Reviews

Perry Anderson, *Brazil Apart, 1964-2019*, Verso, London, 2019; 224pp; ISBN 9781788737944, £16.99 pbk

English-speakers interested in Brazil should be grateful that Perry Anderson lived here in the 1960s and has continued to follow and write about it. He knows both the country and his readership intimately. The book's title is perhaps misleading: it is a collection of articles written between 1994 and 2019, with little about the period of the dictatorship (1964-1985). Apart from the first text, written when Fernando Henrique Cardoso was elected to the presidency (1994), and the more recent ones, penned as Jair Bolsonaro began his term, the chapters take stock of the presidencies of Cardoso (1995-2002), Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva ('Lula', 2003-2010) and Dilma Rousseff (2011-2016). They present a comprehensive and informed analysis of the period known as the 'New Republic', which followed the military dictatorship in the country, and provide an excellent introduction both for foreign readers, and for Brazilians, particularly the youth.

The 'chapters' can be read individually, but the connections between them are not solid – they were written independently and have been stitched together for this book, making repetition inevitable. Anderson considers almost all the most important aspects of the period, but the links between them are not always explored and sometimes contradictions emerge. To make these links, one has to examine the continuities and discontinuities, to understand the meaning of the dictatorship, the movement of history since then, the nature of the Workers' Party (PT) governments under Lula and Rousseff, and their overthrow.

Let us start with the continuities. Anderson believes that PT governments broke with neoliberalism: 'Far from any continuity, there was a gulf between his government and that of Cardoso'; as the PT in power 'refuse the deepening of the neo-liberal regime'. Anderson does not simply parrot the PT's own narrative, and highlights the party's corruption, the myth of a 'new middle class' and the demobilising nature of PT administrations which contributed to what has been since 2015 a 'one sided-class war'. Although Anderson is generally favourable to the analyses advanced by the political scientist and former spokesman for the Lula government André Singer, he criticises Singer's claim that the PT's conservatism in

power stems from Brazilians' 'fear of disorder and acceptance of hierarchy'. To Anderson these are 'legacies of slavery': Brazilians do not avoid conflict because of their docile nature, but because of the brutal violence it provokes.

However, Anderson's claim that Brazil under the PT moved away from neoliberalism is hard to sustain. It maintained the neoliberal macroeconomic regime established by the 'Real Plan' in 1994, along with the fiscal responsibility law. The PT had opposed this law when Cardoso implemented it in 2000, but left it untouched, and in an irony of history, it was used for the impeachment process against Lula's successor Rousseff in 2016. State policy continued to be informed by the logic of competition. PT administrations promoted inclusion through consumption as a solution to social problems, an individual path that commodifies rights. Even *Bolsa Família*, the PT's main social scheme, only consolidated 'various pre-existent partial schemes and expanded their coverage'. In the coronavirus pandemic, Jair Bolsonaro announced its expansion.

Anderson identifies neoliberalism with 'market deregulation and privatization of services'. Under PT administrations no privatisation was reversed and commodification was deepened in such public services as health, education, and social security. The percentage of imports and exports in relation to GDP increased, as did the mobility of capital. These processes took place against the backdrop of a continuous deindustrialisation since the 1980s: between Cardoso and Lula (1994 and 2010), the share of primary products in Brazilian exports rose from 50 per cent to 64.6 per cent. As Anderson predicted in 2002, in the future Cardoso 'could still be able to congratulate himself that, after all, he had rendered a neo-liberal order in Brazil irreversible for some time to come', as Thatcher did with Tony Blair.

As for the discontinuities, recent developments in Brazil take on another dimension. If it is correct that PT (founded in 1980) and PSDB (in 1988) were different but complementary poles of the New Republic (like Democrats and Republicans in the United States), we may argue that under Bolsonaro the New Republic itself is in check. We need to examine PT governments from an angle not explored by Anderson: their functionality from the point of view of the ruling classes. Lula was elected at a time when neoliberalism in South America was contested, amid insurrections which overthrew presidents in Argentina, Bolivia and Ecuador, and electoral defeat for the party associated with neoliberalism in Brazil. Although it was correct to see the so-called 'progressive wave' at the time as a reaction to neoliberalism, with hindsight we should

perhaps ask whether it served to reproduce order, at a moment when traditional political forces faced a crisis of legitimacy.

To illustrate this point: in its first year, the Lula government introduced a pension reform. It was emblematic for two reasons: firstly, it replaced the logic of generational solidarity (in which active workers support retirees), with a model in which each worker has an account, managed as a financial product. But secondly, it revealed the PT's persuasive capacity – the unions and the PT itself had prevented the previous government from enacting the same agenda. In office, the PT carried out through persuasion what the previous government had not achieved by force. The corrosion of this 'Lulista way of regulating social conflict' is crucial for understanding Brazilian politics' slide to the right. Anderson is right to point to the fall in commodity prices that led to recession from 2015, and the corruption scandals, turned into television spectacles by an anti-PT judiciary and corporate media. But Anderson downplays the impact of the June 2013 days. These were the most powerful cycle of popular demonstrations since the end of the dictatorship, and exposed the exhaustion of the PT peace. The claim that there is continuity between the June days and the pro-impeachment demonstrations in the following years is not supported by research on the profile of the protesters.

In the wake of these upheavals, Brazil's dominant classes shifted from inclusive neoliberalism to social dispossession, and from conciliation to class warfare. This was the backdrop for Rousseff's deposition, Lula's arrest and Bolsonaro's election. Behind the personages, the ruling class is thrashing out the political, legal and cultural arrangements to replace Brazil's doomed New Republic. From this perspective, Bolsonaro's election was partly accidental – he happened to be the only one capable of beating the PT at the polls. But the profound significance of his election is not explored – as the Brazilian version of a global phenomenon in which affinities between neoliberalism and authoritarianism are increasingly explicit. Bolsonaro represents a rupture, but one that comes from within and therefore is very different from the coups that overthrew Goulart in 1964 or Allende in 1973. There are numerous connections between the PT governments and the rise of Bolsonaro, which Anderson has mapped but not really explored: neo-Pentecostalists, the PMDB, vice president Michel Temer, the military, corporate media, banks, agribusiness – were all fed and cultivated at some point by PT governments. Bolsonaro represents a metastasis: corrosive forces and interests that seemed contained under the PT, now spread unchecked across the national fabric.

In the last chapter, Anderson acidly evokes Brazilian military participation

in the OAS mission in the Dominican Republic in 1965 at the beginning of dictatorship, relating it to the leadership of the UN mission on the same island forty years later under Lula, this time in Haiti – both in line with the interests of the United States. It is one of the best moments in the book. Anderson draws the links between this latter mission and the recent rise of the military, which now holds more senior positions than it did during the dictatorship. He comments: 'The situation, and the regime, are not the same. But that the overall curve of history, from the beginning to the end of these fifty years, forms a parabola – one which gives its shape to the narrative, and title to the conclusion, of what follows – is plain'.

Historically, the Brazilian military has understood industrialisation as a premise of sovereignty. It is no accident that the country's industrialisation took place between two dictatorships – the Estado Novo (1936-1947) and the most recent (1964-1985). The latter regime aimed to deepen it, integrate the country with massive infrastructure works, expand the agricultural frontier, occupy and explore the hinterland and the Amazon, install nuclear power plants, develop ethanol, and so forth, within the framework of a regional leadership project. The dictatorship cultivated a utopia of 'Brazil Power' (Brasil Potência).

Half a century later, the military threw in the towel. Faced with the regression of the productive structure and the degradation of the Brazilian social fabric, they abandoned any project of building the nation, let alone becoming an international power. Lula sent the military to Haiti thinking of making Brazil a global player. The military returned thinking about how to prevent Brazil from becoming Haiti, and are now militarising the management of social life. We can see the PT administrations as the last incarnation of a 'Brazil Power' project with 'neo-developmentism' as its ideology. However, Brazil is not what it was in the 1960s. As Roberto Schwarz – an intellectual whom Anderson admires – remarked, developmentalism was a good idea until the country ran out of money in the 1980s.

There is continuity between the anti-popular, anti-democratic and anti-national character of the dictatorship; the controlled democratic opening; and the multiple political, economic and military constraints that typified the New Republic. The military police, created by the dictatorship, remains unscathed, while neo-Pentecostalism was fostered by the United States against liberation theology during the Cold War. Both are aligned with Bolsonarism at present, supported by a military which has never been held to account.

Brazil's permanent counter-revolution presents a continuous slide towards a segregated, violent and dependent society – the 'Brazil Apart'

of the book. The PT administrations attempted to slow this movement of history without ever questioning its trajectory. Bolsonaro has changed gear and accelerated.

Fabio Luis Barbosa dos Santos
Universidade Federal de São Paulo

Gary Dorrien, ***Social Democracy in the Making: Political and Religious Roots of European Socialism,*** Yale UP, New Haven, 2019; 578pp; ISBN 9780300236026, £25.00, hbk

This is a difficult book to categorise. Dorrien is an American academic theologian who has been active in the Democratic Socialists of America and a member of their Religion and Socialism Commission. He has written several books on liberal theology as well as studies of Martin Luther King and W.E.B. DuBois. His past interests have centred on the religious ethics of Reinhold Niebuhr and Karl Barth, and this shows throughout this new study. This is his first book on European socialism. The focus of the book is however limited to Britain and Germany, and it is curious to think that the roots of European socialism can be discussed without consideration of French socialist traditions. This is especially pertinent as Dorrien, as a theologian and professor of ethics, is seeking to study religious influences on the development of social democratic politics and organisations, and in France religious influences were arguably far more significant that in the case of Britain or Germany.

The chapters alternate between detailed commentary of theological writings and narratives of political organisational development, with apparently little connection between the two. The two long chapters on Germany – on German social democracy and on German political theology – nearly 200 pages in total – appear in the middle of the book, sandwiched between four chapters which focus on Britain. Rather strangely there is only limited comparison between the British and German experience – there is no concluding chapter pulling together the author's argument, with the consequence that the book reads as a series of loosely connected extended essays. I therefore have to disagree with the endorsement by another American academic that the book is a 'tour de force'. Theologians will probably skip some of the political narrative and the valiant attempt in the German section to summarise Marx's theory (though strangely not fully examining his views on religion). Political

historians, I suspect, will struggle as I did with the theological chapter, which discusses the Swiss theologian, Karl Barth, the Germans Paul Tillich and Martin Heidegger, and the philosophers of the Frankfurt school – all of which seem to have marginal relevance to the development of socialist theory or politics as considered in the other chapters. The chapter on German social democracy is probably the strongest in the book. In the chapter, Dorrien focuses on the political career and theoretical 'revisionism' of Eduard Bernstein. The story of the debates between Bernstein, Kautsky and Luxemburg (with Lenin on the sidelines) has been told several times before, but Dorrien is familiar with German sources and the substance of the theoretical debates is clearly explained, although Dorrien identifies the Bernstein position as derived from the English Fabian tradition, rather from any religious or ethical perspective. It is however difficult to see how this chapter relates to the theological chapter which follows. It is if the two chapters have been written as separate stand-alone essays.

Even accepting the focus of the study as 'religious roots of socialism', I found the author's selection of case studies in the British chapters somewhat curious. The book starts with an assertion that religious socialism in Britain started with Frederick Maurice and the Christian socialists. Leaving aside the debate over the socialistic and communistic views of the mid-seventeenth century radicals of the Civil War period, this assertion completely ignores the socialistic and communistic Christians of the early nineteenth century – and their role in cooperative enterprises and utopian settlements long before Maurice and his group of university theologians appeared on the scene.

There is another problematic dimension. Dorrien, as a professor of ethics, tends to treat the terms 'Christian' and 'ethical' as equivalents. In effect he completely ignores secular ethical influences. At the same time, he ignores the whole tradition of ethical socialism, which outside the academic and Anglican-based religious organisations on which Dorrien focuses, had much greater influence on the early British socialist movement. Not only does Dorrien in effect ignore the Independent Labour Party, focusing on the more secular and positivist Fabian Society, but the Labour Church is hardly mentioned, perhaps because it was both Northern and non-conformist. Instead we get a focus on Stewart Headlam and the Guild of St Matthew, a tiny organisation, with almost negligible impact (though Headlam was himself an intriguing character), the Christian Social Union of Scott Holland and Charles Gore, G.D.H. Cole, who was neither a Christian or for that matter an ethicist, R.H. Tawney, and William Temple, who became archbishop of Canterbury in

1942. Of these, Temple is perhaps the only under-recognised figure. I reread Temple's *Christianity and the Social Order* Penguin Special from 1942, a manifesto which is more radically socialist than anything produced by the Labour Party in recent decades. Dorrien's unfamiliarity with British socialist political history shows. At one point he confuses Jimmy Thomas (who joined McDonald's National Government in 1931) with Jimmy Clynes (who did not). The Ethical Union/South Place Ethical Society, a critical organisation in terms of ethical input into the British labour movement, is referred to as the 'Ethical Culture Society' (a name used by the equivalent society in New York).

I found this book hard work – at times interesting and at other times frustrating and even annoying. If you are familiar with British socialism, you will find the subjects covered more effectively by many other academics, including many American scholars (I am not biased here). If you are interested in the history of British Christian socialism, there is some interesting material, but Dorrien's approach is highly selective and moreover does not make the case for any significant religious impact on British socialism – had he considered the broader ethical socialist movement, he would have had a stronger case. His sections on post-war revisionism tend to conflate the very different views of Crosland and Crossman, while in neither case demonstrating a religious aspect of their positions. While the presentation of developments in German political theory is sound, the argument in the final chapter, so far as there is one, is unconvincing. The German SPD, as a Marxist party until the Bad Godesberg conference of 1959, was largely secular and I would question the relative impact of some of the religious groupings and debates Dorrien considers, on the more centrist social democratic approach of SPD of Brandt, Schmidt and Schroder, whose 'co-partnership ' approach, as in Sweden, owed more to a pragmatic response to the realities of the post-war Cold War division and then global capitalism than to any concepts derived from Christian theologians, whether of a socialist tendency or otherwise.

Dorrien's style of writing is confident in the sense that it is full of blunt judgements which are somewhat questionable in that they lack evidential support. He also has a habit of dismissing theories or political positions outside his own range of belief, in such terms as 'wonky', 'mushy', 'squishy' and 'stodgy'. At one point he refers to orthodox Marxists as 'wingnuts'. I'm not sure how this language fits in with Dorrien's role as a professor of social ethics.

Duncan Bowie
UCL

Ewan Gibbs, ***Coal Country: The Meaning and Memory of Deindustrialisation on Post War Scotland***, University of London Press, London, 2021; 288pp; ISBN 9781912702541, £25.00, pbk

In the context of rising constitutional debates and broader discussions surrounding a vision for Scotland's future occurring both within the Scottish labour movement and Scottish society as a whole at the time of writing, Dr Gibbs' monograph is timely. Gibbs' book is the latest text from the Royal Historical Society's 'New Historical Perspectives' series in partnership with the University of London Press. It is the first attempt to construct a book-length account of deindustrialisation in Scottish coalfield communities, looking 'beyond the ruins of industrial Scotland' which marked previous analyses of the topic.

Gibbs' analysis is underpinned by an adapted interpretation of E.P. Thompson and Karl Polanyi's moral economy which facilitates a coherent examination of both the 'conflict between market forces and protective social agents' and 'the customs and expectations that determined workforce and community perceptions of legitimacy and illegitimacy' (p25). Using the moral economy analysis framework enables Gibbs to examine closely not only the economic impact of deindustrialisation but, also the impact this process has had on the coalfield communities across Scotland.

Gibbs chooses to structure his monograph thematically which enables him to reflect deeply on his extensive archival research and oral history interviews. This approach enables him to research previously under-researched areas such as the impact of deindustrialisation on women within the communities. The examination of the role of gender is interwoven throughout the text through analyses on the impact of deindustrialisation on women's working lives and the transformation of their identities following the collapse of factory work in favour of service and care work. Gibbs' analysis on the gendered impact of deindustrialisation is a ground-breaking attempt by a historian to insert gendered analyses into work on deindustrialisation within Scotland's post-industrial heartlands.

Alongside Gibbs' innovative analysis on gendered perspectives and reactions to deindustrialisation, he uses Alan Campbell's pioneering methodology and extensive oral history interviews to identify three distinct generational identities within the coalfield and more specifically within the National Union of Mineworkers Scotland Area: the 'interwar veteran' that aided in the formation of the NUMSA, to the 'industrial citizens' who were markedly less marked by 'reverential support for the nationalised industry' than their predecessors within the union, and,

finally, the 'flexible workers' who matured within the bitter battles against unemployment and pit closures that marked much of the 1980s. This generational form of analysis is integrated with recognition that despite clear marked differences in experiences there was an identifiable 'inter-generational transmission of historical consciousness' which would aid each generation of miners to formulate their shared political ideals, strategy in fighting back against the deindustrialisation processes and cultural identities across the twentieth century. Gibbs later uses these generational identities effectively in his analysis frameworks of most other themes within the monograph in a synthesis chapter.

As well as completing highly original research on the gendered and generational impacts of deindustrialisation on the Scottish coalfield communities, Gibbs offers an exploration of the political changes within the NUMSA and the coalfield more broadly. Gibbs broadly categorises these changes as a transformation from the narrow Stalinist-labourism to the Broad Left politics that marked the Communist Party of Great Britain's approach to union factionalism in the 1970s. The Stalinist-labourism period, Gibbs identifies within the years following the nationalisation of the coal industry and the formation of the NUMSA under the leadership of Abe and Alex Moffat: both staunch supporters and members of the Communist Party of Great Britain. Gibbs contrasts the Stalinst-labourism period of political activity under the Moffats to the more pluralistic approach of Mick McGahey, also a prominent member of the Communist Party of Great Britain, which saw the NUMSA develop increasingly diverse speakers' lists at both political education events and the Scottish Miners' Gala ranging from prominent left wing trade unionists from across the United Kingdom to even Liberal Party representatives who shared the NUMSA's support for the abolition of nuclear weapons and power stations. Despite these stark differences in approach between the two generations of left leaders within the NUMSA, Gibbs traces an internationalist narrative which links the two generations of leaders from the NUMSA under the Moffats' support for a motion expressing support with the people of Kenya and Tanganyika in their fight for freedom from colonial control, to support within the Broad Left period of political control for the North Vietnamese and condemnation of America's involvement within the war. Gibbs' analyses of the political changes within the NUMSA and the coalfield more broadly, aids his efforts to provide a comprehensive examination of the impact deindustrialisation had on all aspects of the Scottish coalfields and later enables his examination of the

movement towards devolution within the ranks of the NUMSA and the wider Scottish labour movement.

Gibbs' efforts to provide a comprehensive examination of the impact of deindustrialisation is crucial for advancing understandings of the linkages between deindustrialisation and current political landscapes. His tracing of its lasting impact on contemporary Scotland and the ideals of nationhood and its rising national independence movement should enable labour historians to explore and examine the historical context of the Scottish working classes seeming to abandon the organs in which they previously found representation in and their fight for a better more equal future.

Gibbs' arguments regarding the gendered and generational impacts of deindustrialisation contributes to a truly comprehensive exploration of modern Scottish society and deserves to be read by scholars across disciplines from Human and Political geographers to Economic and Social historians. Gibbs has constructed a work that deserves to be placed alongside texts such as Hywel Francis and David Smith's *The Fed* and Ben Curtis' *The South Wales Miners* due to its commitment to look beyond the narrow confines of industrial historiography in favour of the examination of the ordinary working-class men and women who fought tooth and nail to defend their communities from the ravages of the deindustrialisation process. Gibbs' approach to this analysis must be replicated in areas such as the South Wales Valleys and the Northern English post-industrial areas if we as a movement are to understand the lasting legacies of these processes on every segment of those communities.

Logan Williams,
Cardiff University

Terry Irving, *The Fatal Lure of Politics, The Life and Thought of Vere Gordon Childe,* Monash University Publishing, Clayton, VIC, 2020; xiv + 418pp; ISBN 9781925835748, £30.99, pbk

Terry Irving has written an outstanding biography of a complex and elusive man. The official and respectable V. Gordon Childe is presented in a photograph. The smart Edinburgh Professor of Archaeology in the 1930s, he drove an open-topped Bentley, stayed in Scottish grand houses and was a member of the Athenaeum. A child of the Anglo-Australian establishment, his father, a Cambridge graduate from a Shropshire county family, was a High Church Anglican rector on Sydney's leafy bourgeois

North Shore. Childe's early years in this seemingly secure world were far removed from the deprivations of the city's working class. He graduated from the University of Sydney with a First in Classics in 1914; the university awarded him a scholarship to the Queen's College Oxford. He received two Oxford degrees, a research degree for a thesis on Indo-European influences on Greek pre-history in 1916 and a year later, a First in Greats. This impeccable academic pedigree was a fitting prelude to his subsequent academic career. The Edinburgh chair was followed in 1946 by the Directorship of London's Institute of Archaeology. He returned to Australia in the southern autumn of 1957. Six months later he committed suicide in the Blue Mountains.

This curriculum vitae is both accurate and misleading. Childe left Oxford for Australia in October 1917. In 1925 he became librarian at the Royal Anthropological Institute in London; the Edinburgh chair followed two years later. The intervening eight years were not part of this conventional academic success story. In 1923 Childe published a major and, in some respects, enigmatic text on the labour movement: *How Labour Governs: A Study of Workers' Representation in Australia.* These years and the making of this text form the core of Irving's sensitive and meticulous exploration of the diversity of Childe's intellectual networks.

Childe and his friend Bert Evatt had been involved in the 1913 state election in New South Wales won by the Labor Party under W.A. Holman. In Oxford he found a left transformed by a war that he opposed. His politics within this refusal were shaped by many influences – the Oxford University Socialist Society, the Fabian Society, the Union of Democratic Control, the agitation against conscription. Two individuals stand out. Raymond Postgate would partly fund the publication of *How Labour Governs* and would be briefly a member of the Communist Party. Ranaji Palme Dutt, another outstanding classicist, discussed Hegel and Marx with Childe long into the night. Childe represented the Oxford UDC at the Leeds Convention in June 1917. When he returned to Australia his understanding of the varieties of socialism had been enriched but his experience of the quotidian world of labour politics remained limited and of trade unionism was virtually non-existent. His position on the war had destroyed his chance of a university post in Australia. In August 1919 he became private secretary to John Storey, the Labor state premier in New South Wales. Subsequently he returned to London in October 1921 as a state government employee. His tenure was short-lived. A state election the following March removed Labor from office and Childe from his job.

He had envisaged a book on labour politics since December 1918.

Analysis of Australian labour carried an international significance in that the Labor Party had held office for significant periods at Federal and State level. The split over conscription had precipitated Labor's loss of federal office. The hopes of radicals rested on the Ryan Government in Queensland. This administration since its election in 1915 had developed state enterprises, vigorously opposed conscription and had often, albeit with circumspection, favoured the demands of strikers. Childe, in search of employment, moved to Queensland in September 1918. He lived there for almost a year. His initial enthusiasm for the State Labor government was evident in his writing for the Queensland labour press. Early in 1919 he argued that state enterprises provided a basis for an effective industrial democracy. Such optimism about the Queensland project became tempered by evidence that the government's radicalism had severe limitations. The Brisbane Red Flag riots demonstrated the anger of the nativist Right and Labor ministers' pusillanimity. Childe's subsequent experiences in New South Wales would deepen his scepticism about the ALP's parliamentary strategy. His immersion was in a labour world that was both male and white. He noted but barely analysed the significance of Labor's championing of 'White Australia'.

How Labour Governs was published in July 1923. The text examines the organisational consequences of the movement's decision to pursue influence through parliamentary representation, what Childe calls 'politicalism'. He analyses the ability – or often the inability – of the party organisation to control the actions and inactions of parliamentarians. He explores how the search for electoral success led Labor to seek support beyond the working class. The fact that political labour's origins lay in the unionised working class meant that tensions between parliamentarians and trade unionists, those whom Childe calls the 'industrialists', were endemic. The concerns of ministers could conflict with the priorities of trade unionists, particularly when Labor administrations faced strikes. Childe analyses the inescapable tensions; he examines the activities of the Industrial Workers of the World and the abortive post-war campaign for One Big Union. He describes how a Labor politician in the middle-class atmosphere of parliament becomes remote from the rank-and-file. He thinks 'more of keeping his seat and scoring political points than of carrying out the ideals he was sent in to give effect to'. More enigmatically there is the book's final sentence. Having discussed the degeneration of political labour he suggests that even the apparently radical OBU would suffer the same fate. 'Such is the history of all labour organisations in Australia and that not because they are Australian but because they are labour'.

Irving demonstrates that for Childe this negative verdict was not the end of the argument. He had envisaged a second volume. Some sense of what this might have included can be found in articles written for *Labour Monthly* in September 1922 and August 1924. He emphasised how the benefits won by Labor administrations for the working class had been achieved in a period of economic boom. Post-war retrenchment demonstrated the power of capital and the vulnerability of a Labor strategy that rested on the achievement of incremental material gains for the working class. In his 1924 article Childe provided the requiem on the Queensland Labor Government's strategy about which he had once been an optimist. The government had found that it could only raise a loan in London if it abandoned significant parts of its programme; direct action by capitalists had defeated its 'mere constitutionalism'. The Government had been reduced 'to the position of a subservient managing committee for the bourgeoisie'. He did not pursue the argument in depth. His 1925 publication was not a second instalment of *How Labour Governs,* but the book that would provide the basis for his academic career, *The Dawn of European Civilisation.*

How Labour Governs was a product of a period when the demarcations on the left remained relatively fluid. Irving provides an atmospheric portrait of this lost world. In August 1922 Childe attended the Labour Research Department Summer School at Cloughton, near Scarborough. The venue was owned by the Rowntrees, the Summer School's discussions were reported in the *Manchester Guardian.* This ecumenical Progressivism embraced Charles Trevelyan, G.D.H. Cole, S.G. Hobson, George Bernard Shaw, H.N. Brailsrford, Maurice Dobb, Margaret Cole and Raymond Postgate. Childe played bridge and tennis and explored some of North Yorkshire's ancient burial sites. He travelled back to York with a 'great crowd' and played bridge on the train down to London. The images are important. *How Labour Governs* and the subsequent articles were the product of a particular milieu which Irving creates with empathy. The text was one contribution to a political argument, not a text to be viewed in sterilising isolation by a-historical social scientists.

As Childe established an international reputation as an archaeologist, he remained active and visible in a range of left organisations, many linked to the Communist Party. He never became a party member and defended his intellectual judgements against anything that suggested the imposition of a doctrinal orthodoxy. His interest in the Hegelian roots of Marxism endured. This openness meant that he responded positively to the emphasis in Marx's early writings on creativity with all that this entailed for

stultifying official party dogma on the relationship between the economic base and the superstructure. The Marxism that was central to his scholarship had its roots both in the discussions that had begun in wartime Oxford and in his subsequent experience of Australian labour politics and his reflections on its limitations. The missing eight years from his academic *curriculum vitae* were central to his identity as an archaeologist.

Irving offers a judicious and lucid exploration of Childe's life. He teases out possibilities from the available sources and acknowledges their limitations. There remain inevitable loose ends and unresolved issues. This creatively employed rigour is inspired by his own experiences. The Introduction finds him and a few comrades from the Sydney University Labour Club listening the other side of a door as Childe received an honorary degree in April 1957. Childe's significance for the Australian left was barely known. *How Labour Governs* was out of print. In the age of Menzies memories of Australian radicalism were marginalised; historiography was characterised by its complacency. Less polite was the impact of Cold War paranoia on university employment practices and the marginalisation of radical scholarship, a myopic intolerance that Childe had experienced forty years earlier. For a generation of radical historians Childe was a complex and inspiring figure. Irving would be amongst those who were 'part of the radical redirection of the humanities and social sciences liberated by the social movements of the 1960s'. From his own experience he reflects on Childe's complexities, the options forgone and the choices made.

David Howell

Richard Knott, *The Secret War Against the Arts: How MI5 Targeted Left-Wing Writers and Artists 1936-1956*, Pen and Sword, Barnsley, 2020; 226pp; ISBN 9781526770318, £25.00, hbk

Towards the end of the Second World War, the writer Jack Lindsay found himself seconded from his Signals Battalion to the War Office, where he was employed writing scripts for the Army Bureau of Current Affairs theatre unit (he later called his unpublished memoir of this period 'The Only Private in the War Office'). One day all the script-writers were summoned to a meeting where they were warned to be on their guard against Communist infiltration of the unit. As he looked round the room, Lindsay realised that everyone there, except the speaker, was a Party member.

It's a good story, one which indicates the extent to which Communists played a natural, and often leading, presence in British cultural life during the radically democratised years of the People's War. It also illustrates the comic-opera incompetence of the security services who were employed to stop them.

Both points are well made in Richard Knott's welcome new study of MI5's pursuit of CP artists and intellectuals in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. Like James Smith's *British Writers and MI5 Surveillance 1930-1960*, the book draws on recently released MI5 files from the National Archives, notably those kept on Sylvia Townsend Warner, Valentine Ackland, Doris Lessing, Randall Swingler, Paul Hogarth, Clive Branson, Margot Heinemann, Ralph Bates and James Boswell.

It's a well-researched and entertaining account of the paranoia and amateurishness that shaped so much of MI5's surveillance of Communist Party intellectuals. On one occasion, Customs officers reported finding among Ralph Bates' luggage, a novel by Stendhal with the highly suspicious title of *Le Rouge et le Noir* … When the poet Valentine Ackland sent a telegram to the US writer Elizabeth Wade White (with whom she was having an affair), she ended with the words 'ALL WELL SOLOMON SEVEN VERSES SEVEN EIGHT'. The telegram was immediately intercepted and sent for decoding to MI5's Plain Code Section, where a Mr Albert Foyer was obliged to look up and then solemnly record in the files the relevant verses from the Old Testament ('thy stature is like to a palm tree and thy breasts to clusters of grapes … ') In the early 1950s Essex police clearly thought it highly significant that Paul and Phyllis Hogarth were living at a house in Little Maplestead called '*Red* House'.

It is clear that the subjects of this surveillance were often aware of the interest of the security services. The poet Randall Swingler used to stop to talk to the plainclothes policeman who was so obviously following him during the first few months of the War. The radio producer Reggie Smith and his wife the novelist Olivia Manning used to joke to friends about the 'Boys in Blue' making their telephone rattle. Harry Pollitt once paid for two fares on a London bus, one for himself and one for his MI5 tail, 'because I'm the only person who knows where he's getting off'.

There is a childishly disapproving moral tone to a lot of MI5's reporting – 'not washed for at least a week' (John Cornford), 'untidy hair' (Randall Swingler), 'the appearance of a communist' (Christopher Hill), 'sometimes wears sandals' (Julian Trevelyan), 'untidy appearance' (Wogan Philipps). In 1940 the police observed that Philipps had refused to stand for the National Anthem in a pub in the village where he lived; worse,

they reported in some alarm to MI5 that his wife had received a package from abroad, which on inspection was revealed to contain 'a pack of red silk stockings!' Noting that Doris Lessing's London flat was visited in the early 1950s by 'apparently unmarried couples' including 'Indians, Chinese and Negroes', MI5 quickly concluded that the flat was 'an international Communist brothel' that Lessing was using for 'immoral practices'.

And yet, for all the Keystone Kops quality of this surveillance, this was a relentless and destructive operation conducted on an industrial scale for several decades. Their files on James MacGibbon filled twenty box-files. By 1943 MI5 had a staff of 1271; with the leadership of the BUF in prison and their organisation in disarray, most of MI5's energies seem to have been spent pursuing CP members, many of whom like Swingler, Boswell and Branson were overseas fighting Fascism.

'As wars go,' Knott observes,

> the campaign waged by MI5 and Special Branch over the twenty years from the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War to the Soviet invasion of Hungary was lacking in strategic oversight, clarity of purpose and, thankfully, bloodshed. It rumbled on, buffeted by the changes in political circumstance, and accruing over the two decades a swelling avalanche of paperwork, files and internal memoranda … careers were blighted and the probable trajectory of lives changed for good. Blacklists were drawn up and potential opportunities closed down … As for the cost of all this secret machination, how can you put a figure on the hours devoted by agents to observing suspects; the typing up of transcribed phone calls; the travel and subsistence claims of men and women in the field; the envelopes of cash passed to 'discreet sources; the hours of filing and clerking; the meetings, travel costs, phone bills; the costs arising from breaking and entering premises, and bugging the phones of allegedly dubious offices?'

Although of course none of this group of CP writers and artists was ever discovered to have done anything illegal, they were spied on, harassed and blacklisted, the doors of editors, publishers and galleries mysteriously closed to them after the War. As late as 1991 Paul Hogarth (who had left the CP in 1956) was deported by the US authorities in LA on a flight to Australia.

But the long-term consequences of this were arguably paid for by the dullness of post-War British artistic and cultural life. As these 'premature anti-Fascists' were systematically excluded from public life – because of

their ideas about art and society – the lessons of the People's War and the 'cultural upsurge' were forgotten. The routine demonisation and isolation of those writers and artists who had worked so hard to develop a democratic, radical and participative culture in the 1930s and 1940s left an intellectual vacuum in which T.S. Eliot's anti-Semitism was forgiven, non-combatant writers like Orwell, Lehmann, Auden and Spender were allowed to write the literary history of their generation, and Movement and Maverick poets, Kitchen Sink dramatists and Angry Young novelists could appear briefly interesting and even radical.

Andy Croft

Carmen M. Mangion, ***Catholic Nuns and Sisters in a Secular Age, Britain 1945-90***, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2020; xiii + 327pp; ISBN 9781526140463, £80.00, hbk.

It should not be forgotten that despite its inherent conservatism and all too often reactionary past, the Catholic Church has its own sphere of progressivism, most notably illustrated by Vatican II. Scholarship addressing the politicisation and radicalisation of Catholic laity and clergy has tended to neglect the efforts of women religious, an omission rectified by Carmen Mangion. Her study of Catholic nuns and sisters in post-war Britain adopts a novel approach by examining the changes in women's religious life as a women's social movement. It questions how it developed within a specific social, cultural and religious milieu. In the introduction Mangion carefully explains her methodology, her use of documentary and oral sources. Included are personal and congregational archives, plus a range of Catholic media and Church documents. Good use is made of tables to provide an overview of the nine institutes and eighty-one interviewees that contributed to the project, which is further enriched by cartoons, photographs and graphs. The findings and analysis are effectively contextualised within the wider domain of relevant scholarship addressing social movements. Further context derives from the documents of Vatican II, papal encyclicals and Holy See publications. The extensive bibliography makes this a user-friendly volume for scholar and general reader alike. The book addresses three key themes: social movements, transnationality, and identity.

The twentieth century witnessed massive changes for women, from which women religious were far from exempt. Mangion's much needed examination of Catholic women religious opens the doors to a world

that is vanishing throughout Britain, albeit not in other parts of the world. Mangion's telling insights into the changing roles of women in the Catholic Church naturally addresses how women in general, in all their splendid diversity, experienced a rapidly evolving political, cultural and social environment. She skilfully blends oral interviews with archival records, considered against the various interpretations of the key trends and movements identified by the twentieth century's leading scholars. The outcome is a book whose focus on women religious yields critical insights not simply into their changing world but that of twentieth century Britain in a transnational context.

Mangion's study makes a valuable contribution to British social and cultural history, bringing gendered and religious perspectives to the emergent social movements of the mid-twentieth century and beyond. In addition, by tackling the lived experience of women whose world outlooks were determined by their faith, Mangion adds to the growing literature challenging and complicating the previously dominant secularisation narratives. Mangion takes the reader on a journey from the days when individual sisters and nuns had little opportunity to makes changes in their communities or even the course of their own vocations. Charting the developments that formed a part of the renewal of religious life, Mangion shows how the decentralisation of its management allowed sisters and nuns to express their opinions and participate in the governance of their convents and monasteries. As life became less codified and rigid, more personal agency was permitted, leading to an alteration in relationships as their importance was increasingly acknowledged and recognised. As part of the project of modernising the Church, women religious increasingly entered the modern world. Their entrance included professional and theological training. From the 1930s women religious had been pushed by the Holy See to secure academic credentials that would equate to those of their secular counterparts' professional competency. In 1951, Pius XII was insistent that Teaching Sisters attain the same educational degrees and standards demanded by states. By 1965 obtaining academic degrees was linked to renewal.

Renewal could divide convents, with some sisters open, others resistant to it. Many groups sought help from sociologists and psychologists to help sisters process the experience of renewal. Prior to the Second Vatican Council, the world in Catholic thought was regarded as tainted with temptation. In contrast, religious life embodied a 'higher calling' that sanctified suffering and sacrifice and rejected modernity. The preservation of souls required Catholics stay safe within their institutions

and structures, separate from the modern world. Whilst life for women religious remained related to self-sacrifice, service and obedience, some appropriated the right to define their own apostolate. Most significantly, as women asserted their right to define their place in the Church, Mangion demonstrates how their apostolates were influenced by the ideals of social justice and liberation theology. Moreover, she skilfully maps developments for women religious in the Church with those within the women's movement.

Mangion addresses a lacuna in the literature that reflects how, despite the sterling work of feminist scholars, there generally remains a tendency to neglect women's narratives, those of women religious above all. The lack of attention accorded women religious is at least partially attributable to the one-dimensional characterizations imposed on them by the media and even the movies. In addition to publicising any failings, women religious have at times been demonised by the press and in cinematic representations, including at the height of the unconscionable sexual abuse scandals in the Church, despite the main perpetrators being male religious. The impact of the abuse on women religious was not part of Mangion's research, albeit it is discussed in the conclusion. However indirectly, Mangion's examination of the way in which women religious sought authentic means to affirm their traditions contests the negative depictions. Her study is a reminder and affirmation of the historical commitments of women religious to contemporary values like peace and reconciliation, poverty-alleviation and communal repair, human rights, justice and equality. Certainly, such activism wasn't applicable to them all, but it was a sufficient presence, as Mangion's research shows, to repudiate assumptions that women religious were simply reflections of a backward-looking, conservative Church. In the 1970s and 1980s women religious were influenced by a discourse of social justice, the option for the poor, rooted in solidarity with society's marginalised. They were animated by social movements to the extent there was a discernible linking of their spiritual role with political and social activism that was not confined by geography. Ministries were global. Mangion demonstrates how women religious were integral to key social movements, courageously offered succour in conflict situations and despite being part of a too often marginalised group, offered alternative visions and ways of living.

Mangion skilfully deploys the stories of individual women religious to map the institutional changes taking place around them, the varying impacts these initiated, revealing the relationship between structure and agency. In doing so Mangion brings the women to life, revealing their

hopes and fears, their humanity, how the ordinary can become extraordinary. Equally, how they can become bewildered and apprehensive confronted by the rapidity with which their world was changing, as indeed it was for their secular counterparts. The narrative is moving and effective in drawing out how developments that were welcomed and embraced by one generation of women, most usually the young, could overwhelm and intimidate another, most often their elders. For the latter, as for so many of their secular counterparts, encountering the modern world with its new technologies and communications, culture wars and consumerism, could be challenging and frightening. As was the recognition of a decline in their numbers, which seems unlikely to be reversed. This is an accessible book that achieves its aims and should have a wide appeal.

Dianne Kirby
Trinity College Dublin

Eleanor Marx and Edward Aveling, *Letters From England, 1895*, Stephen Williams and Tony Chandler (eds); Francis King (trans); Lawrence and Wishart, London, 2020; viii + 249pp; ISBN 9781912064434, £22.00, pbk

The seven *Letters From England* translated here by Francis King were sent to the Narodnik journal *Russkoye Bogatstvo* which, under the leadership of Nikolai Mikhailovsky, developed the Russian populist movement in new directions. Yvonne Kapp, unable to locate the English language originals, mentioned them in her great biography of Eleanor Marx (vol 2, pp636-637). Bringing them back into English from the published Russian versions has necessarily involved an element of reconstruction. Together with the editorial work, which provides copious notes on the texts (and information about Aveling that I hadn't encountered before), as well as an informative introduction, this is a work of impressive scholarship. The letters themselves are really articles that provide a commentary on British politics at Parliamentary and local levels, as well as within the divided socialist milieu, at a time when the authors were moving back into the Social Democratic Federation (SDF). But Marx and Aveling were well placed to do more than that. Oscar Wilde, Madame Blavatsky, Annie Besant and Robert Louis Stevenson are among the many cultural figures discussed in these essays. Though the authors shared interests in literature and theatre, it is Eleanor's distinctive voice that the editors detect in these sections of the letters, taking up varied questions such as women's writing

and the women's vote. Aveling, the trained scientist, is seemingly allowed to dominate the political narrative, though Eleanor was equally immersed in political work and better informed about social and economic matters relating to the trade unions, wages, and industrial disputes. Both saw socialism as an international project and paid attention to international developments. Like Engels and her father before her, Eleanor had contacts with socialists in many countries, including the Russian revolutionaries. She had translated a work of Plekhanov's and knew Vera Zasulich from her time in London. But it was probably Stepniak (Sergei Kravchinsky), another London-based émigré, with whom Eleanor had a longstanding friendship, or someone from his circle, who provided the connection to *Russkoye Bogatstvo*. 1895 was a very tough year for Eleanor; Engels died, leaving her with big responsibilities concerning her father's literary legacy and Stepniak was killed in an accident at the end of it. But the political work went on, including a gruelling round of speaking engagements in London, Scotland and Lancashire.

While the literary and cultural observations contained in these articles are episodic, the political landscape of England forms a continuous narrative. The Labour Representation Committee is only five years away and a workers' party has recently been formed, but the obstacles to progress loom large and the socialists are divided among themselves. The first letter discusses elections to the London School Board, governing body of 327 schools – grossly inadequate in number, in teachers and equipment and currently plagued by the obstructive tactics of religious reactionaries opposed to a purely secular education. The first elections to parish and district councils have taken place and a general election is imminent. The 'main principle' of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) – 'the new workers' party' – 'for all its diversity, its lack of discipline and the indistinctness of its aims and objectives…is its antagonism to both traditional political parties'. The SDF shares this disposition, the authors admit, but at least it has a programme and policy (p184). Marx and Aveling are clear in their own minds that an even-handed antagonism towards both established political parties is not sensible for the workers' movement. The second letter reveals that reactionaries had gained majorities in the London vestries and the boards of guardians. Even though the London County Council (LCC) had made useful progressive reforms on some issues, London remained the 'most reactionary city' with 'miles of filthy streets, densely inhabited … [and] … Up to now not one serious step has been taken by the parish administrations to alleviate this state of affairs … ' (p82). The third letter reports that elections to the LCC had wiped out the Progressives' majority, setting

back the prospects for a centralised administration capable of addressing the capital's multiple social and economic problems and of bringing the City of London – home of 'the most repugnant forms of competing corruption'– under its jurisdiction. The ILP and SDF could muster only eight candidates between them among the 246 who contested 118 LCC seats. These figures showed how far 'the workers' party in London lags behind the position in other cities' (p111). So did the poor working-class turnout in the election. Another indication of how far there was to go was working class opposition to extensions of the Factory Acts to further restrict child labour. The evidence showed that the capitalist system had 'penetrated … deeply into the consciousness of its victims' (p119).

Yet 'most workers are living in chronically impoverished conditions' (p144), despite the explosive growth of charity work. Recent reports talked of children having almost completely displaced adult male workers in Bradford factories, the very town where the ILP was formed in 1893. The authors commend Keir Hardie for his successful campaign to establish a commission on unemployment in the capital but report that his evidence to the enquiry revealed his own ignorance of the problem and of how to resolve it. John Burns did no better, and an opportunity was lost. Meanwhile Robert Blatchford, the Manchester-based *Clarion* socialist, astonished them by suggesting that the workers' movement had been inspired by 'the sentimentalism' of Ruskin, Dickens, Thoreau and Carlyle. Of much greater concern to Marx and Aveling was the formation of a Conservative and Liberal Unionist government in August 1895. Their Russian readers learned about its social composition and financial interests and the vagaries of the British electoral system, but also of how the workers' party was comprehensively defeated and attached to the 'insane' policy of preaching abstention where there were no ILP candidates. How do they expect to overturn the Tory majority except by means of the Liberal party, the authors ask? The social movement which the ILP and SDF represented looked set to 'fade into the background for a long time' (p212). Aveling may well have been the author of the more strident judgements on contemporary politics contained in these political missives but they are a reminder of the general difficulties of seeing ahead clearly and of the different perspectives that existed within the small socialist camp in 1895. The letters convey something of the flux of late Victorian politics, as well as the obstacles to change, as the socialists worked to encourage an emerging class conscious and channel it into an effective political challenge.

John Callaghan

Gerard McCann and Féilim Ó hAdhmaill (eds), ***International Human Rights, Social Policy & Global: Critical Perspectives,*** Policy Press, Bristol, 2020; 279pp; 9781447349211, £75.00, hbk

The twenty-first century has been one of intense socio-political and economic turbulence, which has fundamentally challenged the actualisation of universal human rights. McCann and Ó hAdhmaill produce a timely, insightful contribution to this field, documenting the various paradoxes and challenges in the provision of human rights in the modern globalised age. The book boasts an impressively broad authorship, with inter-disciplinary contributions of experts across the globe. With its critical social policy approach, this is a highly relevant book for reference across a variety of disciplines. This book provides the most up-to-date account of the complexities of applying human rights in the modern era with new challenges including COVID-19, the rise of the far-right post-Trump, and the intensification of conflict in the Middle East and Africa. The book explores themes such as the Westernised view of human rights application and the need for cultural moderation and relativity in actualising this accepted 'universal' nature of human rights, thus, challenging the one-size-fits-all Westernised standard of rights.

The chapters throughout this book present the need to revisit the Universal Declaration of Human Rights seventy years on, considering the impingements upon fair access to such rights for marginalised groups around the globe. The book is comprehensive and perceptive, but accessible for audiences that could enrich students, academics, activists, NGOs and policy makers alike. Divided clearly into three parts, the book has a strong foundation that is clear and concise, and the chapters follow the same structured approach.

Part I focuses on 'International human rights: context' and must be commended for its breadth of expertise. This section of the book deals broadly with the historical context of international human rights, tracking the changing nature of human rights bodies and their provision of such rights. 'The historical development of the concept of rights' by Hermann and Ó hAdhmaill is an excellent point of departure for the reader, the chapter is armoured in democratic philosophy with theoretical roots dating from 1700BC natural law to the present day. The chapter blueprints the complex lineage of our current global human rights system in an easily translatable fashion, providing an exceptional reference point for further research into the philosophy and history of human rights for amateurs and experts alike. The succeeding chapters build seamlessly upon this

secure foundation, exploring contemporary human rights frameworks. Ó hAdhmaill and McCann's chapter on 'The United Nations and international oversight of human rights' and Griffith's 'The Council of Europe, The European Convention on Human Rights and the Social Charter' are essential reading for dismantling the complex bodies and processes that are involved in the provision of global human rights. Both chapters introduce the key institutions of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the European Union as international human rights champions, assessing the extent to which rights can be fulfilled in a complex, globalised world. The reader departs from part one of this book with a clear understanding of the strengths and limitations of the global human rights system in their functioning, with a critical view of overarching challenges for universal human rights provision.

In part two, readers can delve much deeper into micro human rights contexts. This section provides a textual analysis of the diverse nature of human rights including socio-economic, cultural, migratory, gender and human rights in the context of conflict. Nowakowski's 'Cultural rights' is of particular interest across disciplines, introducing the concept of cultural rights, the frameworks that uphold them and the lack of clarity in defining and providing for such rights sets the tone for much of the other rights debates raised in this section. This chapter is invaluable in raising some of the rudimentary arguments in global human rights contexts such as the provision of rights individually or collectively, state discretion on social and cultural rights and the treatment of rights outside the political and civil remit as positivist inconveniences. A fundamental issue raised by Nowakowski's chapter is the concept of clarity, specifically in cultural rights. The lack of definition around culture itself, can limit the scope in which cultural rights can be implemented and how rights can be manipulated. This chapter is an edifying segue into Cenker and Holder's chapter 'Migration and refugees: applying human rights to "everyone"?'. This chapter offers a formidable account of the global refugee crisis, clearly tracing the nature of the crisis across several regions, equipped with stark data on the extent and consequences of such conflict globally. This chapter reviews the scope of the universality of human rights, tracking the rise of populism and anti-migrant rhetoric, creating a hostile global environment, disregarding the human rights of the displaced. This section outlines contemporary political challenges of the global rights culture, including the legacy of decolonisation, neo-liberalism, global populism, and the rising far-right.

Building upon the knowledge base of its preceding parts, part three introduces 'Human rights approaches to social policy development'.

Buckley and Dukelow introduce this section with an interesting discussion on 'Human rights-based approaches to social policy' setting the tone for the succeeding chapters which deal more specifically with themes such as education, healthcare, housing and developmental rights and groups such as children and the disabled. This section introduces the role of NGOs in interpreting human rights and campaigning for social rights-based protection for all, specifically the most marginalised in society including the elderly, disabled and LGBT+ communities. The chapters within this section challenge the aspirational view of global human rights introducing concepts of power and resistance through redress mechanisms within human rights frameworks and in liaison with NGOs. This section is interesting in its handling of issues such as 'The right to housing' by Donnelly, Finnerty and O'Connell, which addresses gaps in the application of human rights in the developed Western world. It raises the important question of the impact on human rights of western neo-liberalism, capitalism and consumerism. The book closes with an interesting discussion, 'Human rights in a brave new world: the shape of things to come?', in which Powell deconstructs some of the practices most indicative of western human rights violations including Guantanamo Bay, refugee camps and Trump's 'wall project' all of which are physical vestiges of the 'us and them' mentality cultivated by neo-liberal, far-right rhetoric. Despite the connections forged across the world by advanced globalisation the growth of populism and xenophobia are arguably challenging and compromising globalised connectivity.

McCann and Ó hAdhmaill have curated a much-needed book which speaks truth to power at a critical point in time. The book raises fundamental flaws in the provision of global human rights and the necessity for new policies that can effectively protect people and populations around the world. This critical perspective on social, cultural and economic rights is one which is timely in the context of COVID-19 and the looming global recession. With its wealth of contributions, the book critiques, analyses and clarifies many of the major paradoxes and challenges in the realisation of human rights. It deserves, indeed ought to be widely read. It will of course be of particular value to scholars and students in the fields of politics, sociology, philosophy and law but should also be of interest to the general reader concerned about global developments. Highly recommended.

Shannon Doherty
Ulster University

Graham Taylor, ***The Mayflower in Britain: How an Icon was Made in London,*** Amberley Publishing, Stroud, 2020; 286 pp; ISBN 9781445692296, £20.00, hbk

In this study published on the 400 hundredth anniversary of the voyage of the Mayflower, Taylor intertwines an essentially chronological account of its origins, occurrence and consequences with a much wider history of the seventeenth century embracing England, the Dutch Republic and the early American colonies. His wish – though not made sufficiently explicit until very late in his text – is to illuminate 'the aspirations that lay behind the Mayflower expedition: toleration in religion, free trade and parliamentary supremacy in politics' (p233). Taylor endeavours to steer a course between those historians who have claimed that the colony founded by the Pilgrims in New England led directly to American independence, modern democracy, respect for human rights or free market capitalism, and those who dismiss the voyage of the Mayflower as an insignificant episode in colonial history without which this would have been little different. It was, he says, neither a determining force nor merely a symbol but a representation of the struggle for many types of freedom: in trade, religion, from slavery, rights for Indians and refugees. The reason that numbers of historians took such a dismal view of the Pilgrims was that they failed to see them from a British and a London perspective and therefore discounted the long history of struggle from 1553 to 1688.

At the heart of this struggle was the Brownist church which first raised the separatist flag in the reign of Mary I, only to be finally vindicated by with the Act of Toleration in 1689, just as its followers were becoming subsumed in general nonconformity. The demand for the separation of church and state and their conception of a church constituted only through the covenant of its members did not endear Brownists to either kings or bishops. Repression and persecution of the skilled artisans and tradesman who made up the larger part of the early Brownist church, though intermittent, could be brutal and numbers fled to the somewhat more congenial atmosphere of the Dutch Republic. Even there some continued to fear for the future and integrity of their church and the Browinist congregation at Leiden provided a substantial minority of the 102 passengers on the Mayflower. This account is fleshed out with details of the successive 'Brownist' churches, their pastors and benefactors, their successes and failures and the seemingly interminable internal disputes over the church governance and particularly over the need to compromise with established churches and royal authority. Emigration required both royal assent and

a 'patent' authorising settlement within the territorial jurisdiction of the London Virginia Company. Here Brownist aspirations met up with those at the forefront of the economic developments transforming England and most obviously the trading and livery companies of London. The Pilgrims' requests found support not only from sympathetic merchants but from leading members of the London Company and indeed from some highly placed in the government. By the same token they were prey to the factional and personal conflicts which beset both; negotiations for the necessary authorisations dragged on mostly over the heads of the Pilgrims.

Taylor might have made more of the fact it was an interloping merchant operating outside the authorised monopoly companies who redeemed the situation and of the joint stock company formed by seventy investors willing to support a settlement in New England. This was an enduring form of economic enterprise unknown outside England and the Dutch republic. The Pilgrims were to be shareholders in the company and work for it for five years, after which land and property would be distributed. The investors would not have a vote in the colony's affairs which thus assured the Pilgrims' self-government and freedom of religion. The London Company, desirous of attracting settlers to Virginia, made its own bid in the form of a patent for settlement accompanied by a declaration that, according to Taylor, also guaranteed them considerable autonomy. Although the text does not survive it is generally understood that the patent specified settlement in the Hudson River region of north Virginia whilst contrary pressure was being exerted by interested parties for one in New England. Taylor on the basis of considerable circumstantial but detailed information about the preparations for the expedition and its management comes down firmly on the side of those who have always believed that the Mayflower's arrival off Cape Cod 250 miles to the north of the Hudson river was no accident.

Despite the appalling conditions of the first winter which cost many lives and complaints about the inadequacy of the subsequent support from the London Company, within a few years Plymouth colony had not only established itself but managed to buy out the original investors. Of more interest for Taylor's principal theme was the compact for the creation of a 'civil body politic' to make 'just and equal laws … for the general good' and in which government would be by consent – a direct manifestation of Brownist culture. Equally remarkable was the achieving of lasting cordial relations with the native Indians who were paid for any land acquired. The Pilgrims also set themselves against slavery. The ethos of the colony says Taylor was rooted in that of the

Leiden church, tolerant and outward looking. In its early years it successfully withstood attempts to introduce the Anglican church – a threat to both their religious and political autonomy. Different pressures arose with the establishment of the Massachusetts Bay Company in 1629. Controlling extensive areas of New England to the north of Plymouth colony, it brought with it increasing numbers of wealthier settlers and a Congregationalist but authoritarian Puritan regime. Massachusetts was not averse to shipping off local Indians to the West Indies and became the first colony to legalise slavery, which in 1643 was imposed on Plymouth colony. Edward Winslow who served on three occasions as governor in Plymouth shared his Massachusetts counterpart's disdain for democracy. Even William Bradford who served no less than thirty times and regretted the spiritual and moral decline of Plymouth colony was evidently fearful of annoying its powerful and intolerant neighbour. Nonetheless the culture of tolerance did survive in New Plymouth. Although it cold shouldered those dissidents who fled the intolerance of Massachusetts it did not follow the latter by hanging Quakers.

Taylor's explanation for this success lies as much in what happened in England as in the colonies. Much of the last part of the book is devoted to the struggle for toleration in England from the opposition to Archbishop Laud in the 1630s, through the Cromwellian revolution, to that of 1688. New England settlers played a critical part contributing in numbers to the Cromwellian army and navy. Cromwell responded to pressure for full toleration (except for Catholics) by readmitting Jews to England for the first time in 366 years. But ironically it was Charles II who stopped the execution of Quakers in New England and William III who in 1691 imposed a settlement which unified Massachusetts and Plymouth at the same time obliging the new regime to accept freedom of worship and the same principles of toleration as in London. The settlement induced in Massachusetts what Taylor calls 'the last spasm of a Puritan culture': the infamous Salem witch trials. There were none in Plymouth colony.

Taylor's central argument is embedded in a chronological and narrative account from which it emerges in fits and starts, jostling for place alongside ancillary concerns. One appears to be to disabuse readers of the idea that there was anything romantic about the voyage of the Mayflower which was the eventual outcome not only of heroism and commitment but of pain, duplicity, disorganisation and conflict. Another is to assert the centrality of London – the home of the Brownist church, the source of the Mayflower itself, most of the passengers and the investors: 'The founding of New England was perhaps the greatest achievement of the City of

London'. Towards the end of the book the reader is conducted on a tour of the sites of London associated in any way with the Mayflower. Even the Globe Theatre gets a mention because of a couple of oblique references in Shakespeare's plays. Taylor is reluctant to leave anything out, particularly about the large cast of characters around whom much of his account is constructed. These are listed in a series of tables: the Brownist churches of 1592, of 1616, and of 1637, the Mayflower investors, its passengers and crew, and those of subsequent vessels. A single table in alphabetical order would have made retrospective consultation of them much easier.

Whilst Taylor's chronological and narrative approach works for the most part on occasion it impedes a clear exposition of related matters. The first patent authorising settlement in Virginia appears without any explanation for the uninformed reader or cross reference to the fuller account which follows six pages later. William Bradford appears on page forty-four as retrospective commentator on the decision to emigrate to the Dutch Republic without any indication that he was also a deeply committed participant in this critical event. Taylor exploits Bradford's unpublished memoirs to good effect and chides others for failing to heed the primary sources but he does not explain in what ways his own use of them is significant. The extensive biographical details provided in the tables presumably reflect considerable work on London parish registers though the reader cannot gauge how much; for some reason these are not listed in the primary sources but hidden amidst the bibliography of secondary works along with the records of the High Court of Admiralty. An impression of inadequate editorial oversight is reinforced by inconsistent use of footnotes which leaves some direct quotes without a clear source and which a copyreader might have queried. The list of members of the 1592 Church, furnishing precious information about their social make up, is partly based on transcripts of their interrogation by the authorities yet the nearest footnote is to a secondary work.

The great strength of this book lies in its presentation of events in wide context but, *pace* those Mayflower enthusiasts who will certainly find much to mull over in an extremely thorough account, the signposts towards Taylor's central argument could have been stronger. He leaves it until his conclusion to outline the competing historiographical traditions against which he wishes to set his own. These pages could well be read first by any reader wishing extract the full benefit from what is undoubtedly much more than a romantic or heroic tale.

David Parker

Giles Tremlett, ***The International Brigades: Fascism, Freedom and the Spanish Civil War,*** Bloomsbury, London, 2020; 696pp; ISBN 9781408853986, £25.00, hbk

Barry McLoughlin and Emmet O'Connor, ***In Spanish Trenches: The Mind and Deeds of the Irish Who Fought for the Republic in the Spanish Civil War,*** University College Dublin Press, Dublin, 2020; 412pp; ISBN 9781910820582, £25.00, pbk

No-one can complain about a shortage of books on the foreign volunteers who fought in the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39. One bibliography, according to Giles Tremlett's *The International Brigades*, lists 2,317 titles. It's a remarkable total for an army of just 35,000 individuals – there was more than twice that number of British troops deployed on D-Day alone. Their military impact in Spain's war was mixed, and they fought on the losing side, defending the Spanish Republic's elected Popular Front government against General Franco's insurgents. And yet, they retain a prominent position in the left's pantheon of heroes; in political discourse they continue to be held up as a shining example of anti-fascism and international solidarity, sometimes controversially (remember their invocation by Hilary Benn in 2015 when he was arguing in favour of RAF bombs on Syria); and, as both these books demonstrate, among historians their story is still being energetically researched, rewritten and contested.

Franco's victory was secured not only thanks to Hitler and Mussolini, who provided troops, aircraft and armaments aplenty, but also, more indirectly but no less devastatingly, courtesy of Britain's policy of appeasement. Under the guise of 'non-intervention' – or 'malevolent neutrality', as one historian has described it – the governments of Stanley Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain strangled the Spanish government with an arms embargo and ban on the sale of oil or any other products deemed to be potentially helpful for the war effort. Support from the Soviet Union, Mexico and the International Brigades ultimately succeeded only in prolonging the conflict. The ensuing Second World War and then the Cold War shifted attention elsewhere. A few memoirs of veterans were published. One, George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*, about the author's six months with the militia of the revolutionary POUM (Workers' Party of Marxist Unity), became the most widely read book on the war, its anti-communism conveniently in tune with prevailing orthodoxy. We had to wait until 1961 and Hugh Thomas's groundbreaking *The Spanish Civil War* for the first proper history. So concerned was Franco that he

set up a special unit in his Ministry of Information to counter the 'illegal propaganda' being spread in translated copies that were smuggled into the country.

In 1965 there appeared the first English-language attempt at a history of the foreign volunteers: *The International Brigades: Spain 1936-1939*, in which author Vincent Brome rightly cautioned that 'any attempt to give a detailed account of all the battalions drawn from fifty nationalities would obviously involve a twelve-volume work'. Brome couldn't have foreseen the extent to which interest in Spain's war would grow following the Caudillo's death in 1975. For scholars of the International Brigades, a key development came in the 1990s with the opening up of the so-called 'Moscow Archive', a vast trove of International Brigade records assembled by the Communist International (Comintern). The result has been a plethora of books about the International Brigades, of which *In Spanish Trenches* is only the latest example. We now have several books each on the British, Irish, Scots and Welsh, as well as histories of all the main national groupings and specialist studies of the Jewish, women and medical volunteers.

The International Brigades pulls together the main strands of these stories. The publisher's claim that it is the 'first major history of the International Brigades' is questionable. Leaving aside Vincent Brome's opening effort, we would also have to discount several non-English language studies, along with more narrowly focused books on the political and military significance of the Brigades. Tremlett's book is nonetheless an impressive piece of scholarship, covering a vast and complex topic and drawing on archives and sources from around the world. However, it is necessarily still an overview, though a highly informative and entertaining one. To fill the gaps we must turn to books such as *In Spanish Trenches*, in which authors Barry McLoughlin and Emmet O'Connor have written a definitive account of the 247 Irishmen who fought for the Spanish Republic. 'Irish' is broadly defined as anyone born in Ireland. Barely a quarter of the Irish International Brigade volunteers travelled from Ireland; most were living and working in Britain, or else in Canada, the US and Australia. Nor was there a separate Irish unit for them in Spain. Most joined the British Battalion, others serving with American and Canadian battalions. The now commonly used 'Connolly Column' tag was applied retrospectively many decades later.

The 'Irishness' of the volunteers was significant, however, given the mood in Ireland at the time. Probably uniquely among Western democracies, public sentiment was overwhelmingly in support of Franco's rebels.

Reflecting this, the much derided Irish Brigade of some 600 recruits mustered by Blueshirt leader Eoin O'Duffy to fight alongside the Generalísimo easily outnumbered their fellow countrymen in the International Brigades. The crucial factor here was the Catholic Church. There was outrage in Ireland at the atrocities committed against Catholic clergy by elements opposing Franco's attempted coup. Communism, meanwhile, with which the Spanish Republic was strongly identified, was denounced from the pulpits as 'satanic'. Though not in a majority, a large proportion of the Connolly Column were card-carrying communists. From an appendix listing each of the volunteers we also see that significant numbers were drawn from the IRA, the losing side in Ireland's own civil war of 1922-23, and from the more left-leaning Irish Republican Congress (IRC).

Among the IRA men was Frank Ryan, a veteran of that civil war and joint secretary of the IRC. He was regarded as the unofficial leader of the Connolly Column. At the Jarama valley south-east of Madrid in February 1937, when the British Battalion had been cut to pieces by Franco's Army of Africa, it was Ryan, with British Army veteran Jock Cunningham, who rallied its depleted, hungry and exhausted remnants and, surprising the enemy Moorish troops, managed to retake lost positions. The Madrid-Valencia highway remained in government hands and Spain's capital city was saved. That would probably have been enough to secure Ryan's place in the history books. Instead, it is the events leading up to his death from heart disease in Nazi Germany during the Second World War for which he is largely remembered.

McLoughlin and O'Connor devote two chapters and much of their epilogue to the controversy, attempting to answer their question: 'Why did Frank Ryan, a popular figure in [Irish] Republican and left-wing circles, agree to work for the fascist German State?' They lay out in detail what is known about how and why Ryan, captured in Aragón in 1938, was allowed to travel to Berlin after two years as a prisoner of Franco. His escorts were officers of the Abwehr, Hitler's military intelligence service, which was then working with diehard Irish republicans hoping to take advantage of the war to undermine Britain's presence in Ireland. In August 1940 Ryan boarded a U-boat at Wilhelmshaven with the aim of being landed in Ireland. The mission was aborted when his fellow ex-IRA companion, Sean Russell, died on board and Ryan refused to be put ashore alone. For the rest of his time in Germany he was dogged by ill-health, eventually dying in Dresden in June 1944. What are we to make of all this? Did Ryan put his Irish republicanism before his anti-fascism? Or was he a willing hostage, who used his potential value as an anti-British

asset as a means to escape his thirty-year sentence in Franco's gaols? Based on the incomplete available evidence, the authors, while admitting that 'the swastika will always stick to Ryan', conclude that he was not a Nazi collaborator, though he did act as an 'adviser' to his German liberators.

Ryan's story is not the only Connolly Column controversy. The decision by most of the Irish in the British Battalion to transfer to the Abraham Lincoln Battalion on the eve of the fighting at Jarama is another, jarring as it did with ideals of internationalism. McLoughlin and O'Connor blame the split on Communist Party of Great Britain officials in Spain, who exacerbated the unease felt by several of the Irish about the British Army record of some battalion officers by convening an unnecessary meeting to discuss the matter. Interestingly, Ryan was one of those who opted to stay in the British Battalion following the twenty-six to eleven vote in favour of joining the Americans.

A third controversy was the battlefield execution of Maurice Emmett Ryan, a middle-class volunteer with a reputation for drunkenness and insubordination, who like namesake Frank was from Limerick, but unlike him had no IRA or left-wing connections. Emmett Ryan was shot by his battalion commander in August 1938 during fighting at the Ebro. No offence was officially logged, and recollections by his machine-gun company comrades differ. Did he turn his fire on them? Was he unforgivably drunk or asleep? Or was he simply politically suspect? The authors are certain that Ryan was 'blind drunk' and concede that instant justice of this sort would have been meted out in Allied armies during the two world wars. But they also say the 'grizzly deed' – the only such execution in the British Battalion – was a stain on its record in Spain and was 'based as much on political paranoia as on military procedure'.

Individual stories like these, though they may illustrate the understandable political, national and class tensions within the Brigades, should not divert us from the big picture. The International Brigades were, as Tremlett points out, a unique phenomenon – unprecedented arguably since the medieval Crusades – as a truly international army of volunteers from sixty-five countries, which comprised three-quarters of all sovereign states in 1936. They were mainly working class, many of them hardened anti-fascists and political activists. Most were communists and had been recruited by communist parties under the direction of the Comintern. The central role of the Comintern and, by extension, Stalin and the Soviet Union in organising the International Brigades raises one of the principal concerns for Spanish Civil War historians. Should Stalin's involvement be taken at face value as a genuine, albeit self-interested, attempt to resist

the rise of fascism? Or, given this was also the time of the purges, was it a stratagem for imposing communist supremacy on the left and a prelude to the installation of a 'people's democracy' in Spain?

For most leading historians the evidence suggests that Stalin was motivated chiefly by the desire to prevent the balance of power in Europe shifting in favour of the Axis powers. Tremlett's scrutiny of the communist record in the International Brigades corroborates this interpretation. Important posts were held by Comintern officials, and this did raise suspicions that they were primarily in the service of Stalin. But in fact the Soviet presence in Spain was 'modest' and 'even the communist Brigaders were, first and foremost popular front anti-fascists and members of Spain's Republican army', he writes in a chapter tellingly titled 'Stalin Was Still a Saint'. Elsewhere the reader is told that some of those who travelled to Spain with no political affiliation 'soon came to appreciate the [communist] party's disciplined approach to warfare and joined the Spanish Communist Party'. Meanwhile fatal victims in Spain of the Soviet secret police, the NKVD, numbered little more than twenty, not the hundreds or thousands claimed by some. The best known of these was POUM general secretary Andreu Nin, whose militia, as Orwell witnessed, fought pitched battles with government forces on the streets of Barcelona in May 1937. Its other leaders, *The International Brigades* notes, were tried in open court and acquitted of the main charges against them.

Tremlett's narrative follows the chronology of Spain's unfolding tragedy. 'The volunteers remained absurdly brave', he notes at one point. 'This sense of suicidal bravado was even more pronounced amongst the officers, who were mostly either enthusiastic young idealists or dogged veterans of clandestine activity, police beatings and prison cells.' Decisive success on the battlefield was rare, though all the more satisfying when it came. Victory in March 1937 at Guadalajara saw the Garibaldi Battalion repulse an offensive spearheaded by Mussolini's troops. Among the Garibaldis were some Abyssinian volunteers. One, whose father had been hanged by Mussolini in the Italian invasion of his country, showed his delight by drawing his finger across his throat and proclaiming 'Mio giorno' (My day).

An estimated 9,000 Internationals lost their lives. Survivors returned, if they could, to their home countries; others, particularly the Germans, Italians and Poles, had no choice but to exile themselves. Many soon became leaders of anti-Nazi resistance and partisan movements. During the Cold War there was imprisonment and persecution in the McCarthy witch-hunts in the US, and suspicion and surveillance in Britain and

elsewhere in the West. Some veterans reached high office in Eastern Europe, though in Czechoslovakia and Hungary there were also Stalinist show trials and executions, while in Poland some former Brigaders faced antisemitic hostility (a third of the Poles in Spain were Jewish).

These were not uniformly 'good' people, Tremlett tells us early on. 'There were cowards, psychopaths and rapists in their ranks'. Both books offer us a picture of the Brigades stripped of the heroic veneer. Desertions were commonplace, though hardly surprising in a 'volunteer' army; discipline was often harsh; and morale, while sometimes very low, remained remarkably buoyant, given the successive defeats and terrible fatalities. Despite all this, the memory of the Connolly Column and other national contingents has now been embraced by the political mainstream and 'subsumed into myth'. The Jewish volunteers from Palestine, for example, who were reviled as 'red renegades' by their Zionist neighbours, are today celebrated as the first Jews to resist the Holocaust. There are forty-five memorials to the International Brigades in Ireland and just one, on a church pew in Dublin, to the much larger force that fought for Franco. In case we didn't already know why, Tremlett explains: in a binary war the Internationals fought on the right side 'against the most destructive and evil force' of the twentieth century. Or, as the Belgian-Jewish volunteer Piet Akkerman put it in a letter written only a few weeks before his death in January 1937: 'Please understand, mother. You need to know, that I have not come to Spain out of selfish interest. I just had no right NOT to come – on seeing that in Spain lay the powder keg that was about to set fire to the entire world, that would perpetuate oppression, scientifically institute mass murder, and trample and animalize the whole of humanity.'

Jim Jump
International Brigade Memorial Trust