

with his *Gulag Archipelago*. In my view, in order to restore Russian society to health and create the preconditions for real reform it is absolutely necessary to research the terror of the communist regime and to disclose in their entirety all the files relating to the horror and the fears of everyday life. That makes Memorial an important organization and Adler's work is a must for all those involved in analysing developments in Russia.

Adler's book on the Memorial movement is also a witness to her personal involvement in the movement. Numerous interviews and personal examples are used to illustrate how Memorial developed; these serve to make the book vivid and quite readable. The chronological arrangement of the chapters seems to be the only way to present the results of such research at this stage. This is a great disadvantage, however, because it leads to a continuous change of scene, topic and theme. Furthermore, her account of the Memorial movement leaves many questions unanswered, questions relating to the background to official attitudes towards the movement, and the formal and legal regulations concerning rehabilitated victims. These matters demand another study, and I hope Adler will oblige us by producing one in due course. Another qualm I have relates to Part 1 of the present book – beautifully titled “Memorial: History as Moral Imperative”. This looks at the general formation of the Soviet system, the inheritance and legacy of Stalinism, and the rediscovery of Soviet history. Only a rather limited range of opinions are represented here, and few academic works are cited (and none at all on de-Stalinization); the result is rather unbalanced. Nevertheless, readers are reminded of the enormous importance of terror in the communist period and they will appreciate the value of Memorial.

*Ab van Goudoever*

**BORIS, EILEEN.** Home to work. Motherhood and the politics of industrial homework in the United States. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 1994. xviii, 383 pp. Ill. £12.95; \$17.95.

Thanks to the vivid social photography of Lewis Hine, Jacob Riis, and Women's Bureau social workers, generations of US history students have been presented with graphic portraits of the female tenement homemaker. Laboring in dark surroundings with inadequate ventilation, she fights an uphill battle to finish sewing yet another pile of infants' dresses while her own children languish or perhaps labor themselves on clothing they and their parents cannot possibly afford. The image provides stark proof of the price women, children and their families pay when the time-honored separation between work and home is breached.

Eileen Boris is part of a growing cadre of scholars who are seeking to challenge both the historic image of homemaker as victim as well as to argue that the separation between home and work is a (gendered) ideological construct that crumbles when historians pay closer attention to the lives, *mentalités* and struggles of homeworkers. While earlier scholars, even some women's historians, uncritically incorporated Hine *et al.*, into their texts, Boris reminds her readers that Lewis Hine was no disinterested photojournalist. Indeed, he was a special agent for the New York Consumers' League (NYCL), an organization devoted to the abolition of homework.

From the outset, Professor Boris brings a number of different theories and methods to bear on the study of homework. Gender analysis is central. Boris notes that “Behind homework lies the sexual division of labor that assigns childcare and household maintenance to women and the construction of gender that considers women’s subordinate position in both the family and the labor market as ‘natural’”. Boris shows that the same gender ideology that assigned women the role of primary care giver ensured that for many working-class women the boundaries between home and work would be obliterated; thus, for female homeworkers, the “double shift” became institutionalized *within* the home. “Her need to labor while caring for children”, Boris notes, “encouraged employers to send manufacturing into the home and spurred reformers to protect mothers from such a practice.”

Boris provides an important corrective to existing US historiography that too often posits an almost inevitable process of separation of home and work occurring during the nineteenth century. The incessant search on the part of employers for “flexible” workers as well as their desire to avoid overhead costs (especially highly competitive low-capitalized industries) has led to the persistence of homework. This process thus places “the home” squarely within the capitalist market-place. In addition, it makes the historical study of homework an extremely timely endeavor considering that increasing numbers of workers around the world are facing forces of production and climates of deregulation similar to the ones tenement homeworkers in the US have long experienced.

Professor Boris begins her narrative in the latter part of the nineteenth century with a fascinating discussion of the role that tenement house cigar workers played in the industries’ general strike of 1877. In the strike, called by Samuel Gompers’s Cigar Makers’ International Union (CMIU) female tenement workers proved their militancy and ability to organize in defense of their interests and in concert with their sister and brother shop workers in the CMIU. Female tenement workers in New York defended picket lines, fought evictions and marched in gala public demonstrations of solidarity. One visiting unionist from Cincinnati who commented on the women strikers admiringly noted that “we can work hand and heart with them, in killing oppression and elevating our trade”. Boris argues, quite rightly I think, that “The Great Strike showed that homeworkers might be organized if they were seen as part of the working class and not dismissed as merely underminers of factory standards.”

Neither Gompers nor the CMIU – with the exception of dissidents who organized the Cigar Makers’ Progressive Union (CMPU) – internalized these sentiments. After the strike’s defeat, Gompers bitterly accused the tenement workers of going “out on strike without organization or discipline. We union men saw our hard-earned achievements likely to vanish because of this reckless precipitate action without consultation with our union”. Boris writes that in the wake of the Great Strike, the CMIU attempted to defend their craft by barring cigar homeworkers and punishing union locals who tried to organize tenement laborers. “Since employers eroded the craft through tenement production,” Boris argues, “such a stand blocked union organizing of the less skilled.”

In the wake of Great Strike, the CMIU turned to the New York state legislature in an effort to prohibit homework. The failure of this strategy, personified in the disastrous *In re Jacobs* decision (1885), Boris argues, led Gompers more decisively in the direction of voluntarism and away from reliance

on state intervention. For reformers and some garment trade unions, however, late nineteenth-century legislative contests over the regulation of homework set the stage for a pattern that would hold fairly constant for the next few decades. Middle-class reformers, employers and trade unions each battled over the existence of home production and assembly of clothing, furniture, electronic components, etc., by simultaneously struggling over discourses of motherhood, family and home that represented rhetoric rather than reality. For instance, social reformers repeatedly argued that the home should be a sacred space set apart from the daily depredations of the market, yet they too often ignored the material conditions that made homework a necessary survival strategy for working-class families. Here Boris draws on discourse theory (while remaining keenly focused on issues of power, gender, class and ethnicity) to explore various “languages of motherhood” that allowed non-homeworkers to control a national policy debate that excluded the voices of homeworkers.

Boris builds on the work of other scholars that have sketched out the existence of a Progressive Era “women’s network” of middle-class female reformers who subsequently became important New Deal administrators (e.g. the NYCL’s Frances Perkins and the WTUL’s Clara Beyer). Boris argues that tactics employed by groups like the NYCL and the Women’s Trade Union League set the tone for a problematic relationship between reformers and homeworkers that endured through the passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938. Boris demonstrates that middle-class reformers often viewed female tenement workers less as associates in reform struggles and more as victims to be saved.

This unequal alliance had deleterious effects on efforts to create regulatory frameworks that could survive employer opposition as well as guarantee minimum labor standards in homework. Middle-class reformers often tried to eliminate homework altogether, thus alienating homeworkers. “What privileged and educated women viewed as ‘the wreck of the home’, a threat to motherhood and childlife,” remarks Boris, “provided the margin for maintaining the immigrant, working-class family.” In part, this clash of interests meant that homeworkers responded to many reform initiatives by evading efforts at reporting wages and hours and, at times, even physically chased would-be reformers out of their homes. While Boris is careful to note the ideological distance that separated a Rheta Childe Dorr from a Florence Kelley, she points out that in general, Progressive Era feminists embraced a definition of home and work that ironically jibed with the opponents of female suffrage; if the home as private sphere was to be kept clear of politics, it should also be cleansed of work as well.

Boris provides rich descriptions of the failures and successes of social legislation that hinged on homework regulation or restriction from *In re Jacobs* to the Reagan era. *Home to Work*’s national scope and chronology – stretching from the 1870s to the 1990s – represents a kind of *longue durée* for US social historians as well as a welcome departure from localized studies. In terms of studies that purport to analyze labor policy debates and social legislation during an era of global integration, this is critical. Boris shows that manufacturers who employed homeworkers often responded to homework regulation in one state by moving production to adjacent states. In this manner, New Jersey became a favored location for homework employers trying to escape regulations hatched in New York during the 1910s.

This study also provides important revisions to polity-centered analyses that give too much weight to state structures and middle-class reformers in the

shaping of public policy while obscuring power relations between reformers and conservatives. In Illinois, Boris shows that successful homework policy development *and* enforcement in the 1890s depended on a broad-based coalition of progressive trade unionists, settlement house activists (especially socialist Florence Kelley), and labor organizers such as Mary Kenny, Elizabeth Morgan and Alzina Stevens. Here, Boris builds on the work of Kathryn Kish Sklar to argue that it took every ounce of this coalition's energy and vigilance to pass an anti-sweat shop bill that momentarily triumphed over the *laissez-faire* ideologies of homework employers and the Illinois Supreme Court. Yet, with the defeat of governor Altgeld in 1897, Kelley lost her position as factory inspector and tenement homework again proliferated.

While the wide scope of *Home To Work* contributes to the book's strengths, it also contains some pitfalls. At times, Boris's chapter organization is blurry. For instance, chapter nine ends with a discussion of the Fair Labor Standards Act while the next chapter opens with a newspaper headline from 1991. In addition, given the international growth in studies that focus on the intersection between women's history, labor and homework, the lack of a bibliographical essay is puzzling.

Nonetheless, *Home To Work* is an excellent monograph that simultaneously informs important debates in women's and labor history as well as public policy studies. In an era of global integration and the concurrent reemergence of homework as an international phenomenon, Eileen Boris has produced a most compelling and timely piece of scholarship; one that gives us, ironically, a clearer picture of homework than Hine or Riis were ever able to achieve.

Paul Ortiz

CHANDAVARKAR, RAJNARAYAN. *The Origins of Industrial Capitalism in India. Business strategies and the working classes in Bombay, 1900–1940.* [Cambridge South Asian Studies.] Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 1994. xviii, 468 pp. £40.00; \$69.95.

“Political action”, Chandavarkar writes in the conclusion to his book, “has often been most securely grasped in terms of given social categories.” Workers, in the typical tale, are assumed to be politically militant and anti-capitalist. “It is perhaps more important to recognize that these social categories were not given in the first place but politically constructed, and that the process of the social formation of the working class was shaped by an essentially political dimension at its core.” This book tells the story of the ways in which the Bombay workers made and unmade their various political identities. Central to this tale is the local forgings of the universal contradictions of global capitalism.

The casual reader might pick up this book and think of it as a dense empirical study of a diverse community of workers in a remote place (Bombay, India). That does not do it justice. The academic division of labor between historians (“empiricists”) and theorists (“abstractionists”) draws too wide a gulf between these two forms of academic practice. Chandavarkar has not written *mere* history, for that itself is to privilege the conditions of possibility of the writing of *mere* theory (which is able to stand apart from the concrete categories which restrain