Mike Makin-Waite, *Communism and Democracy. History Debates and Potentials*, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 2017; vii + 296 pp.; ISBN: 9781910448762, £18.00, pbk.

This highly readable and stimulating book is an absolute must for all those engaged in the endeavour to chart a socialist route out of the neo-liberal quagmire. It is, however, overwhelmingly a work of history with some concluding reflections about the choices that now confront us. The central theme is the constantly shifting relationship – sometimes close, sometimes tense and distant – between the twin struggles for democracy and socialism.

Makin-Waite's analysis begins with the Enlightenment and the French Revolution from which both liberal democratic and socialist movements took their inspiration. Despite tensions between the two down to the early twentieth century they progressed in reasonable harmony. Liberals and socialists alike assumed both a natural equality and equality before the law and shared a commitment to the defence and extension of democratic rights. However Marx and Engels, whilst engaging with and supporting struggles for the extension of democracy, also felt liberal democracy fell short because it lacked a class understanding of the basis of political power and could not deliver on its promise as long as the economy was 'left outside of democratic politics'. The founders of Marxism left to their successors no clearly worked out theory of democracy whilst their sketchy conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat which would replace the class rule of the bourgeoisie en route to Communism was to prove a two edged sword, readily gutted of its democratic content. Marxism where it achieved state power, observes Makin-Waite 'became a *rejection* of liberalism rather than an attempt to realise it more fully' (p55). A revolution carried out in the name of a small and increasingly disaffected proletariat, fearful of counter revolution, gave a profound push towards centralised and authoritarian practices justified by a reified and abstract claim that government by the soviets was inherently more democratic than what Lenin described as 'ordinary bourgeois democracy' (p100). The Bolsheviks dispensed with the constituent assembly in which they were a minority and by the end of 1922 other political parties had been shut down. The newly emergent communist parties of the West also adopted an attitude of disdain towards bourgeois democracy and the inadequate reformism of social democratic parties.

The remainder of Makin-Waite's historical account is devoted to a delineation of the stages by which this posture, ultimately fatal for communist regimes, was abandoned and then reversed. The process began fairly abruptly with Hitler's assumption of power in 1933, itself facilitated by

divisions on the left, and the decision of the Comintern two years later to promote the widest unity of all the democratic forces opposed to fascism. This rapidly bore fruit with the election of the popular front government in France the following year. The communist parties of France and Italy emerged from the war against Nazi Germany with sufficient support to put them on the threshold of power. In 1946 the French Communist leader became deputy premier in the French socialist-led government.

The renewed attachment to pluralist politics was not of course replicated in the Soviet Union nor those countries which fell within its sphere of influence in the post-war settlement. During the Cold War the Stalinist regime, more murderous and isolated than ever, used its military power to crush movements for political or economic reform in Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968). But the Soviet Union itself could not in the end resist pressure for change as the centrally planned economic system, despite its prodigious success in raising the living standards and education of the people, had changed little in some respects since the 1930s and proved increasingly inadequate in more complex times. Khrushchev's exposure of Stalin's crimes in 1956 was accompanied by some measures of economic liberalisation and decentralisation but, according to Makin-Waite, his fall from power in 1964 may be attributed to a resistant bureaucracy. Lack of democracy became a significant block on further economic progress. When Gorbachev tackled the problem head on in the late 1980s with his policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost* they led not to a reformed socialism but to its demise.

During the decades leading up to the dissolution of the Soviet Union European communist parties not only came to terms with fact that without democracy socialism made little sense but developed a conception of revolution as a process rather than a possibly violent upheaval. The dissemination of Gramsci's ideas, delayed until the early 1970s, played a crucial part, particularly his view that in advanced capitalist countries it was necessary to conduct a long 'war of position' and achieve a struggle for cultural hegemony prior to any revolutionary rupture; through the extension of democracy to the whole of civil society the aim should be to establish a progressive democracy. The state itself was now seen as a site of conflict with the possibility of gradually opening it up for the general good and not simply as an instrument of repression. Appropriately enough it was the Italian Communist Party, following a Eurocommunist strategy that came closest to achieving power. It was widely recognised as competent and uncorrupted in its management of the great 'red belt' of central Italy and the projected historic compromise with the Christian Democrats seemed on the verge of success when Aldo Moro was murdered by the Red Brigades in May 1978.

By the time that Makin-Waite turns to contemplate the future prospects for socialism the case for the indispensability of democratic practice to both the struggle for socialism and its survival has been well made. He concurs with Nicos Poulantzas that 'the essential problem of the democratic road to socialism' was to find ways to 'radically transform the state in such a manner that extension and deepening of political freedoms and the institutions of representative democracy are combined with the unfurling of forms of direct democracy and the mushrooming of self-management bodies' (p220). In order to avoid the economic and environmental catastrophe which looms on the horizon we should be prepared for a long process of constructing alliances, generating support for alternative social institutions and policies, 'making capitalism human until maybe it isn't capitalism' (Judith Shapiro cited p281).

Such a brief summary of Makin-Waite's historical analysis and his strategic prescriptions cannot do justice to the nuances and caveats with which he presents both – and there are many. He observes, for instance, that communist impatience with bourgeois democracy can in part be understood by the latter's repeated failures and timidity; the middle class failure to stand up to the forces of reaction in the upheavals of 1848 greatly irritated Marx whilst the way in which social democratic parties fell in behind the war policies of their respective powers in 1914 dismayed Lenin who also had to cope with the Russians liberals' seeming inability to dispense with autocracy. Makin-Waite further acknowledges the force of the criticism that Eurocommunist parties became little more than left wing social democratic parties, which in the Italian case ' did come to mean a self-defeating accommodation with reality' (p215). His sharp critique of Soviet-style communism is tempered by his understanding of the circumstances which gave rise to it. The reader is reminded that the Russian Revolution was carried through in the midst of crisis and war and, contrary to subsequent endeavours to bestow on it a revolutionary coherence, followed a fairly chaotic path. The pressure and meddling of the capitalist countries from 1917 onwards, 1939-46 excepted, is also given due weight. Some of the most interesting pages are devoted to the brutal, American backed, overthrow of the Popular Unity government in Chile in 1973. This had a significant effect in reinforcing the Italian Communist Party's view that only the patient creation of a hegemonic block of democratic forces would suffice to defeat American efforts to stop them coming to power. Strategic options for the left were at the same time much reduced by the erosion of the traditional foundations of working class movements and the sapping of their cohesion and identity. Individualism and consumerism took hold backed up by the establishment of international

organisations designed to stabilise the capitalist world. The demise of the Soviet Union not only left the field free for them but also took off the table a means, in Pablo Neruda's words, of 'comparing possibilities' (p235).

Yet it is a great virtue of this study that it makes clear, whatever the objective constraints and explanations, that critical choices were also made from amongst available possibilities and then sometimes, given the theological propensities of Marxist discourse, transformed into eternal truths. Thus the Menshevik option of a slower staged transition to socialism via a bourgeois revolution was consciously rejected; the resultant revolution was then taken as a universal paradigm despite the fact that Lenin himself justified it in terms of Russian peculiarities. In 1968 the Soviet Union decided to invade Czechoslovakia destroying what was possibly the last opportunity to create a democratic socialist regime in Eastern Europe. None of these things, which all had enduring consequences, were strictly speaking necessary even if historically explicable. Hindsight some will say is wonderful, but too often perhaps a different path might have been taken had other voices prevailed. 'Social production without democracy', Kautsky warned in April 1917, 'could become a most oppressive bond'. (p90) Makin-Waite's thought provoking study reminds us not only of the wisdom of these words but of the fact that, though we make our history in conditions not of our choosing, it is nonetheless ours to make.

David Parker

Doug Enaa Greene, *Communist Insurgent: Blanqui's Politics of Revolution*, Haymarket Books, Chicago, 2017; 292 pp.; ISBN: 9781608464722, $19.00, pbk.

In this short book, Doug Enaa Greene seeks to examine the life and thought of the nineteenth century French revolutionary figure, Louis-Auguste Blanqui (1805-1881). In an epilogue he outlines the political evolution of his followers after his death and in an appendix he gives us a valuable account of how Marxists viewed this important figure who could be described as a revolutionary but not a Marxist. At the risk of oversimplifying, the essential difference is that Blanqui was an organiser of conspiracies led by an enlightened few whereas Marxist revolutionaries had a greater sense of the underlying forces that shaped social change. Blanqui believed that an elite would bring the working class to a more just society (the nature of which he thought could be created after the overthrow of the oppressors) whereas the followers of Marx saw the proletariat as the basis of the revolution. As

Engels put it, Blanqui had 'neither socialist theory nor definite practical proposals for social reform' (p153 – all references are to the work under review). Greene is not afraid to confront the suggestion of some radicals and anti-communists that the Great October Socialist Revolution was merely 'a Leninist minority coup' (p155). Lenin himself disposed of this argument by stating that the revolution depended not on a conspiracy but on an 'advanced class' (p156) deriving its power from 'a revolutionary upsurge of the people' and finding itself at a 'turning-point' in history'.

This is quite damning and suggests that Blanquism was a revolutionary dead end. Indeed, in the book's epilogue, which precedes the appendix and is entitled 'The Fate of Blanquism', Greene describes the evolution of the party in the 1880s. It was drawn to the populist Boulanger who led a movement accurately described as 'anti-Semitic, populist and nationalist' (p144). In 1888, the Blanquist movement split with a majority choosing to align themselves with Boulanger's views while the minority went on to be absorbed into the socialist/communist mainstream. While Greene's focus is understandably on the minority which remained on the left of politics, nevertheless it could have been useful to have looked a little more closely at the majority who were happy to embrace the right-wing pre-Fascist ideologies of the early twentieth century. Was there anything in Blanqui's thinking and practice that might have predisposed them to such an evolution? It is a question that is all the more urgent in the current political climate where populism is again on the rise.

Greene is at his strongest when dealing with Blanqui as an insurgent and when examining his place in the left wing movements of his own and subsequent times. Indeed, the appendix will be of considerable value to anyone seeking a succinct account of a complicated series of relationships and influences. Here Greene demonstrates mastery of his sources and produces a line of argument that is most convincing.

Unfortunately, the rest of the book does not uniformly demonstrate these strengths. I have a number of reservations. There is at times a lack of precision defining terms. For example on page 6, Greene tells us that 'The sansculottes were not a single class but composed of a bourgeois minority – artisans, shopkeepers, merchants and workers'. However, on page 9, he says: 'For the sansculottes, peasants, and workers, the revolution enabled them to articulate their own radical demands'. In the first quotation, the workers are part of the category 'sansculottes', whereas in the second, they are separate. It is important to be clear about this, not just because the readership may not necessarily be familiar with the term 'sansculottes' and may not know why these particular people were so called, but also because, as

we have seen above, the workers are at the heart of what constitutes for Marxists the revolutionary movement. The workers are not a subcategory of a 'bourgeois minority'. Matters are not helped when we read on page 97: 'The Blanquist understanding of the working class was still influenced by the experience of Jacobinism as the most oppressed class of the people'.

There are numerous such slips and infelicities throughout the book and the first chapter is particularly weak in this respect. On page 9, we read: 'The emperor's armies marched across Europe, where they abolished feudalism and spread the revolution on their bayonets'. On page 48, we have 'the legitimacy of the count [sic] to judge him'. On page 100, Greene writes of 'the brilliant medical student, Dr. Albert Regnard'.

The mastery that Greene demonstrates at the end of the book seems to be absent and in general his account of the historical background needs to be treated with a certain wariness. The account of Blanqui's education needs to be further developed in order to clarify the precise nature of the relationship between the Institution Massin and the Lycée Charlemagne. Chronology can be confusing or disjointed. The events of the last days of the second empire is laid out on page 110 but not in their temporal order – and it is hard to see why this is being done. There is a tendency to repeat certain names instead of using pronouns as happens on page 49: 'Blanqui's imprisonment at Fontrevaud was especially hard since he was separated from his family. Even though Blanqui was kept isolated in prison, he was allowed to assemble a small library on topics ranging from history to physiology to economics'. These infelicities may be the result of time pressures or of the constraints imposed by word limits. In any event, if there is a second edition, the opportunity should be taken for some revision.

Such errors are frequent and, while annoying, can be addressed. Of greater concern is the misogyny of the following passage: 'Due to his Girondin and Napoleonic past, Jean Dominique [Blanqui's father] was dismissed by the Bourbons, reversing the family's fortunes. The Blanquis were saved from destitution when Sophie [Blanqui's mother] inherited an estate – the chateau de Grand Mont in Aunay-sous-Auneau. After Sophie carelessly indulged in shopping for jewellery in the shops of Paris, the Blanquis nearly lost their second chance'. The assumption that a woman has no right to her own property is of its time and here goes unchallenged. It is accepted that her rights are subsumed into those of the patriarchal family. Furthermore, the use of the phrase 'indulged in shopping for jewellery' seems to tap into stereotypes of our own era and the adverb 'carelessly' cannot be other than condemnatory. However, it might have been more appropriate for Greene to have examined the context rather than rush to judgment. The times

were turbulent and jewellery represented portable wealth. They were what people took with them when the needed to flee for their safety. Could it not be that Sophie was being prudent?

John McCann

Chris Holmsted Larsen, *Den Folkekaere Stalinist. En biografi om Carl Madsen*, Gylendal, Copenhagen, 2017, 544 pp; ISBN 9788702220353, 350 DKK, hbk.

Carl Madsen was born in 1903 into a conservative, religious home in northern Jutland, in a milieu of big farms or smallholdings. His background was middle class, both parents were teachers. At 15, sick of school, he worked on a couple of farms. At 16, he enrolled at grammar school, leaving 3 years later to study law. In Copenhagen he became involved in student politics, at first social democratic; but in December 1928 he joined DKP (the Danish CP), where he imbibed the sectarian Stalinism of the time which he never abandoned.

Qualifying as a lawyer that year, also marrying, he became a civil servant auditing accounts, being shifted from ministry to ministry. He gained employment as a lawyer also, fitting it in somehow. DKP entrusted him with defending the Moscow Trials which, later in life, after Khrushchev's 'secret speech' he still defended as 'clearing out a 5th column', only conceding that some excesses had occurred. As a lawyer, his speciality defending the 'little man', was in challenging the legal system and bringing its faults into the public realm; thus even when he lost, he had made a case for change. He defended International Brigade volunteers. There was a ferment of radical ideas across the board at the time and Madsen became prominent in the cultural sphere, too.

Denmark was occupied by Nazi Germany on 9 April 1940, but DKP remained legal. Following the line of the Hitler-Stalin Pact, Britain and France were the aggressive imperialist powers, while Germany was a benign one – not an easy line to defend. However, on 23 June 1941, a day after the Axis attack on the Soviet Union, Madsen was arrested. DKP's preparations for illegality had not been good enough. The Germans were after 66 leading DKPers, but the Danish police obligingly arrested 339 in all. 150 of them ended up in Stutthof Concentration Camp near Danzig; 22 of them did not survive incarceration.

The social democrat-led government ignored the constitution and retroactively adopted a law to justify it and parliament revoked the immunity of

the 3 DKP MPs. Most of those arrested were moved to Horserød internment camp. Out of 300-400 most were communists, and around 100 had been International Brigaders. Madsen operated as a barrack-room lawyer. In summer 1942, a few leading DKPers escaped.

By mid-1943, the Axis powers were in retreat and resistance activity increased in Denmark. In August strikes and disturbances broke out in major towns. Government ministers had agreed that the introduction of the death penalty and an enactment of special laws regarding Danish Jews were unacceptable. The Germans insisted on the former so the government resigned and the country was under military emergency rule from 29 August 1943. As a result Horserød came under German control but in the confusion 95 succeeded in escaping, Madsen among them.

The Freedom Council of representatives of resistance organisations was set up that September. Madsen had a role of preparing cases against traitors, war-profiteers, etc. The aim was to go after the big fish not the minnows. Liberation came on 4 May 1945, and around 30,000 were arrested at first, Madsen became an Extraordinary Prosecutor representing the resistance movement.

A government was formed in which DKP had ministers, but it was a coalition of the resistance and collaborators – the Prime Minister was the social democrat Vilhelm Buhl, who had called for the public to denounce saboteurs, etc. Due to the prestige won by the DKP in the resistance, and demands from workplaces for one workers' party, the social-democrats engaged in negotiations for unity but by August broke them off. DKP's cosying up to the social democrats made it willing to compromise and not be as firm as Madsen over the trials, where he met with obstruction from politicians and civil servants. The contracting firm WTK, whose founder was president of the Employers' Federation, had done a lot of work for the Nazis, but it had been agreed by the government. Madsen was prevented access to documents, officials obstructed him and eventually the case was shelved. Efforts to try war profiteers, politicians, judges or police, came to nothing, a great bitterness was created in those who had struggled, suffered, and lost family – particularly Madsen.

The first post-war general election on 30 October 1945 saw DKP gain eighteen MPs, but at the expense of social democracy, resulting in a Liberal government. During the Cold War DKP lost support, ending up with no MPs by 1960. Madsen became a defence lawyer again in 1949, specialising in controversial cases which he politicised and thus created a new public awareness. He represented GDR interests in Denmark from the 1960s, helping its legitimisation campaign and that of exposing Nazis in top posts in the West.

Communism had made its greatest impact in the cultural sphere, the author writes, and by the 1960s attitudes were changing, DKP authors, Madsen included, were creating the narrative of the occupation and of the resistance, which would permeate the left from the late 1960s. He won a new audience among the '68 generation of radical leftists, who tended to by-pass DKP, which by its moderation, parliamentary fixation, and links to the East Bloc, was unattractive. An anti-imperialist mood was afoot, particularly over the barbarous US war in Vietnam. DKP was involved in a moderate anti-war campaign, not in the militant solidarity movement, and even expelled those members who set it up.

In his books, Madsen criticised the legal system; and would name those involved in collaboration with the Nazis, welcoming the chance of a libel action, in order to publicise his accusations in the media. On 27 April 1968, violence erupted outside the US embassy when police roughly went about removing demonstrators, with fifty arrests. Ten were charged with serious offences and were defended by Madsen and two other barristers. The trial began on 14 August 1968 and lasted until 17 June 1969 – Madsen wanted to call 137 witnesses. Imperialism, capitalism, the legal system, including the police, as well as US warfare, which Madsen compared to nazi crimes, were all flayed, in a show directed by him. Eventually, the judge closed the show, refusing to hear the last thirty-seven witnesses. Two defendants were found not guilty, the others given mild sentences. Madsen had become a hero on the left, his book on the trial a classic.

After a heart attack in 1970, Madsen reduced his legal activity and concentrated on historical matters: the case of Richard Jensen and his comrades, and the German communists and Jews handed over to the Gestapo by the Danish authorities. Jensen – a key figure in 'Out of the Night' by Dan Valtin, a mix of fact and fiction – had links to the Comintern's sabotage network led by ex-KPD Reichstag deputy Ernst Wollweber. Upon being found guilty of bombing two trawlers built for Spain in July 1941, Jensen received a sixteen year sentence, six other DKPers were sentenced, thirteen were not guilty but interned anyway. DKP expelled them and denounced them as provocateurs, etc. The case had been brought under Gestapo pressure. Madsen regretted the way DKP had boycotted the 'bombers' in Horserød. By reopening Jensen's case he hoped to get at the archives. It seemed to be going well but Jensen died on 29 October 1974. The author found that British intelligence was still watching Jensen's home in the 1950s.

Madsen became more critical of DKP's leadership over the drift rightwards, and those who had led it into coalition with collaborators, unity talks, and hence sidelined it post-1945. The leadership feared skeletons coming

out of the cupboard. His research in the GDR also created problems. He found dirt on the social democrats and the authorities over communists and Jews being sent back to the Gestapo. Konrad Blenkle, a KPD CC member, was one who was sent back and executed. It later turned out that the SED had kept back lots of dirt – Madsen only got crumbs – as some KPDers had since become non-persons, and, crucially, Denmark was recognising the GDR on 1 January 1973. Madsen 's book made his point. However, East Bloc editions of his books always met with problems. He had to remove references to Auschwitz, sanitary towels, and Polish CPers he had housed, owing to the latter having been murdered, not by the Nazis, but by the NKVD when Stalin liquidated (literally) the Polish CP.

Stronger and public criticism of DKP's development led to Madsen's expulsion in mid-1975. In spite of cancer, he took on the defence of the inhabitants of Christiania, the alternative life-style 'free city', once a military facility, threatened with eviction. Madsen won, the Defence Ministry could not evict the Christiania citizens. The case then went to the High Court; and on 2 February 1978 it determined that parliament decides the use of state property, not the courts. Legally the case was lost but as usual politically it was won. The government immediately changed tack and Christiania could stay – and it is still there. Madsen endeared himself to a broader range of people. He died 4 months later. His funeral was attended by over 500 people, but DKP's leaders stayed away.

Madsen wrote only one of the three volumes of memoirs he had planned. After his death his wife found a half-finished second volume, but, sick of the feud with DKP, she dumped it. This biography gives us an account of the man and his deeds, including the negative traits I have not mentioned. Madsen was a remarkable figure who developed a form of legal combat to defend the little man. This book does him justice and is simply superb.

Mike Jones
Chester

Hamish MacGibbon, *Maverick Spy: Stalin's Super-Agent in World War II*, I. B. Tauris, London, 2017; 288 pp.; ISBN: 9781784537739, £20.00, hbk.

Historical works come in many different forms: the more externalist account of events/periods, investigative journalism and, playing an increasingly important role, the personal narrative of those directly involved.

This book just cannot be categorised in this way, combining as it does the strengths of all three approaches into a most compelling form. The reader is

gripped by the remarkable nature of this story as it unfolds, helped by the author's dramatic form – the use of pointers, often at the end of chapters, gesturing towards what is about to unfold, or to an individual's later reappearance in another role. These devices artfully weave the narrative together.

The author was driven to write this memoir of his father as he gathered evidence from extensive scholarly research and interviews with those immediately involved. This gives the book one further quality – that of the gripping detective story.

Hamish MacGibbon's father, James MacGibbon revealed, towards the end of his life, that he had been a spy during the Second World War, providing vital information on German and British war plans to the Russians. As the narrative develops, there is a gathering recognition of its importance to the Soviet victory, a turning point in the war.

This was, then, a juncture in history of world historical importance. We are presented with a particular man, whose very specific character and socio-cultural context placed him in just the right place at just the right time. His moment came ... and he grasped it.

James MacGibbon came from a financially comfortable and eccentric family. Narrowly escaping a life in 'the motor trade' as initially planned, he found his metier in publishing (the book gives much fascinating detail of the publishing world at that time). Like many of his generation he was really quite unaware of the gathering storm in Europe that is until two key events brought it home. Firstly, living for a while in Germany (Berlin at time still being seen as the centre of European intellectual/cultural life) he witnessed the escalation of hatred of the Jews and the burning of books after the Reichstag fire: 'Culturally he was a changed man. Subconsciously the visit began a sea change in political perspective'.

The other critical fundamental influence was the Spanish Civil war. The author, in the space of one chapter, provides a masterly overview of the war, a distillation of his extensive scholarly reading, a scholarliness he wears lightly. MacGibbon tells us that the British Navy blocked the entry of armaments destined to support the republicans whilst military support for Mussolini and Hitler 'poured in unhindered'. He movingly records this spirt of working class solidarity, many joining the International Brigade, contrasting the impressive war monuments, of our urban landscapes with the modest memorials (fifty-five in all) to those fallen in this cause, mostly working class. We are reminded of the support of the church for the fascists, a particularly zealous faction informing their flock that they 'would have one year less in purgatory for every red killed'.

James MacGibbon and his wife Jean were, like many of his class and

generation, deeply affected by the lack of any adequate response from the major political parties. At Whitestone Pond in Hampstead, James and Jean heard a speaker who, at last, made sense of these world events. He was a Communist and so they took out a subscription to the *Daily Worker*. Subsequently they both joined the Party – again like many of their background and generation. These middle class communists, because the British Party was comparatively so small, had a disproportionately large importance within the British movement as a whole.

James's army life started in the fusiliers but he was soon transferred to the Intelligence Corps. However, there was, naturally enough, concern about his relationship with the Communist Party (his house had been searched by MI5). He was asked to confirm by the recruiting officer that he was 'with us', they 'shook on it', and that was that!

The German invasion of Russia was a turning point not only in the war but in this particular narrative. Many thought that, like elsewhere in Europe, the Russians would not hold out for long. But when it became clear that this belief was ill-founded, it remained general opinion that the Russians would be defeated; this was not, as one might imagine, accompanied necessarily by despair but rather, in many quarters, by a dark optimism. Given the deep ambivalence of having the Russians as Allies, many thought that the best result would be a Russian defeat, but one that would take long enough to wear down the German army. It was decided to withhold from the Russians all the intelligence coming from the Enigma decodings of German war plans.

This is the crucial moment when James walks onto the world historical stage. He could not accept the cynical decision to sacrifice our Allies in this way and soon met with intermediaries of Soviet Intelligence. So started the life of agent 'Dolly' who, for the rest of the war, secretly handed on vital information to the Russians. This included information about German battle plans and also of operation 'Overlord' (the D-day landings). There is a photo of the 1943 meeting of Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin accompanied by the author's musing that Stalin seemed to be in a particularly jovial mood perhaps as, unbeknownst to the others, he already had notice of what was being secretly planned by the British. James channelled information firstly from London and subsequently during his posting in Washington.

By a near miraculous coincidence Svetlana Chervonnaya, a Russian historian, was carrying out her own research on Soviet war intelligence at the same time as the author, thus leading her, quite independently, to James MacGibbon. Careful scrutiny of the research by Chapman Pincher and Chervonnaya confirmed that the agent sending information from

Washington, code named 'Milord', and 'Dolly' almost certainly were one and the same – James MacGibbon.

Despite attempts to recruit him, James had no more to do with Soviet Intelligence after the war. He was, however, kept under close surveillance by MI5 who installed taps in his home. The surveillance records give a very vivid insight into MI5's ways of working. MacGibbon's narrative here combines a Le Carré story with occasional features of an Ealing comedy (vital documents blown out of the window by a gust of wind, the darkly comic surveillance note of Jean entering the room appearing like 'Lady MacBeth' (sic)).

The account of James's subsequent interrogation makes an extraordinarily compelling read. He managed to give nothing away to one of MI5's most skilful interrogators (it was he that broke Fuchs). James's life, unlike the famous spies of that era (such as the 'Cambridge Five'), was not dominated by his espionage activities and he had no links to anyone else or other organisations. He was indeed a real maverick.

The author informs us that James, a keen sailor, rejected all buoyancy aids. This seems to be entirely in character and acts as a fitting metaphor. He was of course very careful as regards his mission and was calmly confident that he was doing the right thing; he seemed to require no support from others apart from Jean. From one perspective this may have seemed foolhardy, but as we look back now we can see that it was an inner strength, a lack of conventionality, that made it possible for him to carry this work through, thus making a vital contribution to the outcome of the war. It is a story that needed to be told not only for itself but for what it illuminates, with its combination of broad sweep and careful detail, about the world at that particular time.

This book will be of interest to a very wide readership – scholars will find much important historical record, whilst those whose interest is less academic will find here an extraordinary story told with passion. I can only echo the words of Patrick Wright – 'a brilliant and moving voyage of discovery'.

David Bell

Enrique Moradiellos, *Franco: Anatomy of a Dictator*, I. B. Tauris, London, 2018; 264 pp.; ISBN: 9781784539429, £20.00, hbk.

Much was written on Franco during his dictatorship, and much of this was hagiography or propaganda as the regime churned out constant reminders of El Caudillo. His enemies wondered how this goggle-eyed charmless man

could cling to power, despite his collusion with Nazi Germany, obsolete ideology, and failing economic policies. Even so, Franco has not been short of scholarly biographers, and anglophones have been particularly well-served by Paul Preston's very comprehensive *Franco: A Biography* (1993). Enrique Moradiellos justifies this new study on two grounds: first, the wish of so many in Spain today, especially its youth, and the political centre and centre-right, to observe 'the pact of forgetfulness' on the civil war and the years of hunger and decades of mediocrity that followed; and secondly the need for a short, synoptic and essentially interpretive critique, with a greater focus on the nature of *Franquismo* and the state it created. The book is divided into three overlapping sections, with half covering the man in 'a basic biography', and the remainder divided between historiographies of 'The Caudillo', and 'The Regime'.

Francisco Franco was born in Galicia in 1892 into a lower middle-class family. He would have followed the family tradition into the navy had the fleet not been diminished in size and prestige after the humiliating Spanish-American war. How different Spain might have been without that war. Naval officers are usually the most conservative element of the armed forces, but tend to be less likely to intervene in politics. You cannot ring the presidential palace with ships. So young Francisco joined the army, and soaked up the anti-modernist Catholic nationalism and the nostalgia for Spain's ancient greatness that went with it. In its Moroccan pocket-colony, where the inept Spanish army struggled to beat the Rifs in a long and savage war, Franco made his name as a ruthless, brave, and effective soldier who saw a chance to forge the soul of Spain anew, playing conquistador in the heel-tap of a once vast empire. Moradiellos regards the essential Franco as an 'Africanista'. Morocco led to rapid promotion, and Franco became the youngest of Spain's 800 generals. With a reputation to lose, he acquired his notorious caution. Promotion also confirmed his politicisation and led him to the conviction that he had the answer to Spain's problems. In July 1936, he was an eager member of the military conspiracy against the Popular Front government.

It was late September 1936 before Franco was appointed Generalissimo. Other candidates for leadership of the revolt had fallen away in an unlikely series of events that Franco regarded as providential. When the expected capture of Madrid failed to materialise in November, the Generalissimo decided to pursue a grinding war of attrition. With superior resources he reckoned he was bound to win, and a slow attrition would ensure the elimination or abject defeat of his enemies. From the wreckage it would be easier to rebuild the kind of Spain he wanted. The major deficiency in this book is

that it does not explain adequately how such a genuinely pious man could be so pitiless towards his own people, leaving the reader to surmise that the ferocity stemmed from a combination of his 'Africanismo', his medieval Catholicism, and his horror of the modern world.

Whether Spain was to be fascist or traditional-authoritarian has been a source of endless debate. Was Franco a Mussolini or a Piłsudski? Moradiellos is in no doubt that Franco was a traditional, Tridentine Catholic, with a fear of liberals, Jews, and Freemasons as much as Communists. But up to 1945 he believed in Fascism as the path to a new order, and wanted to join Germany in the war in June 1940 in return for Gibraltar, slices of French north Africa, and food, fuel, and arms. At that point Hitler calculated that destitute Spain would be a liability. When the two met at Hendaye in October, their positions were reversed. Hitler wanted Spanish help to take Gibraltar, while Franco was having doubts after the Battle of Britain, and though he still expected an eventual German victory and wished to be part of it, he felt he could not join the war as long as Spain's wheat and oil supplies, together with the Canary Islands, were at the mercy of the Royal Navy.

Franco's prospects were looking grim in 1945. Britain, France, and the United States expressed the hope that democracy would be restored in Spain. Hunger was a constant reality for millions of Spaniards, and Franco's autarkic policies were not working. Even among his own followers, Franco enjoyed a limited level of popularity. What saved him was his ability to turn a regime founded on the civil war victory into *Franquismo,* and a conviction among the victors that *Franquismo* was impossible without Franco. Their survival was wrapped up with his. Then came the Cold War and the willingness of the United States to enlist Spain. Finally, with rehabilitation, came an opening up of the economy to international trade, something Franco accepted with regret. Moradiellos is particularly sharp on the nature of the regime, and explaining how it was able to adapt to evolving circumstances while giving the impression, through the unchanging and ever-present Caudillo, that it remained the same. However, the regional dimension, with its Basque and Catalan nationalisms, is neglected.

Scholars divide on periodisation of *Franquismo*, and the characterisation of its chronology. Moradiellos reviews a variety of models. Most agree that Fascism, or Falangism, yielded to a traditional authoritarianism after 1945 – which Moradiellos sees as driven by Franco's version of Catholic corporatism – and then, from 1957, the foundation year of the European Economic Community, a controlled modernisation under the tutelage of technocrats drawn from Opus Dei. Finally, from about 1970, the regime prepared for the succession. The relatively peaceful transition to democracy

is explained by the exhaustion and disintegration of *Franquismo* long before the demise of the man himself.

In this fair and objective account, Moradiellos is not harsh on Franco. Neither is he complimentary. He does acknowledge that Franco brought Spain an unusually long period of stability, and eventually introduced a process of modernisation. Yet the origins of the regime in civil war and the destruction of democracy always denied it a legitimacy and Franco's aching mediocrity meant that it had a strong vision of the past and a capacity to muddle through the present, but no future. Today, most Spaniards want to forget it and erase the memory of its leader.

Franco: Anatomy of a Dictator is an easy and compelling read. Wonderfully concise and engaging, it succeeds in offering an excellent introduction for the novice, and an insightful synopsis for the specialist.

Emmet O'Connor,
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Emmet O'Connor, *Derry Labour in the Age of Agitation, 1889-1923, 2: Larkinism and syndicalism*, Maynooth Studies in Local History, Four Courts Press, Dublin, 2016; 68 pp.; ISBN: 9781846826115, £8.99, pbk.

This slim volume forms the second part of a series published by the National University of Ireland at Maynooth's Studies in Local History and Four Courts Press. It is an enterprise that has produced some excellent studies over the years, many of them the fruits of a unique Masters programme in local history at Maynooth. This particular series however, was commissioned especially to allow the premier labour historian in Ireland, Emmet O'Connor, to produce a two volume study of the labour movement in the city he has lived for almost thirty years. The result is a fine-grained and thoughtful analysis packed Tardis-like into two small books, the first of which covered the years 1889 to 1906. This volume takes up Dr O'Connor's specialist subject of famed Irish labour leader 'Big Jim' Larkin and traces his influence in and involvement with Derry in the years 1907 to 1914. It then discusses the challenges brought about by the First World War before concluding with a focus on Derry's experience of republican socialism in the tumultuous years of the Anglo-Irish war.

Derry, or Londonderry as it is also known, is a unique place in many ways. An overwhelmingly Catholic and nationalist city with a majority female workforce, shoehorned into the new Northern Ireland state at its inception very much against the popular will of the populace, it occupied

a strange liminal space between two states. It was its actual physical location however, that O'Connor, like others, has suggested provided limited opportunities for industrial investment and development. This peripherality was something nurtured rather than natural, particularly when in the years after partition the locus of power, political and economic, increasingly resided in Belfast and the surrounding area. Trade unions and trade union activity nevertheless became the convenient scapegoat, as O'Connor outlines, for any lack of investment, closures and lay-offs that took place over the years, a mythology that many Derry workers even appeared to believe themselves.

In the years before Jim Larkin made his appearance in Derry as a representative ostensibly of the National Union of Dock Labourers (NUDL) and began his characteristically flamboyant campaigning, local trade unions were, O'Connor argues, largely 'treading water' and not generally very effective. He notes that scabs were regularly and easily hired. However, this does seem to have been a feature even after Larkin had come and gone, no doubt related to the persistently high male unemployment in the city. Incidentally, this consistent feature of Derry's economy is a matter which could usefully have been discussed further in the book. Either way, Larkinism made no great advances in Derry and failed ultimately to break the hold of the British-based amalgamateds. The Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU) which appeared in 1909 as the Irish-based alternative, was never able successfully to get a foothold. Much of this was down to the reluctance of the dock labour force to embrace Larkinism. This in turn was part of a wider battle in the North between the ITGWU and the NUDL over property and assets, a battle which Larkin fought mostly from a base in the south and resoundingly lost. One possible explanation for this, beyond the clearly British-oriented nature of much of trade unionism in the North, is that the NUDL in particular, as O'Connor points out, was as much an Irish as a British union in its leadership and membership, in spite of being 'British-based'. Even James O'Connor Kessack, the NUDL organiser who replaced Larkin and whom O'Connor identifies as a Scot, scarcely saw himself as simply that. Undoubtedly sectarian politics held sway but these do not appear to have spiked Larkin's chances of success in Derry as much as they did in Belfast. O'Connor notes there had always been a delicate balance among local Protestant and Catholic trade union figures, which had endeavoured to keep politics and religion out of the labour movement as much as possible. Local leaders like James McCarron and William McNulty nevertheless expressed support for Home Rule and the Irish Parliamentary Party of John Redmond and tried their best to steer the Irish Trades Union

Congress (ITUC) away from any moves towards the creation of an Irish Labour Party.

The advent of the First World War brought investment and development to Derry as it did to many other places and solidified the idea that the city's labour movement was indelibly bound to British fortunes and futures. The British-based 'amalgamateds', like the National Amalgamated Union of Labour (NAUL), saw increases in their membership in both shipbuilding and the local distillery as both industries, like the shirt manufacturers, saw exponential growth and successes in wage struggles. The rise in the number of strike days was quite remarkable. As O'Connor notes, the pattern of industrial disputes mirrored developments in collective bargaining which saw considerable advances in living standards for some workers, though unsurprisingly those most tied to the war economy. O'Connor does an excellent job here of building the context for the final chapter of the book on the slump of 1920 to 1923. Against the backdrop of the nationwide nationalist militancy of the Anglo-Irish War and economic woes brought on by the crisis in over-production, opportunities arose for the appearance and development of a socialist republicanism in Derry. There is some fascinating work on the appearance and activism of famed IRA leader and ITGWU organiser Peadar O'Donnell in Derry from 1919 which in many ways rewrites the formerly dismissive accounts of his time in the city. As O'Connor admits however, Derry's experience with what he badges as syndicalism did not involve soviets, factory occupations, radical newspapers or triumphalist 'red flaggery', it merely echoed 'the zeitgeist with sympathetic action and efforts at promoting a working-class counter-culture'. In this sense it is probably fair to question how far O'Donnell's activism and successes for the ITGWU and a more clearly republican position for sections of the dock labour force and certain other groups of workers can be seen as syndicalist at all? In the final analysis this is probably less important than the fact that the amalgamateds seemed to offer a more appealing path for most Derry workers than anyone else. This was especially the case after partition when, as O'Connor acidly observes in his conclusion, 'the result was a brittle unity across the confessional divide at the expense of sugar-coating sectarianism with a veneer of class rhetoric, a trade unionism policed by a self-selecting oligarchy of officials, a provincial movement whose highest objective was to track cross-channel wage levels, and a dysfunctional Labour politics unable to gain a lasting traction'.

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David Parker, ed., *Letters of Solidarity and Friendship: Czechoslovakia, 1968-1971*, Bacquier Books, Meltham, 2017; 338 pp.; ISBN: 9781526206039, £14.99, pbk.

David Parker's *Letters of Solidarity and Friendship* – a collection of letters between his father, Leslie Parker, and a distinguished Czechoslovakian doctor, Paul Zalud – is both a useful historical source in its own right, and an engaging study of how a friendship can transcend all boundaries.

The starting point of these, and indeed their relationship, was a letter from Zalud, published in *The Times* just before the Soviet Union's crushing of the Prague Spring in August 1968. Zalud's critical comments spurred an enraged Leslie Parker, a member of the Communist Party of Great Britain, to write to Zalud personally, criticising him as a counter-revolutionary and stooge of the Western capitalist interests. David Parker states that this attack on Zalud – which Parker senior later apologised for – has always been something of a mystery to him. Was it because – due to Leslie's poor eyesight – to the fact that it had been read out to him, thus causing Parker senior to miss something in its written form? Or perhaps, as Parker senior told his son, it was because Zalud had chosen the *Times* as his publisher of choice – when he could have picked a more apt publication in the form of the *Morning Star*? This is a mystery that is unlikely ever to be fully resolved, but these letters at least help the reader grasp the mind set of these two individuals – separated by an Iron Curtain but otherwise so very similar; two Communist (ex- in the case of Zalud, and semi-retired in the case of Parker) activists but both independently minded and struggling to come to terms with the crises facing the international communist movement.

The text is not an academic study of 'party life' or of the Prague Spring and its aftermath, but rather an intimate portrait of two people's lives, thoughts and feelings throughout a short window of time. Other than an introduction and a concluding section of reflections, much of this book is simply the collected letters of Parker senior and Zalud, written to each other over a period of about three years (1968-1971). As David Parker states, there is logic behind this. Leslie Parker and Paul Zalud never met in person, and nor did they converse in any form other than through letters. This then was the only medium through which they could form their friendship; without any prior knowledge or ability to engage in face-to-face conversation. They embarked on their friendship blind, and for the reader and to read these letters in this way – devoid of much context or background of the individuals – is to in some way share the journey of Leslie and Paul.

The collection forms a useful anthology of sources that will no doubt be

used extensively by scholars of the Prague Spring and the subsequent international response to it. Furthermore, these letters provide further insight into the mind of CPGB members and activists at the height of the Cold War. This was a period of intense internal debate and reflection about the future direction of the CPGB in the wake of de-Stalinisation, and within this text then we can get a deeper understanding of the thoughts and opinions of many root and branch members of the communist movement at a time when the ideology they subscribed to was being challenged from many quarters, including within their own ranks. These letters were until their publication here, unseen, and the opening of any archival material that can further shed light on the thoughts of CPGB members is to be welcomed. For historians of the CPGB, this collection of letters will no doubt be read with great interest.

As previously stated, however, *Letters of Solidarity and Friendship* is not an academic text by any means. Yet this is one of its greatest strengths. The explanatory footnotes Parker uses throughout this work are not so much to be distracting, but enough to provide the reader with a general understanding of the who, where and what. As a result, it is highly accessible as a text. Laid out in an epistolary format, Parker's collection could be easily appreciated as a work of literature, enjoyed by the average lay-reader, as much as it would be enjoyed by historians well-versed in Cold War or Communist history. *Letters of Solidarity and Friendship* is an intimate portrayal of a friendship formed through letters, and over a political dispute. This was clearly a labour of love for David Parker, and it shows through the way he sensitively dealt with the source material, only correcting minor issues and leaving them in their original form as much as he could. As a collection of sources, this book is a useful trove of letters for historians and scholars, but it is as a story of two men brought together over their concerns for the future, and how it would be shaped, that this work is best read.

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David Peace, *Red or Dead*, Faber & Faber, London, 2013; 736 pp.; ISBN 9780571309047, £40.00, hbk.

Remembering the legendary Bill Shankly – a first division England football manager who had a reputation as a socialist – is like a fairy tale today. *Red or Dead* is the story of the rise of Liverpool Football Club from the backwater of second division status to become the most consistently successful English team. It is the story of the man who made it happen by inspiring players with his own dogged determination and refusal to concede to directors and

anyone who did not share his vision; it is the story of a manager who won adulation, some claim a god-like status – among the club's fans because he made them feel so good about their team's winning ways. He told them repeatedly he managed the club for 'the People'.

David Peace's story is a fictionalised account, told mostly in the present tense, of the appointment of Shankly in 1959 through fifteen seasons of hard fought footballing success to the day in 1974 when, aged sixty, he resigned when Liverpool stood poised for even greater victories. During that time, Shankly had driven his team to three League titles, two FA cup triumphs, three Charity Shields and the UEFA cup, all the time espousing a message of solidarity with the common man. In retirement, the managers of the team to which he had brought such greatness never welcomed him back to the hallowed turf. Eight years after his retirement, Shankly died.

In 784 games during the time Shankly managed them, Liverpool won 408 matches and drew 198; they lost 178 (23 per cent). Only three European games were lost at Anfield. Peace recounts that when the team lost a match, Shankly would go home and clean the oven and kitchen to clear his head. His conclusions about winning and losing were stark: 'First is first, second is nowhere.'

Throughout this book, Peace tells the stories of these matches – won and lost – goals scored and conceded, players who excelled, along with the numbers of people who attended the games, home and away, and links them to positions in the League tables at each stage. The minute by minute accounts of team Liverpool matches will be a great talking point for diehard fans as they recall those momentous days of the 1960s and 70s.

He was a master at the psychology of raising a team from defeat in one match, to play to their strengths and go on the pitch when they had been written off as losers, determined to win. As he said often, football was his life. Training and hard work were central to his strategy and he expected everyone, players and coaching staff and ground staff and young trainees, to match his work ethic. He attended matches almost every night of his working life to watch how new players and other up and coming managers and teams were performing.

Shankly, early on in his Liverpool manager's career, initiated a strategy of encouraging local schoolboys on Merseyside to come and train at Liverpool's grounds, to give every lad an opportunity to display his talent. In this way, the club and its manager and trainers would have the chance to help them achieve their dreams of one day pulling on that famed red jersey.

Nowadays other famous teams have sports initiatives that reach out to young people in their areas, to encourage them to play sports and develop

healthy lifestyles. But they are run at arm's length and rarely provide direct opportunities for young people to meet and compete with team players and coaches. Today's top players are an overpaid elite whose lives of unabashed luxury are equalled only by the idle rich fund managers, investment bankers and media moguls who populate private boxes at matches but have no real interest in the sport.

The nature of football has been fundamentally changed by the huge investments directed at teams in the top leagues; supporters are welcomed to pay the high gate fees, buy costly replica shirts and merchandise, but are rarely welcomed to train and display their skills.

The stories that surround Shankly have resonance today for some of us; how he stopped the team bus to give a lift to supporters and made the players share their sandwiches with the hungry travellers, how he would readily referee a match for local children who knocked on his door, and give them the bus fare home if they needed it. He lived in and was part of his local community.

For others, Peace's breathless recounting of the stages of how the legendary manager transformed a backwater team to world class winners, is a study in the pursuit and achievement of excellence, from rescuing the pitch to building a team that could carry all before them.

William Shankly was born into a poor home in the Ayrshire mining village of Glenbuck near Glasgow in 1913. He was the second youngest child in a family of 10, with four brothers and five sisters. All the brothers played football at professional level, following their uncles who both became club managers or directors. The reasons why so many of these young men from pit villages became footballers rather than go down the mines to work require little imagination. The pay was better and the dangers less and the inspiration to wear a club jersey – with the hope of playing for Scotland – is what drove eighteen-year-old Shankly when he signed for Carlisle in 1932.

But the determination with which he led Liverpool FC, that was forged from the life of a boy born into a Scottish pit village. He identified himself as a socialist because of the community where he was born and raised. And he knew what it took to become a winner because he had a family history of men who had played and succeeded in football.

Today the story of Bill Shankly still resonates because his approach to football, to the winning and losing, to the life of the game, has been all but lost. Now the major clubs are defined by their profits, and the race to top League positions help to win bigger gates and more profit. In fact, *Red or Dead* and Peace's story is how a conservative board of directors focussed on making a profit and ensuring bigger gates, had inadvertently managed

to hire a visionary in the form of Bill Shankly to manage their club. The changes he persuaded them to make were not won easily, and they resisted every step of the way.

Sarah Quilty

Roger Spalding, *Narratives of Delusion in the Political Practice of the Labour Left 1931-1945*, Cambridge Scholars Press, Newcastle, 2018; 244 pp.; ISBN 9781527505520, £61.99, hbk.

Spalding seeks to challenge the historiography of the Labour Left in the period between the crisis of 1931 and the end of the Second World War. The title of the work declares Spalding's revisionism, His basic argument is that the advocates of Labour leftism in this period were deluded. Spalding's title refers to political practice. However, while many of the earlier studies focus on political practice, the focus of Spalding's work is actually the writings of three Labour activists, rather than their political practice. Moreover, his choice is a little curious. Cripps is perhaps an obvious choice as the leader of the Socialist League, but rather than choose leaders of the ILP such as Maxton, Brailsford or Brockway, or leading theoreticians of the labour Left such as Strachey, Wise or Laski, Spalding chooses two individuals who were not theoreticians or had leading political roles in the pre-war period, but two left journalists – Bevan and Foot. Even more strangely, the chapter on Foot precedes that of his mentor (and biographical subject Bevan). Bevan and Foot in both pre-war and the wartime periods were in effect critics rather than leaders. Only Cripps was to have a significant political role in the period, as opponent of the Labour leadership, and then of the Wartime Coalition. Both Bevan and Foot were to have more significant roles in political life after 1945, and in Foot's case not till much later where he was perhaps the most effective demonstration of the failure to transition from critical journalist to political leader. But those trajectories are beyond Spalding's timescale. There is another curious context for Spalding's work: It was clearly intended to demonstrate that it was delusional for the Labour left to believe they could take the leadership of the party. This fails to acknowledge, that Wilson took the Labour party leadership from a leftist background, and as demonstrated by Bew's recent biography, Attlee was a much more committed socialist than is generally acknowledged, while Spalding's thesis has been most explicitly controverted by Corbyn and McDonnell's capture of the Labour Party, even if they have not as yet succeeded in taking the Labour party into power.

Spalding focuses on the extent to which Cripps, Bevan and Foot were Marxists. He concludes that they were not true Marxists. Perhaps this is not too surprising, given none of the three claimed to be, unlike Strachey and Laski who both promoted Marxism at least in their pre-war writings. In the early chapters in the book, Spalding traces the transition of the Labour left from supporting the United Front of 1934-37, in effect an alliance of the Labour left and the Communist Party, with the relatively insignificant ILP somewhat uncomfortable between the two, and the Popular Front of 1938-39, where the alliance was extended to include progressive Liberals and even dissident Conservatives who opposed appeasement with Hitler and wanted to bring down the Chamberlain government. By focusing on the Labour left, Spalding perhaps understates the role of the Communist Party in initiating both movements, but also the extent to which an essential working class-based alliance for the replacement of capitalism by a system in which the workers controlled production and the financial system, was superseded by what was in effect an alliance of middle-class intellectuals against the Government.

Cripps was a left Christian socialist, rather than a Marxist. Spalding focuses on what he sees as Cripps' legalistic and mechanistic approach but also recognises his Christian moral-based ideology (p84). He nevertheless recognises that Cripps's distinction between the productive activity and unproductive activity is based on a moral position rather than derived from the Marxist notion of the class struggle (p95). It was this perspective that was to guide Cripps in his role as Chancellor of the Exchequer in Attlee's post-war administration. Spalding comments (p99) that Cripps turned to the Labour Party when he became convinced of the impotence of religious organisations. He was, however, paternalistic and had little belief in working class self-management. He was a believer in the leadership of technicians and experts as much as were the Fabian Webbs. Spalding is correct in noting that by 1943 Cripps had moved away from a view that production and services must be nationalised, to a view that the economic controls exercised in the war could be effectively used by the state after the war, and the self-sacrifice of the population and the social unity generated a new framework for democratic governance.

The study of Foot focuses on his journalism, pointing to his trajectory from liberal pacifism to a form of radical patriotism. Spalding devotes considerable attention to Foot's chapter in the 1934 edited essays published as *Young Oxford and War* in 1934, when Foot was still a student and in fact President of the Oxford University Liberal Club. It should be remembered that Foot was only twenty-seven when he contributed to the

anti-appeasement polemic – *Guilty Men*. For most of the intervening period, he worked for Beaverbrook's *Evening Standard*. He was unsuccessful parliamentary candidate for Labour for Monmouth at the age of twenty-two. I am surprised at the attention given to Foot. As Spalding recognises, Foot was to remain throughout his career inspired more by eighteenth century radicalism than by socialism, as his obsession with Hazlitt demonstrated. I tend to agree with Spalding that 'Foot's windy, quote strewn rhetoric' hardly represented the 'red flame of socialist courage' (p122). As his later career showed, Foot was totally incapable of either political leadership or effectively running a Government department. He was of course a noted parliamentarian, in the sense that the House of Commons could be seen as an extension of the Oxford Union debating chamber.

Spalding's third subject is Aneurin Bevan. This chapter is based mainly on Bevan's speeches in parliament and articles in *Tribune* as Bevan only wrote one substantive political work – *In Place of Fear*, which was not published until 1951, that is discounting his polemical *Why not Trust the Tories?*. Spalding focuses on how Bevan's rhetoric was also grounded in the British radical tradition of the Levellers and the Putney debate rather than in Marxist socialism. Much of the chapter focuses on Foot's interpretation of Bevan so it is sometimes difficult to separate the follower from the mentor and the biographer from the subject but Foot and Spalding are probably correct that Bevan was moving away from his early Marxism (and the Marxism of the South Wales coalfield) as early as 1921 (p145). Both in the pre-war period and during the wartime coalition administration, Bevan's reputation was as an oppositionist, rather than as theorist or even political activist and organiser. After the war, Bevan was to become first a successful minister in terms of his role in creating the NHS and the post-war housing programme, before become the frontman for the Bevanite group which was to include a cohort of prospective political leaders including the successful Harold Wilson and the less successful Foot. I'm not convinced that Spalding's close reading of Bevan's pre-war journalism necessarily helps us to understand Bevan's later career. I am also not persuaded that, in contrast with Cripps, either Bevan or Foot had a significant influence on the direction of the pre-war political left. The volume nevertheless makes interesting reading, though the concluding chapter which seeks to relate the pre-war experience to the Corbynite Labour Party is perhaps a mistake. There are some lessons from history but the current political context of the left in Britain is somewhat different from that of the 1930s.

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