

moins préparé. Si la narration est « pleine de pierres d'achoppement, ... de petits chemins qui ne mènent nulle part », de « contradictions personnelles », c'est bon signe: il y a tout lieu de croire qu'on réussit une bonne entrevue (p. 47). Bien entendu, Jean et Millar rappellent tous deux l'importance que l'enquête orale peut avoir en histoire sociale ou en sociologie (pp. 16, 19-21, 54): c'est parfois le seul moyen dont on dispose, en effet, pour recueillir des témoignages de milieux populaires qui, sans cela, risqueraient fort de nous laisser dans l'ignorance de ce qu'ils ont pensé, senti, vécu.

On trouvera dans les pages qui suivent (pp. 55-65) de brèves mais excellentes directives proposées par le linguiste Marcel Juneau pour l'édition de textes d'histoire orale. Et finalement, un exemple d'interview tiré d'un corpus de 145 histoires de vie, réalisé à l'Université Laval, sous la direction de N. Gagnon et J.-P. Montminy. Cet exemple, dont nous n'avons ici que « la première partie » (pp. 71-95), est bien entendu édité selon les directives de Juneau. On ne peut manquer de s'interroger à son sujet cependant: il fut choisi dans la série réalisée à cause de la qualité exceptionnelle de l'informateur et, en même temps, parce qu'il parut « typique des transformations culturelles du Québec des années 40 » (p. 67). On peut se demander si ces deux caractères ne sont pas contradictoires; à moins qu'il s'agisse des transformations culturelles telles que les ont perçues les enquêteurs et non les personnes interrogées. Par ailleurs, on regrettera sans doute que l'interview n'ait pas été publiée intégralement, car le titre choisi « Fin d'une religion », ne correspond qu'en partie, et de façon fort discutable, à l'extrait publié. Les éditeurs nous laissent perplexe sur ces questions.

En somme, *L'histoire orale* est un bon petit dossier sur une forme d'investigation encore peu étudiée, surtout dans les milieux francophones. On ne manquera donc pas de le lire, mais il reste un dossier exploratoire. Il semble s'arrêter, en particulier, au seuil des problèmes d'interprétation.

À tout prendre, cette collection « Méthodes des sciences humaines » pose des jalons sur des sujets fort bien choisis. On souhaiterait cependant que certains des cahiers qu'elle propose puissent bénéficier de quelques améliorations ou compléments, à l'occasion d'une prochaine édition.

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ERIC J. HOBBSBAWM, ed. — *The History of Marxism: Marxism in Marx's Day*. Volume One. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1982. Pp. xxiv, 349.

This is, ironically, a book for the non-Marxist reader. From it can be gleaned something of the complexity of Marx's and Engels' intellectual and practical work in the cause of socialism as well as an appreciation of the debates, discussions and disagreements that would flow into the post-1900 years when contending Marxisms battled for hegemony within the workers' movement. Comprehension of this diversity is the fundamental starting point for any non-Marxist seeking an understanding of the impact of Marx and Engels in both the past and the present. But if this edited collection may enlighten sceptics and scholastics (should they prove capable of a dispassionate reading of its contents), it will be received with mixed feelings by Marxists themselves.

Marxism in Marx's Day is the first of four volumes that aim to survey the development of Marxism. Edited by Eric J. Hobsbawm, the project is introduced by a preface that epitomizes Hobsbawm's capacity to synthesize and range widely over vast realms of experience. It is a tantalizing beginning, laying out a sense of both the intellectual history of Marxism and of the historical contexts that played such a forceful role in moving various Marxisms out of the realm of abstract theory and into the problematic process of consolidating socialism.

The essays assembled here are meant to provide "the foundations" upon which this subsequent history can be analysed. Some are remarkable only for their failure to say anything new or to intersect with current controversies surrounding the interpretation of Marx's and Engels' attempts to establish historical materialism and socialism. David McLellan's discussion of "The Materialistic Concept of History", for instance, contributes little to our understanding of materialism and avoids reference to a wide range of work addressing this theme (E.P. Thompson, Raymond Williams, G.A. Cohen). Narrowly conceived, McLellan's contribution turns on the vital, and undeniable, place of *The German Ideology* in the formulation of the materialist concept of history. But it stops short of any sustained comment on *The Poverty of Philosophy*, the *Grundrisse*, or *Capital*, and ventures only superficially into the political world of the 1840s, where Marx and Engels moved decisively beyond both Hegelian idealism and liberal rationalism. This is a decidedly unmateriastic and ahistorical view of historical materialism.

Other essays, while more valuable, also seem to fall short of the mark. István Mészáros offers a vindication of "philosophy" that turns on the rather unremarkable notion that Marx's "intellectual greatness" lay in his capacity to explore the logic of concepts through constant reference to empirical reality. This masterful application "of a dialectical philosophical conception firmly anchored to actuality" lent substantive force to Marx's assertion that "you cannot supersede philosophy without realising it" (pp. 131, 103). Thirty-three pages are thus required to elaborate the obvious: Marxism must be simultaneously a way of acting in and interpreting the world, a practice guided by theoretical premises grounded in reality, but not frozen in dogma.

Less disappointing are Maurice Dobb's discussion of Marx's critique of political economy, Nicola Badoloni's unique reading of the quest for communist liberty, and an extremely useful attempt on the part of Lawrence Krader to place Marx alongside of his contemporary intellectual figures: Darwin, Carlyle, Morgan, Maine and Kovalevsky. All of these essays can be read with profit by Marxists and non-Marxists, although the latter are likely to gain most from them. Dobb's essay, in particular, as the last work written by this pioneering Marxist economist, has its own, albeit tragic, historical significance. As an attempt to explore Marx's peculiar theory of value and its break from Smith and Ricardo, Dobb's article addresses the centrality of expropriation and exploitation, themes currently being scrutinized by Michael Ignatieff, Gareth Stedman Jones and others at the Cambridge project on classical political economy.

A final essay, Pierre Vilar's difficult but rewarding analysis of Marx and history, should be read by all non-Marxist historians. "It is not only by reading Marx that one becomes a Marxist", Vilar notes. "It is by looking about one, following debates, and judging actions — *critically*. In the same way one becomes an historian; and this is how Marx became one" (p. 53). If Vilar too easily assumes that history *is* the scientific study of societies, he is nevertheless firmly, and rightly, convinced that much that is "new" in historical practice represents a dangerous drift away from Marxism toward ahistorical structuralism or antihistorical sociology. He is also quick to condemn the more traditional positivistic struggle "against a

history that led to revolutionary conclusions”, the older specialized attempt to carve history into discrete realms — social, political, economic — all governed by equally discrete, reified, “facts”. Against archaic empiricism and the “spontaneous offensive” of a history determined to go beyond “the event”, Vilar insists upon the validity of “synthesized history ... history-explication”, the shining success of the *Communist Manifesto*.

For Marxists, the essays of *Marxism in Marx's Day* that will generate most enthusiasm are those by Hobsbawm, Georges Haupt, and Gareth Stedman Jones. The first provides three separate analyses: of pre-Marxian socialism, of politics, and of the critical influence of the writings of the two founders of historical materialism. Hobsbawm develops a fresh perspective on the Marxian synthesis of British political economy, French radicalism, and German philosophy, explaining the conjuncture of the 1840s, which saw utopianism replaced by a proletarian-based, materialistic, and historically determined socialism. Whereas most writers simply posit the existence of these separate influences, Hobsbawm explores the strengths and weaknesses of each, outlining the French and British resistance to Marxism and explaining — in light of the associationist French tradition and the British labour movement's indigenous class consciousness — why it was that the new socialism would consolidate on the margins of bourgeois society, “by means of a reconstruction of the all-embracing speculative architecture of German philosophy” (p. 23). He follows this with equally insightful discussions of Marx's and Engels' practice and their views on the state and class struggle. Closing the book is Hobsbawm's concise, if schematic, overview of the reception accorded Marx's and Engels' writings, and the various publications that appeared as a consequence, in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. These essays are enhanced by two other fine contributions.

Gareth Stedman Jones' “Engels and the History of Marxism” generates a learned and systematic vindication of Marx's life-long ally, who has recently suffered an undeserved intellectual demotion at the hands of Althusser and a host of self-proclaimed “critical theorists”. Finally, the late Georges Haupt gives the Marxist reader an essential and thought-provoking analysis of the ideas, parties and programmes associated with Marxism in the late nineteenth century. Tracing the history of faction and polemical exchange, of eclectic socialism, of social democracy, of “scientific” socialism, and of the revisionist crisis and the birth of Marxisms, Haupt brings the collected essays together upon the ground where theory and practice met historically: in the institutions and debates of the international workers' movement.

Uneven as they are, the essays comprising *Marxism in Marx's Day* thus have something to offer everyone. If the non-Marxist can perhaps learn most from them, Marxists, inevitably, will read them most carefully. This is part of the history of Marxism as “the other”: a dangerous and threatening (and deeply misunderstood) way of looking at the world and acting in it. In English Canada in particular this is now well-established. But it is here, perhaps, where Marx's acute understanding is desperately needed. It was Marx, after all, whose “Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right” provided us with words worth bearing in mind at this specific historical moment: “The constitution does not create the people but the people the constitution.”

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