.

*Christopher H. Johnson*

DATT, RUDDAR. *Lockouts in India*. Manohar, New Delhi 2003. 184 pp. Rs. 500.00; DOI: 10.1017/S0020859005121877

In Western societies it has become commonplace to regard lockouts as a form of old-fashioned labour conflict. The lockout – the withdrawal of work from employees, enforced by the employer – is the opposite of a strike, which takes place when employees voluntarily stop working in order to achieve certain goals. Historians and other researchers in the field of labour relations explicitly claim that, compared with strikes, lockouts have become a rarity in the West. This is not the case in India, however, where in the period 1987–1997 the number of man-days lost due to lockouts (171,021,000) exceeded the number lost due to strikes (107,514,000). The greater number of man-days lost due to lockouts was mainly a result of the longer duration of lockouts, for both the number of conflicts and the number of workers affected were higher in the case of strikes. On average, each year saw 1,073 strikes and 455 lockouts, involving 874,000 and 301,000 workers respectively.

Ruddar Datt has collected and analysed a great deal of data on Indian labour conflicts for

the years 1961 to 1997. Unfortunately, he has succumbed to the temptation of including so much of this data that his study is sometimes difficult to read because of the vast number of tables and graphs. However, emerging from this statistical overload are a number of interesting insights into the phenomenon of the lockout in Indian society.

Datt begins with an introduction on all-India developments. One of the major conclusions he draws is that lockouts caused more hardship for individual workers and a greater loss of production to society than strikes did. The author reaches this conclusion by calculating what he calls the individual intensity and the social intensity of strikes and lockouts. The individual intensity measures the number of days a worker was involved in a conflict, while the social intensity measures the number of man-days lost per dispute. On average, the individual intensity of lockouts was 3.64 times that of strikes, while the social intensity of lockouts exceeded that of strikes by a factor of 3.51.

One of the other conclusions in this introductory chapter concerns the rise in the proportion of lockouts in the public sector since 1991. It is generally believed that lockouts are a private-sector phenomenon, but in recent years the state too has openly demonstrated its hostility towards the working classes by locking workers out on occasion.

After having given the all-India figures, Datt analyses events in seventeen major individual states. Not surprisingly, he finds that about 85 per cent of all lockouts took place in the five most industrialized states. The second part of this book is dedicated to a study of forty-two cases in West Bengal, one of these states. Datt ends with a summary and conclusions. A final chapter consists of recommendations to the Indian government based on this study, relating to further investigations and the means to reduce the intensity of lockouts.

Datt's study is important to international scholars of the subject because of some of its conclusions. The most important point to note initially though is that because separate statistics on strikes and lockouts exist in India Datt was able to do his research at all. In many countries no distinction is made between the two, and the international publications by the International Labour Organization (ILO) therefore give no separate statistics for these categories. This omission by the national offices is at odds with the ILO's recommendation, published as late as 1993 in a "Resolution Concerning Statistics of Strikes, Lockouts and Other Action due to Labour Disputes, Adopted by the Fifteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians", that a distinction be made between strikes and lockouts. Most countries provide insufficient information, and therefore the ILO only gives totals for all labour conflicts. The reasons why the various national statistical offices continue to neglect the distinction between strikes and lockouts are various. Since 1894, British statistics have failed to distinguish between strikes and lockouts. Both were classified simply as disputes between employers and employees: from the point of view of their effects on the national economy, the precise nature of the dispute was considered irrelevant.

Datt's book takes a firm stand in this controversy. First, Datt describes lockouts as "a kind of punishment inflicted on the labouring classes" (p. 11). Secondly, he calculates an all-India correlation coefficient between the number of man-days lost due to strikes and the number lost due to lockouts. This yields  $r = 0.431$  and  $r^2 = 0.185$ , which means that 18 per cent of the change in the number of man-days lost due to lockouts is a result of the change in the number of man-days lost due to strikes. In other words, 82 per cent of the change is accounted for by other causes. Because the data on strikes and lockouts form a population and not a sample, there is no statistical need to calculate the significance of the



correlation. Datt nevertheless calculates this figure, and discovers that the all-India pattern is not significant.

Another argument against distinguishing between the two forms of conflict is the practical difficulty of separating the two during “mixed conflicts”. This surely seems a valid argument, but in Datt’s research on West Bengal almost 75 per cent of the lockouts turned out to be pure lockouts. They were neither a reaction to strike activity nor a prelude to such activity. We can conclude therefore that this practical argument applies only in the case of a minority of lockouts, and is therefore not valid.

One of the firmest conclusions Datt makes is that the lockout as a weapon of capital against labour has received strong support from the neo-classical liberalization since the 1980s. Datt calculated the influence of liberalization on lockouts by taking a dummy variable for liberalization as the predictor. He calculated an  $r^2$  of 0.82, which implies that the impact of liberalization on the development of lockouts was considerable. Thus, government policy since 1991 has made it easier for employers to resort to lockouts by increasing their power vis-à-vis employees; workers became anxious about going on strike. Thus, while the incidence of strikes fell during the period 1961–1997 the incidence of lockouts fell to a lesser degree. Datt concludes that “As the arm of the State shifting in favour of the industrial and business classes, has forced labour to become docile, and thus, the employers are able to achieve their objectives of disciplining, manning, downsizing, and increasing the workload of workers without excessive resort to lockouts” (p. 129).

In his recommendations, Datt urges the need for better statistics. He has discovered discrepancies between the data published by the West Bengal government and the Ministry of Labour. According to the first source, there were 68 per cent more lockouts in West Bengal in 1986–1997 than would appear from the annual review published by the Ministry. We know that official statistics often underestimate the number of conflicts, but in the Indian case we actually find two government agencies publishing quite conflicting data. This would seem to be unique.

The book ends by expressing the hope that the government will play a role in creating a better climate for industrial relations. “The government, in the era of liberalization, must play a proactive role in supporting the weaker bargaining partner so that a better deal of ‘decent work’ can be provided for labour” (p. 179).

Although the statistical overload referred to earlier might deter some readers, this study can nonetheless be recommended to researchers in the field of labour relations. Datt offers some surprising insights into the character of lockouts, and also makes the Western reader, in particular, aware of the fact that developments in the West should not determine our view of global developments.

*Sjaak van der Velden*