

with their families, their school years, their first experiences of work, their looking for a job, their collective identity as *jornaleros*, their sense of justice and morals. Her main source in this part of the study are the interviews with the affected persons themselves. Through these interviews, Di Natale elaborates a "collective structure" of thought.

With respect to the "strategies of action", the author stresses that they are derived directly from the "social system" of latifundism in which the *jornaleros* and their way of thinking are embodied. Many ideas and possibilities are discussed in order to solve or at least to alleviate the problem of *paro* (unemployment). The ideological world of the ideas and claims of the *jornaleros* is composed of concepts like agrarian reform, the establishment of agrarian collectives and productive cooperatives, the (symbolic) occupation of land, even the utopia of finishing with "the unjust system of capitalism" in society. In spite of the different political affiliations of the workers, nearly all of them expressed a conviction that the *jornaleros* had a certain right to possess the land upon which they were working; this basic idea is still quite close to the anarchist concepts of a century ago.

In her final remarks, quoting E.P. Thompson, the author speaks of the *jornaleros* as a social stratum that has been run down by the development of history. Although it is not yet possible to draw an analogy with the industrialization process of the nineteenth century, there is no doubt that the basis of the *jornalero* existence is being destroyed continuously by the technological development of Andalusian agriculture. The mental structure of the day labourers is still determined by a social system that is disappearing.

Di Natale's study is very informative, from a historical as well as a present-day point of view. It contributes to an understanding of the latifundist system as a historical phenomenon. The "strategies of action" of the *jornaleros* of our day show so many parallels with Spanish agrarian history of the last 150 years that this book could be the basis for an extensive historical comparison. The longevity of the "agrarian worker's culture" could probably be shown to be part of the structural continuity of the latifundist system. The way the *jornaleros* acted depended and depends heavily on their *Lebenswelt*, and this *Lebenswelt* has been acting as a historical continuity. It is worth while continuing to examine these questions.

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DUBOFSKY, MELVYN. *The State & Labor in Modern America*. The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill [etc.] 1994. xviii, 321 pp. \$44.95. (Paper: \$24.95.)

Historians have been urged to "bring the state back in" for over two decades. Melvyn Dubofsky takes this advice to heart in *The State and Labor in Modern America* as he plots the relationship between the American labour movement and the federal government. Examining the upper echelon of labour leaders and federal policy-makers, Dubofsky takes us through familiar and not so familiar court cases, legislation, strikes and political battles from the 1870s through to the 1980s. The result is a well-written narrative that moves briskly through a wealth of secondary sources, augmented in places with original primary research.

Bringing the state back in, however, is only one of the goals of the book. Dubofsky's chief aim, stated forcefully in the introduction, conclusion and footnotes, is to launch a liberal attack on Marxist thinkers and activists. He adopts two familiar tactics. First, he challenges Marxist views of the state, claiming they are too simple because they emphasize the repressive role of the state. Instead, the author maintains, "the relationship between the state and labor is far more ambiguous" (p. xvi), for the state has offered workers "a real as well as a counterfeit liberty" (p. 236). Of course the role of the state is more complex; it is not simply the "slugging committee" of the bosses, and no Marxist would argue otherwise. Dubofsky does not critique or elaborate on Marxist theories of the state in this work. Rather, he creates a caricature, a straw man, which he then knocks down by demonstrating that on occasion workers have made some gains when the state extended a nominal protection. But the real question is not whether workers have ever received anything useful from the state. Certainly they have. The real question is what have workers gained and lost from the capitalist state and how to weigh the score. His conclusion that workers have on the whole "gained from positive state intervention" (p. xvi) seems forced, given that time after time Dubofsky shows how various arms of the state crushed the labour movement, held back reform, and blunted labour's offensives on the industrial and political fronts. By accentuating the positive, Dubofsky gives us an interpretation of the state that is at least as one-sided and skewed as those of the Marxists he criticizes.

His second tactic is to stress the positive actions of labour leaders such as Samuel Gompers and John L. Lewis while ignoring or denigrating the contribution left-wing activists have made to the American labour union. He is right to argue that we need to understand these policy-makers as much as we do the ordinary worker. But Dubofsky does more than shift the emphasis of labour history away from social history. Again, his real purpose is to attack radical activists and historians. It is the peculiar conceit of liberals to claim that their ideology is practical and pragmatic, while that of the left is romantic and utopian. This is the standard defence of the labour bureaucrat, and it is taken up by Dubofsky. It is a position that is difficult to sustain, however, for its assumptions are largely unproved. Since the labour conservatives united with employers and the state to purge socialists and communists from the labour movement, it is impossible to know how successful the left might have been if it had been allowed to implement its tactics and visions. Nor is it possible to argue with certainty that the rank-and-file members supported the conservative leadership, for its control over the union machinery often led to rigged and manipulated elections.

Furthermore, the "pragmatic" defence of the labour bureaucracy begs the question. To defend the conservatives against the left, it is necessary to show that the bureaucrats negotiated not just any settlement, but the best settlement possible under the existing conditions. This is never demonstrated by Dubofsky. Instead, he merely asserts that the pragmatists did all that was possible, that what did happen was the best that could have happened. This is Whig history applied to labour. Finally, Dubofsky's own evidence suggests that unions gain from the state when they are militant and progressive. Historically, only when workers came together and took to the streets did the state respond with changes in labour law and policy. To pressure the state effectively the labour movement

needs to build a culture of resistance that continues after the election and after the collective agreement is signed. Therefore, one way to judge labour leaders is by how they foster and sustain militancy. It is clear that the leaders that Dubofsky supports do not measure up. It may be that they did win the best contracts possible, though this is debatable. In accepting the blandishments of the welfare state in the 1930s and 1940s, however, the Sidney Hillmans and Walter Reuthers agreed to stifle rather than encourage militancy, whether it came from the rank and file or from other union officials. If, as may be inferred from this book, militancy is the most important key to labour gaining from state intervention, the labour bureaucracy does indeed share some of the responsibility for labour's decline. In stressing the failure of the labour bureaucracy, the left is perhaps more pragmatic and practical than its critics who argue without evidence that the conservatives did all that could have been done.

Dubofsky ends *The State and Labor* on a bewildering note by insisting that the radical left and the conservative right are equally enemies of organized labour and solidarity. His rationale for this conclusion is that in "railing against trade union bureaucracy" (p. 237) the left places the rights of individual workers above the collective rights of the union just as anti-labour employers do. This is simply incorrect. The Marxist critique of bureaucracy is not primarily based on what Dubofsky dismisses as "rights talk" (p. 238) or a *laissez-faire* individualism. It is instead based on an expansion of the collective rights of the rank and file against the rights appropriated by the leadership. It is a call for a genuine solidarity based on democracy rather than a fragile pseudo-solidarity imposed from above. Dubofsky's misrepresentation of the left is unwarranted and splenetic.

Stripped of its highly charged polemics, *The State and Labor in Modern America* is useful for its broad survey of state policy and the goals of the labour elite. Professor Dubofsky is an excellent writer and stylist, and his insistence that the primary question of historians should be "who rides whom and how" is well placed and welcome. The research in secondary materials is thorough, and the bibliography is a handy guide to the field of labour history. But the book fails to achieve its aim of discrediting Marxist labour history and state theory. Indeed, its liberal analysis serves as a timely reminder that Marxism is necessary to fully understand labour, capital and the state.

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BERNHARD, MICHAEL H. *The Origins of Democratization in Poland. Workers, Intellectuals, and Oppositional Politics, 1976–1980.* Columbia University Press, New York 1993. xv, 298 pp. \$49.50. (Paper: \$17.50.)

The origin of the political opposition movement in Poland which caused the systemic change in 1989 can be traced back to the misled attempt of the Communist Party to raise food prices in 1976. The nationwide protests of the working class against this attempt and the subsequent repression of striking workers (and persons not involved) led to the foundation of the Workers' Defence Committee (KOR), a new kind of political opposition in Soviet-dominated countries.