

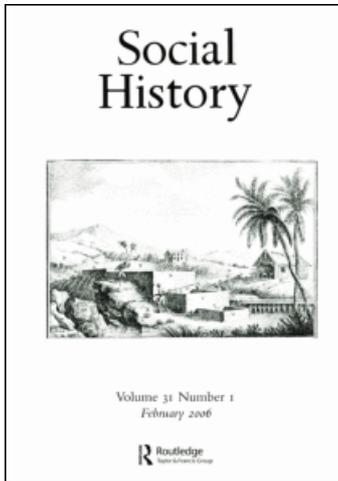
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Access details: Access Details: [subscription number 930884249]

Publisher Routledge

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Social History

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713708979>

Reviews

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Online publication date: 26 April 2011

To cite this Article Mizutani, Satoshi , Sen, Satadru , Aitken, Robbie , Dawson, Alexander , Zachariah, Benjamin , Triner, Gail D. , Bairner, Alan , Lassiter, Matthew D. , Frohman, Larry , Knapton, Michael , Bonar, Daphne , Horn, Jeff , Huberman, Michael , Humphries, Jane , Griffin, Emma , Steinberg, Mark D. , Larkin, Kraig , O'Sullivan, Michael E. , Ward, James Mace , Tönsmeier, Tatjana , Cruz, Jesus , Gorman, Anthony and Shaery-Eisenlohr, Roschanack(2011) 'Reviews', *Social History*, 36: 2, 205 – 250

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/03071022.2011.555624

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03071022.2011.555624>

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Reviews

Harald Fischer-Tiné, *Low and Licentious Europeans: Race, Class and White Subalternity in Colonial India* (2009), 498 (Orient Longman, New Delhi, £31.05/\$32.65).

Elizabeth Kolsky, *Colonial Justice in British India: White Violence and the Rule of Law* (2010), 266 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge and New York, £55.00/\$95.00).

For readers familiar with the image of British India as ruled by cultured gentlemen from Oxbridge, the two books by Harald Fischer-Tiné and Elizabeth Kolsky may come as a bit of a shock. The white men and women discussed in these historical monographs are hardly ones endowed with the bourgeois refinements and sensitivities usually enumerated as the required qualities of British rulers in Victorian and Edwardian India.

Fischer-Tiné's *Low and Licentious Europeans* is probably the first systematic attempt, not just in South Asian studies but in colonial studies in general, to treat within a single volume various subordinate European groups in a colonial situation. The reasons why the presence of 'white subalterns' has long been neglected by scholars of colonialism, as well as why it now stands in need of being historicized, are clearly articulated in the first chapter, which lays out the book's historiographical implications. The five empirical case studies which follow focus on a series of 'disorders' caused by working-class white men and women who came to British India as rank-and-file soldiers, seamen, railway workers, or as female sex workers. While clarifying the historical reasons as to why and how these groups arrived and settled in the colony, the author describes, in exhaustive detail, the ways in which they became seen as almost hereditarily immoral and ill-behaved, and why they were identified as targets of colonial social control by both state and non-governmental agents. They would have had to be put under vigilant control not least because their highly ambiguous 'whiteness' was seen as fatally disruptive to the racialized social order of colonial rule. Through analysis of a wide range of materials, each chapter reveals the complex and often contradictory attitudes of the ruling order and convincingly shows how these attitudes were informed by the racial, class and gender ideologies of a global empire.

Kolsky's *Colonial Justice in British India* explores the 150-year history of violence committed by Europeans against native subjects in British India. 'Violence' in this context consists of forms of physical abuse (including murder and rape) that occurred in the quotidian realms of the colonial encounter. A major point of Kolsky's research is to demonstrate just how endemic these everyday forms of white violence were throughout the period of British rule. Historians of British colonialism in India have long failed to register this simple fact, tending to confine their examination of colonial violence to specific forms of organized state violence, such as military oppression. As the title suggests, however, the book is not just about violent

Europeans and their criminal misconduct, but also about their ambiguous relationship to the question of the 'rule of law' in the colonial context. The first two chapters trace the philosophical and historical trajectories of the British idea of legal order in colonial India. Through careful examination of archival materials, Kolsky shows how the colonial legal system paradoxically created a space of lawlessness, where British European subjects could literally get away with murder. The case studies presented in the third and fourth chapters explore the practical implications of the 'injustice' inherent in colonial justice. The colonial legal system was not in the least universalist, but was itself explicitly partial, enabling Europeans, for example, to insist that the Indians they murdered did not die directly because of their acts of violence but because of the latter's alleged 'racial' frailty. Kolsky identifies the most explicit example of such lawlessness in the tea plantations of Assam, which, with their location on the fringes of empire, constituted what Joseph Conrad would have called a 'heart of darkness'. Like the 'low' Europeans of Fischer-Tiné's volume, Kolsky's violent European men often emerged to the colonial authorities as serious sources of social and political unrest. The last chapter of her book clearly demonstrates how the failure of British rulers to punish Europeans for their abuse of natives ended up fuelling anti-British sentiments among Indian nationalists and in the vernacular press.

Through nuanced and careful explorations of the colonial archive, both authors succeed in presenting a highly unsettling social landscape of the British Raj, with graphic accounts of unruly white groups. For South Asianists, the hitherto under-studied lives of these 'unrespectable' whites are themselves inherently interesting, but the two authors go far beyond simply chronicling their past. What their books sharply foreground are a series of structural contradictions posed to British rule by their disconcerting existence.

Fischer-Tiné explores how the Europeans of lower order were perceived by the British ruling elites as internal threats to the racialized divide of imperial rule. They were undeniably 'white' in colour and blood, but emphatically not so in terms of social conduct. The oft-cited dispositions of the ruling race – reason, frugality and moral uprightness – were not among their attributes. Their characteristically 'uncivilized' behaviour (manifested in drinking, 'loafing', prostituting and so on) were allegedly exacerbated by the physical and cultural environment of India, which supposedly made the mental and corporeal constitutions of Europeans 'degenerate'.

Kolsky focuses on a similar contradiction, but one that particularly relates to the question of legal justice in the colonial situation. According to the ideology of imperialism, the benevolence of British colonialism was predicated upon its 'rule of law'. As part of the colonial 'civilizing mission', the British promised to deliver the spirit of legal justice and equality to Indian society, uplifting it from the alleged arbitrariness and despotism of native customs. Non-official Europeans, however, continuously rejected subjection to the uniform legal system established by British rulers. They opposed being placed on an equal legal footing with Indians, and they particularly abhorred the idea of being tried by native judges and juries. More problematical still, the very legal exemptions of these British European subjects were both the cause and effect of their rampant racism. Rather than embodying the cherished modern values of law and order, these Europeans – particularly the planters – behaved as though there were no legal restrictions on their conduct in India, daily harming or even murdering natives with impunity.

As both authors clearly demonstrate, what is crucial to note is that these contradictions were frequently addressed as fundamental problems of governance by colonial authorities. British

administrators were keenly aware of the presence of 'mean' and 'degenerate' whites amid their colonized Indian subjects and worried about the harm they posed to British prestige. As Fischer-Tiné points out, successive governments, both Company and Crown, feared that the existence of poor, distressed Europeans – often reduced to a state of vagrancy and/or involvement in a range of illicit activities (including violence and prostitution) – would shake the very foundation of colonial racial rule, which rested on the supposed moral superiority of the white race. Likewise, as Kolsky shows, liberal and conservative rulers alike – from Bentinck to Lytton to Curzon – continuously expressed concerns not just about white violence but also about the role of the colonial legal system in insufficiently punishing perpetrators. In the minds of natives, *injustice*, rather than justice, had become established by the late nineteenth century as the hallmark of British colonialism. In fact, the official anxieties caused by these unruly whites were not at all unfounded. The leaders of the Indian nationalist movement and the native press frequently criticized the British Raj for its inconsistent attitude towards Europeans when it came to questions of justice and equality.

The presence of the 'low', 'licentious' and 'violent' Europeans of British India was far more politically central to British rule than contemporary scholars would have ever imagined, and this is precisely why the two monographs are theoretically significant for both the historiography of South Asia and post-colonial studies. Both of the authors astutely remind their readers that, in British India, rulers could not help but deal with what Kolsky calls the 'third face of colonialism', an ambiguous group made up of those Europeans who were regarded as neither rulers nor ruled. European criminals, vagrants and prostitutes may have been marginal in the sense that they did not represent the 'whiteness' required for British racial rule. But, all the more so, their uncontrolled presence was seen to have dire political consequences. Fischer-Tiné's study reveals that the colonial authorities sought to build a set of moral and institutional regimes that monitored and disciplined 'white subalterns'. They also tried to curb the number of problematical groups through tighter immigration control, while making sure that those who did enter the country would go back home after their services were no longer useful to the Raj. Kolsky persuasively argues that it was partly in order to control legally the 'lawless' Europeans in the *mofussils* (districts) that liberal imperialists like Thomas Macaulay tried to introduce a system of 'codification' in India, subjecting all subjects, whether European or Indian, to a universal system of law. Clearly, the European community of British India was not in any sense homogeneous: it had 'rulers' and those who were not quite so. It is thus important for scholars to go beyond simply stressing the prevalence of white poverty and crime or associating 'whiteness' solely with bourgeois civility and western modernity. The more accurate picture of British colonial rule would be one in which the government was committed to the ideology of white supremacy, while simultaneously being forced to deal with the enduring existence of white poverty and/or the violence of certain groups of European origin. It is from such a perspective that the books by Fischer-Tiné and Kolsky successfully rewrite the social and political history of British colonialism in South Asia.

Just how complex the British attitude towards the 'third face of colonialism' was is carefully analysed by both authors. While non-official classes were socially unwelcome because of their tendency to misbehave, it was equally the case that colonialism was reliant, if reluctantly, on their enterprise and labour. For example, the infamous planters were eventually given privileges and protection because of their hugely profitable businesses which contributed substantially to imperial capitalism. Also important were the white soldiers whose service to

the empire was considered indispensable, particularly in the wake of the rebellion of 1857, which ushered in a period of intensified racial antagonism. Even European prostitutes – whose presence was perhaps the most dreaded of all white subaltern groups in terms of the threat to the racialized and gendered hierarchy of colonial society – were given an almost officially sanctioned function: the sexual service provided by white sex workers was seen as useful in preventing British men from falling prey to rape, miscegenation and homosexuality. As ‘necessary evils’, these groups curiously had their place in colonial society and, as ‘whites’, they also enjoyed certain racially defined benefits. Fischer-Tiné, for instance, points out how European prisoners in British India were treated favourably (in terms of food, clothing and so on) compared with Indian convicts. White subalterns, as he argues, may have occupied subordinate social positions but it remained the case that they were also recipients of the ‘racial dividends’ of white rule. In the case of planters, as Kolsky shows, non-official Europeans went so far as to entertain a sense that their special rights could not be taken away even by the colonial government. In fact, they were highly successful in pressuring the latter into reducing proposed legal reforms into ones that made it virtually impossible to bring European offenders to justice. The Raj often found itself in a dilemma, and largely failed to resolve it. This was to prove politically fatal, as it enabled Indian nationalists to lay bare the faulty foundations of Britain’s civilizing mission: they blamed British rule not for its rule of law but for its rule of lawlessness.

In view of their trenchant expositions of colonial contradictions, both *Low and Licentious Europeans* and *Colonial Justice in British India* can be seen as extending the recent attempts of post-colonial theory and subaltern studies to refigure the historical narratives of modern South Asia. The authors claim, however, that their studies depart from some of the theoretical and methodological assumptions of the current orthodoxy. In particular, they both criticize the disproportionate attention that has been paid to questions of knowledge and representation in the colonial context and emphasize in contrast empirical realities. There is a tendency among the social and cultural historians of South Asia to treat the ‘whiteness’ of Europeans as something meta-historical: as subjects of colonial discourse. One effect of this line of enquiry is a relative neglect of the corporeality of whiteness. As white subjects are discussed only as the producer/accumulator of knowledge about the ‘realities’ of colonial society, their own bodily realities paradoxically disappear from the sight of history. While the auto-critique of historical categories will always remain important for scholars of colonialism, the wholesale shift to meta-historical critique has had its political costs. As Kolsky notes, while radical scholars have been preoccupied with the ‘epistemic violence’ of colonial discourse, they are curiously indifferent to the quotidian forms of physical violence committed against natives by colonizers.

In addition to offering a useful corrective to the historiographical blindness to non-official and subaltern classes of the European community, Fischer-Tiné and Kolsky also provide methodological insights into the nature of the colonial archive. Both authors express their amazement at the sheer quantity of official records about unruly white groups. Not only does the colonial archive store Orientalist knowledge about Indian subjects, it is also filled with information, both ethnographic and logistical, on violent and subaltern whites. Post-colonial historians have long benefited from Ranajit Guha’s advice to ‘read the colonial archive against the grain’, thereby revealing the colonial archive as a discourse of power. Both Fischer-Tiné and Kolsky argue, however, that one can also read the colonial archive *along its grain*. As their works clearly demonstrate, the contradictions of British colonialism manifested themselves

partly because its attempts at hegemonic rule apparently failed. It was increasingly obvious both to colonizers and colonized that the idea of Britain's civilizing India was an inherently flawed one. Many Britons were not only uncivilized but were rudely infringing on the very principles of equality and justice. To maintain the fiction of imperial hegemony, the colonial state was obliged to monitor and control, if often in vain, the behaviour of non-official European troublemakers. Government officials knew perfectly well that the hegemonic appeal of western modernity was precarious at best, and their anxieties became firmly inscribed into the colonial archive.

The two historical studies by Fischer-Tiné and Kolsky make full and creative use of the colonial archive, and they make a strong case for re-examining the social and political impact of white subalternity and violence on the British Raj. With their empirical richness and analytical acuteness, their studies will be essential references for decades to come.

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Aparna Vaidik, *Imperial Andamans: Colonial Encounter and Island History* (2010), 282 (Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, £55.00/\$85.00).

In her monograph on the Andaman Islands – a place known to historians as the site of a British-Indian penal colony – Aparna Vaidik argues that the islands were not a ‘natural prison’, but were rendered insular and peripheral by the colonial encounter. Intending to position colonialism in the Andamans within the wider strategic and maritime geography of empire, she argues that the British persisted with the settlement in spite of its drawbacks as a penal colony, rather than because of its inherent suitability as such.

The book is a mixed bag of rewards and disappointments. The author problematizes, to some extent, the spatial ‘truth’ of the Andamans, pointing out that the ‘Indian’ orientation of the islands is the result of historical developments and that other orientations were conceivable, since the colony emerged in the context of British interest in Malaya. In spite of Vaidik's impatience with oceanic histories that emphasize movements of convicts and labour, her initiative strengthens the configuration of the Indian Ocean as a viable space of historical study. The book also includes a good discussion of piracy as an imperial concern, although it fails to relate that concern to British abolitionism and the interception of slave trading in the Indian Ocean.

Vaidik's analysis of the discourse of Andamanese cannibalism is thoughtful; she is effective in demonstrating the pushes and pulls (of property, status, community) on released convicts contemplating going ‘home’; and her discussion of the ‘rehabilitation’ of the island-born children of convicts is promising, if brief. The narrative of how the colony was affected by the end of penal transportation is informative and well researched. Vaidik is also attentive to financial cost as a factor in the history of the settlement: a necessary, if unexciting, consideration in the study of a penny-pinching colonial regime.

In studying the making of an ambiguously punishing tropical-imperial space, however, Vaidik is late on the ball: the ground-breaking work is Peter Redfield's *Space in the Tropics*

(Berkeley, 2000). The topic is hardly closed to enquiry, but it does require engagement with Redfield's book, which does not feature in Vaidik's bibliography. This is symptomatic of a larger problem with an under-theorized and overly expository study, inadequately situated in the relevant scholarship. No attempt is made to engage Vishvajit Pandya's work on Andamanese conceptualizations of space, or Alice Bullard's study of geography and civilized-imperial angst in New Caledonia.¹ Vaidik speculates about insularity in imperialism but ignores Kathleen Wilson's *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London and New York, 2003). There is no theoretical engagement with race or settler colonialism, although both are vital to the subject of settling a space that is simultaneously 'empty' and full of natives. Homosexual 'intrigues' among convicts remain uncontextualized in the history of sex and gender. Consequently, in spite of Vaidik's avowed desire to escape the 'confinement' of the history of punishment, the book is a curiously old-fashioned penal history of the Andamans. The ambitious analytical objectives broached early on – insularity, space-making, oceanic history – soon evaporate.

As penal history, *Imperial Andamans* intersects with my work and Clare Anderson's *Convicts in the Indian Ocean* (Basingstoke, 2000). Here, Vaidik is more engaged but inconsistent. There is considerable misreading: where Anderson or I have attempted to describe British expectations (such as the expectation that islands might be 'natural prisons' or facilitate surveillance), Vaidik has seen descriptions of an 'all-pervasive normative discipline' (11). That problem emerges only when there is a citation. Vaidik does not cite my work on Maulana Thanasari, and she treats Thanasari as virgin material even as she revisits themes which I had explored, such as the illicit life of the convict employee and the fashioning of families in the penal colony.² This is, at best, carelessness.

Vaidik's characterization of the historiography of colonial incarceration as 'staid [and] Foucauldian' (11) reinforces her tendency to tilt at windmills. After Michael Ignatieff's retreat from Pentonville,³ there are few 'staid Foucauldians' left even among historians of the metropole. Anderson, James Mills, Harald Fischer-Tiné, myself and others have sought to complicate Foucault in the colonies by highlighting the tensions between modern institutional models, colonial racial imperatives, the simultaneous centrality and weakness of the state, and the resilience of negotiation and failure. Vaidik's claim that my own *Disciplining Punishment* is aligned with the nationalist history of the Andamans suggests an over-zealous attempt to generate polemical distance when there is much repetition in *Imperial Andamans* of the themes, organizational priorities and archival content of *Disciplining Punishment*, without significant new analytical dividends.⁴ It is only right that the premises and conclusions of my work and Anderson's will be revised by new scholarship, but misrepresentation and regurgitation (alongside the insistence that one is making a dramatic analytical departure) constitute an unfortunate intellectual strategy.

¹V. Pandya, 'Movement and space', *American Ethnologist*, xvii, 4 (1990), 775–97; A. Bullard, *Exile to Paradise* (Palo Alto, 2000).

²Satadru Sen, 'Contexts, representation and the colonized convict: Maulana Thanasari in the Andaman Islands', *Crimes, Histories, Societies*, viii, 2 (2004), 117–39.

³Stanley Cohen and Andrew Scull (eds), *Social Control and the State* (New York, 1983).

⁴Satadru Sen, *Disciplining Punishment: Colonialism and Convict Society in the Andaman Islands* (Oxford and New York, 2000).

Imperial Andamans contains minor factual mistakes: no inscribed pillar was left in the Andamans when the first colony was abandoned (43); the idea was merely contemplated. More seriously, Vaidik takes colonial constructions of aboriginality and its boundaries at face value (86) and reasserts myths such as ‘the Andamanese could not count’ (128). The cliché that anthropology was the ‘handmaiden of empire’ (130) is an oversimplification of the history of anthropology as well as of empire in the Andamans. The claim that ‘little was known [about life in the islands] by the general public in India’ before the era of nationalist prisoners is tenable only if Vaidik is using ‘public’ in the narrowly modern sense (156). When Vaidik writes that the Andamans were simultaneously ‘a hellish inferno and a paradise-like place for the convicts’ (132), she ascribes to the convicts a discursive binary specific to post-Columbian and (not identically) post-Cook European explorations. Wonder is not generic, and *khwab-e-khyal* (141), or ‘whimsical dream’, is not the same as ‘tropical paradise’.

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Susan D. Pennybacker, *From Scottsboro to Munich. Race and Political Culture in 1930s Britain* (2009), xiv + 400 (Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford, paperback £19.95/\$27.95).

Susan D. Pennybacker’s fascinating investigation into the central role of race in 1930s British political culture begins across the Atlantic at a set of train tracks in rural Alabama in 1931, scene of the arrest of the Scottsboro boys, nine young African-Americans falsely convicted of rape. Using the international campaign to save the ‘boys’ as a point of departure, Pennybacker takes the reader on a remarkable journey which foregrounds the ‘interconnections of activist lives’ (1) and the causes to which they were dedicated. Travel and movement, whether of people or ideas, emerge as leading motifs. Over the course of six main chapters she reveals the complex networks of protest which brought together committed activists and men and women of conscience primarily of a left, but also of a liberal persuasion, who sought actively to intervene in contemporary racial politics. The coalitions they formed at the local, national and international levels were, however, frequently unstable, marked by infighting, and they were of a temporary nature. With time it would prove more and more difficult to find common ground. The study concludes in the immediate aftermath of the ‘treacherous sacrifices’ (265) made at the 1938 Munich Conference, where people and lands were abandoned in the name of appeasement, and with the political left increasingly disunited and unable to find an effective response to the rise of fascism.

This new study sees Pennybacker developing further her previous ground-breaking work on the international dimensions of the Scottsboro campaign co-authored with colleagues James A. Miller and Eve Rosenhaft and published in the *American Historical Review* in 2001.¹ At

¹James A. Miller, Susan D. Pennybacker and Eve Rosenhaft, ‘Mother Ada Wright and the international campaign to free the Scottsboro boys, 1931–40’, *American Historical Review*, CVI (2001), 387–430.

the same time she also builds upon recent research by the likes of Barbara Bush into British anti-imperialism, linking British and non-European activists, as well as work on the intersecting networks of black internationalism and the Communist International, such as that of Brent Hayes Edwards and Jonathan Derrick.² What makes Pennybacker's work stand out is not just the global perspective of protest that she presents, but also her ability to synthesize a vast amount of information, successfully connecting personalities and events that up to now have been treated separately. The scope of the book is reflected in the impressive range and volume of archival and contemporary printed material consulted. This includes previously undiscovered sources from the archives of the Comintern as well as memoirs, diaries, and parliamentary and private papers from French, North American, British and Dutch archives.

The study is organized on a series of biographical sketches of five key figures, some better known than others, who influenced debates concerning anti-racism and anti-imperialism in Britain and, indeed, beyond. These main protagonists, none of whom was British, are discussed in connection with pivotal events and protest actions, which are then expertly embedded within the wider historical context. The first chapter centres on Ada Wright, mother of two of the Scottsboro defendants, who visited Europe as part of a Communist-sponsored campaign. Wright was presented as the personification of her sons' struggle, and the stops she made on her tour of Britain were linked to pressing local issues in order to demonstrate the global dimensions of oppression. Through a discussion of the British Indian politician Shapurji Saklatvala, Pennybacker draws parallels between the Scottsboro trial and the Meerut trials – a campaign to free a diverse range of largely leftist activists in India from 1929 to 1933 – with which it was frequently associated.

The Trinidadian radical George Padmore provides a basis to examine anti-colonial and anti-racist politics in London. Padmore's unwavering anti-colonialism is contrasted with the anti-slavery campaigning of Lady Kathleen Simon and her arguments in favour of the 'enlightened preservation of empire' (103), which tentatively foreshadowed liberal justification for appeasement. In the context of the Italian invasion of Abyssinia, Pennybacker convincingly demonstrates that liberals like Simon and her husband Sir John Simon could intellectually legitimate Italian occupation and the defence of empire by arguing that lasting progress against slavery was most likely to be made under European rule. In an examination of the Mock Reichstag Fire Trial of 1933 and the life in exile of the German Communist and publicist Willi Münzenberg, Pennybacker argues that violence on the European continent, such as the Nazi seizure of power and the Spanish Civil War, began to take precedence over colonial causes in the campaigns of European activists. As a result, anti-racism and anti-imperialism were, to their detriment, increasingly subsumed into a larger campaign of protest against fascism. In the context of appeasement, when the transfer of British colonies to the Nazis was considered as a means of combating the latter's expansionist aims, many on the left 'tacitly moved towards a defence of empire' (214). Only a minority of activists, largely from the colonies, such as Padmore and Jawaharlal Nehru, remained convinced that in order for anti-fascism to be

²Barbara Bush, *Imperialism, Race and Resistance: Africa and Britain, 1919–1945* (London, 1999); Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation and the Rise of Black Internationalism*

(Cambridge, Mass., 2003); and Jonathan Derrick, *Africa's Agitators: Militant Anti-Colonialism in Africa and the West, 1918–1939* (London, 2008).

successful it was essential that it did not ignore the inequalities and abuses of the colonial system.

Throughout the book Pennybacker points to the growing tensions within the international left, and in particular between the Comintern and leading activists, as a further source of disunity that enabled the fascists to gain ground. In the early 1930s it was often the Comintern that provided a ready-made organizational apparatus to give leadership to protest actions, helping to turn local events into global campaigns. At the same time the involvement of Communist-sponsored organizations dissuaded some sympathizers from associating with such campaigns. As the decade proceeded, Moscow increasingly withdrew from the anti-colonial struggle in favour of accommodation with the West, and Stalinist repression was turned on its own in order to silence those who no longer shared its views. Thus, two of its most influential anti-racist and anti-imperial activists, Münzenberg and in particular Padmore, were expelled from the Comintern, while other supporters chose to ignore Soviet persecution. By the late 1930s it now proved impossible to re-create the broad-based alliances of the earlier part of the decade in order to challenge the fascist threat.

At times Pennybacker's study is overloaded with a wealth of in-depth information, which can make the narrative difficult to follow, and the connections between the myriad individuals and events discussed are not always self-evident. Equally, some of the arguments are more implied than explicitly stated. None of this, however, should detract from the value of the study. *From Scottsboro to Munich* is a rich and sophisticated work which offers a challenging and alternative take on the history of the 1930s, demonstrating convincingly the central role that racial debates played not simply in British culture and politics, but also within a wider international context.

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Robert Chao Romero, *The Chinese in Mexico, 1882–1940* (2010), xii + 254 (University of Arizona Press, Tucson, \$50.00).

Mexican scholars have come slowly, and perhaps reluctantly, to the serious study of the Chinese diaspora in Mexico. Until a few years ago, nationalist traditions largely ignored nineteenth- and twentieth-century immigration as epiphenomenal, while those who considered the Chinese have focused on racism but have given us little understanding of the lived experiences of the thousands of Chinese who migrated to Mexico in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Robert Chao Romero promises to address this gap and to do much more. One cannot effectively study such a complex diaspora and remain within national borders, and so Romero follows a series of developments in Mexico, the United States, Cuba and China to explore phenomena that brought tens of thousands of Chinese to Mexico at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. We find (perhaps unsurprisingly) that, for many, Mexico was second prize. Excluded from the US, Mexico was either a land of limited opportunity or a jumping-off point for undocumented migration to the United States.

Chinese nationals could cross the border illegally with Mexican guides or disappear into US-based Chinese communities while 'in transit' from China to a third country (often Cuba). We see fascinating stories of migrant ingenuity here, including what seems to have been a thriving trade in which legal Chinese residents of the United States traded identities with an 'in transit' sojourner (for a price), only to return freely to the United States.

These are important stories for a number of reasons, not least of which are the ways that they remind us of the need to examine diasporic communities in the Americas through a transnational lens. Business interests from Guangdong province to San Francisco to Havana and Chihuahua profited from and facilitated Chinese migration. The migrants themselves often moved from town to town in search of opportunity, to and from various countries, and developed vast networks of kin and associates. As Romero shows, they came not only as coolies but also through kinship networks, chain migration and other means. Likewise, they pursued a vast array of occupations, from labourer to transnational entrepreneur. Marriage patterns, female migration and return migration are also considered carefully.

Romero uses this data to make a case for the importance of the Chinese in Mexico, but one wonders if he overstates it. He seems intent on somehow transforming the narrative of *mestizaje* in Mexico through the insertion of Chinese subjects, yet his own evidence undermines his claim. If the Chinese population of Mexico indeed peaked at 24,218 in 1926 and was less than 5000 just fifteen years later, it is hard to make any serious claim about its substantive or long-term impact. Although they may have been the second-largest foreign-born population in Mexico at the time, Romero's evidence in fact suggests that during these years Mexico was, well, remarkably Mexican. Unlike the Afro-Mexican population which, while largely forgotten in twentieth-century renderings of *mestizaje*, represented a considerable portion of colonial society and clearly left important (though largely ignored) legacies in Mexico, the Chinese experience there seems to have been relatively brief and fairly limited, especially when compared with other countries in the Americas.

This in turn begs a question. If they were such a small, even marginal population, why were they so loathed in Mexico? Romero details the Chinese phobia carefully, including the Torreón massacre (where 303 out of a total of a little more than 600 Chinese residents in the city were killed) and the expulsion of the Chinese from Sonora in 1931. In the former case, we might call the Chinese residents of the city the unlucky victims of revolution (in all, only 500 Chinese were killed during a civil war which took a million lives), but this seems an inadequate explanation. The Chinese were indeed targeted specifically in both instances and condemned on racial, sanitary and economic grounds. We may assume the first two were fairly common phenomena during the twentieth century, but Romero also pays very close attention to the third. In fact, he gives some credence to the claim that Chinese merchants had unfair advantages over their Mexican competitors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, arguing that their access to transnational Chinese capital, labour networks and Chinese-dominated wholesale enterprises in the United States were the keys to their success. While Romero in no way suggests that this in turn justified the anti-Chinese sentiment, this does suggest that we need to look beyond simple prejudice to understand the hostility the Chinese faced in Mexico.

These questions are perhaps best left to a future study, which will no doubt draw from the rich evidence and analysis presented in this text. Important questions remain about how we

should integrate our understandings of the Chinese diaspora in Mexico into our understandings of the country's history more generally, but this text represents a good beginning.

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Federico Finchelstein, *Transatlantic Fascism: Ideology, Violence, and the Sacred in Argentina and Italy, 1919–1945* (2010), xiii + 330 (Duke University Press, Durham and London, \$89.95, paperback \$24.95).

There will be several ways of engaging with this book. Scholars of Argentinian history will debate the emphasis placed on Argentinians' Italian engagements rather than Spanish ones; and most scholars on fascism (generically) or Fascism (the Italian version) will raise the usual question of whether a 'real' fascism existed outside Europe, either in its heyday between the two world wars and during the Second World War, or thereafter. For those of us who are interested in comparative studies of fascism, however, this book makes a number of welcome interventions, though not always as self-consciously as one might like.

First, it avoids the 'original and copy' problem, addressing as it does various levels of engagement with fascist (generically, and therefore with a small 'f') ideas among an Argentinian public and among Argentinian intellectuals. Finchelstein addresses the tension between Italian attempts to export its Fascism to Argentina (a country that Italian Fascists regarded as particularly suited to this export, allegedly because the best elements in Argentinian society were of Italian origin) and a much more wide-ranging engagement with Fascist or fascist ideas among Argentinian *nacionalistas*, who saw in fascism or Fascism a set of ideas that – with necessary changes – could be applied to Argentina and as a doctrine compatible with their forms of right-wing populist nationalism.

Second, it goes some way towards looking at questions of the intellectual histories of engagements with fascism that do not necessarily relate to full-fledged capture of state power and a successfully murderous regime: not seeing fascism in the light of Nazi Germany, Auschwitz and the retrospective view from 1945 and after.

Third, even as it concentrates on relatively positive engagements with Fascism, it is able to provide a sense of the large spectrum of people and groups who discussed what was, after all, one of the major social and political – and intellectual, though one uses this last word with some hesitation – movements of the twentieth century.

Finchelstein starts from Emilio Gentile's understanding of Fascism as 'a modern revolutionary phenomenon that was nationalist and revolutionary, anti-liberal and anti-Marxist' (5), and as a 'secular religion' with a militarist, organicist, corporatist and totalitarian conception of a warlike and virile state at its core. Fascism's emphasis on creating a new civilization makes it necessary, Finchelstein argues, to work with an idea of 'a global ideology undergoing constant transformations', and on this basis he concludes that fascism exists in its 'classic' form (Mussolini's Italian version) as well as in its 'varied reformulations on both sides of the Atlantic and beyond'. This approach requires Finchelstein to 'de-essentialize' (27)

fascism and to work with a 'fascist catalogue' of ideas (6), instead of identifying what is usually referred to as a 'fascist minimum'.

This enables Finchelstein to raise an important question: what were the pre-existing tendencies that made it important for Argentinian right-wing ideologues to engage with fascism? As Finchelstein so aptly points out, 'Argentinian *nacionalismo* was a fascist movement endowed with a fascist ideology of its own' (43). And, perhaps more importantly, does this suggest an affinity or a cousinhood of a number of contemporaneous inter-war ideological tendencies that at a particular time recognized one another and moved closer, in particular by tuning in to their more successful cousins?

The book proceeds by attempting to identify a Fascism that Italian fascists sought to export and Italian attempts to guide or mould a specifically pro-Italian Fascism in Argentina. This account appears at times to be somewhat too dependent on statements made by Benito Mussolini himself. Despite attempts by German National Socialists to influence Argentinian politics in their direction, it was the Italian version that remained the central point of engagement for the Argentinians – a fact that, Finchelstein argues, has been obscured largely because of Argentina's role as a destination for fugitive Nazis after the Second World War. Finchelstein then tunes in to the public debates on fascism in Argentina, mostly on the right, in the 1920s and 1930s. He debunks the idea of fascism as necessarily secular, pointing to the importance of Catholic 'clericofascism' in Argentina.

The book does not directly address the question of fascism(s) as *movement* rather than as ideology – or of fascism(s) as ideas, to use a less defined term that perhaps does more justice to the vagueness and inconsistency in rational terms of fascisms. Since Finchelstein has previously written on Argentinian fascism, this is understandable; but this might give the impression that these debates were about fine-tuning Argentinian *nacionalismo* in the light of fascism. Not much is said about the engagement with fascist ideas by a wider public outside groups of intellectuals, except via letters to various journals. Finchelstein is, however, very successful in highlighting the fascisms of many Argentinian *nacionalista* ideologues, as well as their internal debates and divergences, while at the same time avoiding the teleology of narrating a pre-history of Peronism.

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Steven Bryan, *The Gold Standard at the Turn of the Twentieth Century: Rising Powers, Global Money, and the Age of Empire* (2010), 273 (Columbia University Press, New York, \$50.00).

Steven Bryan's *The Gold Standard at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* offers an important corrective to our understanding of, precisely, the gold standard at the turn of the twentieth century. Bryan challenges the classical liberal interpretation of the gold standard by invoking two parallel approaches, both of which have been under-represented by the literature in economic history. Rather than assessing economic trends surrounding the operation of the gold standard and focusing on 'core' economies, this study offers an in-depth analysis of the

debates about introducing the gold standard, and the book fixes its attention on 'peripheral' economies of the period – Argentina and Japan.

These approaches very effectively reveal that the ideology behind the gold standard had a relatively minor role in its adoption. Part I reminds economic historians that the standard's central features of stable currency value, free flows of capital and trade, and limited government intervention in economic decision-making became policies only after long periods of developmental protectionist policies consolidated the position of the core countries. The international spread of the monetary regime occurred in even more diverse and contentious settings than its origination.

Bryan's subtle and well-written analysis of the debates about the gold standard's adoption within Argentina and Japan clearly demonstrates the competition among interest groups to adopt their beneficial policies. While economists and historians typically represent the gold standard as a given outcome, arriving at a monetary regime actually embedded (and embeds) two crucial issues: a currency's value (relative to gold or other hard currency), and whether the value of the currency should be fixed or allowed to fluctuate. Exporters and import-substituting producers typically benefit from currency that has a low value relative to its reference points; those with economic interests within a domestic economy, rather than with global trading, benefit from strong currency. Fixed currency value (a gold or other currency standard) offers price stability but, in its pure form, requires government monetary authorities to maintain the reserves for currency convertibility. Floating values transfer wealth between these groups in accord with the direction of change: devaluation shifts wealth from creditors to debtors, and vice versa. Deciding on these variables strongly affects the structure and the prospects of any economy. As Bryan emphasizes, the actors in these debates continually relied on historical and contemporary particulars, rather than principles of economic theory, to shape their responses.

Argentina and Japan are especially useful cases to study for this debate. These cases were important ones for the gold standard at the turn of the twentieth century, and, through their differences, they cover a wide range of issues. At the turn of the twentieth century, Argentina seemed poised for wealth by virtue of its position in the international export of agricultural staples to Britain; however, national unity had never been one of the characteristics driving domestic politics and policies. The lack of unity reflected diverse economic interests and had important fiscal implications. Supporters of the gold standard fashioned their arguments with explicitly developmental, nationalist and protectionist goals, and they advocated supporting the peso at a value greater than the market currently bore. After extensive debate, when Argentina did adopt the gold standard in 1899, it was without a clear commitment to the crucial fiscal condition of full convertibility between the peso and gold at a fixed rate. The purpose and structure of this gold standard bore little resemblance to its idealized form.

In Japan, in addition to the debates between the value and fluctuation of the currency, Japanese trading patterns (less reliant on commodity exports, a wide range of trading partners, with Asian nations mostly on silver standards) and geopolitical military ambitions added complicated dimensions to the question of establishing a currency regime. Bryan skilfully explores the choices available to Japanese policy-makers between the gold, silver and bi-metallic standards with respect to the relative values of the metals, trading patterns and future expectations. The Japanese were trying to solve an arbitrage problem of enormous proportion. Simultaneously, and at least as importantly, Japanese arguments debated the usefulness of a gold

standard for developing its standing as a geopolitical power. Bryan focuses on the expectations of key Japanese policy-makers for being able to access western capital markets as a means for developing military power, and the implications of any monetary standards for its colonial empire (Taiwan, at the time.) Here, the debate recognizes many of the theoretical benefits that advocates had attributed to the gold standard, including access to capital at favourable rates, and demonstration of economic prowess, in the service of establishing military capability.

Bryan brings an impressive array of skills to this book. Most obviously, a scholar able to research complex technical issues in both Spanish and Japanese, and then to analyse them convincingly in English, is extremely rare. Shifting the perspective from the core to the periphery and from theory to practice raises new questions about monetary regimes. By applying the historian's methodologies and sources to questions that have largely rested in the domain of economists, he sheds new light on issues of fundamental economic importance. Finally, Bryan raises historical questions that are currently re-emerging for policy scrutiny. This book is important for historians of global economic issues, Japan, Argentina, contemporary financial economists and policy-makers.

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Andrei S. Markovits and Lars Rensmann, *Gaming the World. How Sports Are Reshaping Global Politics and Culture* (2010), xi + 345 (Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford, £20.95/\$29.95).

This is an erudite, well-researched and stimulating study. On the completion of reading the book, however, two things strike one about its title. First, for a younger audience (younger certainly than this reviewer), the word 'gaming' surely comes with particular modern connotations, few of which are addressed by the authors. This is not to suggest that their book should have focused on the world of computer games, specifically those that allow for the simulation of 'real' sporting contests. But neither should they be ignored. Furthermore, the fact that these do not warrant discussion in what purports to be a state of the global sporting world address is reflective of a more serious underestimation of the role of information technologies in the worldwide penetration of sport. Not only computer games themselves, but online discussion groups, blogs and tweets have all served to create new sports communities far removed from those which once gathered in relatively close proximity to favoured teams and hallowed physical spaces. Second, the authors declare in their opening paragraph an intention to analyse 'the continuities and changes that have characterized sports cultures in the United States and Europe' (1). So much, then, for 'global politics and culture'. In fact, the rest of the world plays what can only be described as a walk-on part in this study, worthy of mention when it has been impacted by American and European sporting influences, but largely ignored when it has not. Indeed, I would go even further and suggest that Europe itself is discussed primarily in relation to the degrees to which it has either embraced or resisted American games.

Despite the undoubted scholarship that draws upon a multitude of non-American references, this strikes a European reader as a very American book. Globalization may well be

multidirectional, at times effectively promoting cultural homogeneity, at other times finding its progress blocked, or at least temporarily halted, by local, regional and national forces of resistance, few of which are seen in a positive light. But, no matter how the process unfolds, the United States emerges from the book as a key, if not entirely successful, player. If we are in any doubt, the image on the book's front cover is of a 'soccer player kicking ball' as opposed to a 'footballer kicking a ball'.

Following a preface and acknowledgments, the book consists of six chapters and a conclusion. Chapter 1 examines the broad debates concerning sports, politics and identities. Chapter 2 seeks to map the globalization of sports cultures in relation to cosmopolitanism, nationalism and localism. Chapter 3 focuses on what the authors describe as the transatlantic transfer of sports and their cultures.

Chapter 4 tries to offer an ill-advised assessment of the so-called 'feminization' of global sports cultures, which consists of little more than a superficial account of women's football in the United States and Europe. Whatever is meant by the term, the use of the word 'influx' (157) to describe the increased involvement of women in sport is scarcely indicative of enthusiasm. On occasions such as this one is reminded of the tension between either having to critique a work for ignoring gender or else commenting on what comes across as little more than disinterested tokenism. On balance, my advice here would have been to risk the wrath of critics concerned by the absence of gender and to leave well alone.

Chapter 5 considers what the authors believe to be a 'counter-cosmopolitan backlash' (207), highlighting the politics of exclusion, racism and violence in European and American sports cultures. The choice of the word 'backlash' is interesting, implying as it does that anyone who opposes the spirit of the cosmopolitan age is necessarily a violent xenophobe. Leaving aside the fact that it is somewhat ironic to hear a cry for cosmopolitanism from authors based in the United States, which many outsiders would regard as the isolationists' isolationist *par excellence*, it is also invidious to suggest that the only way to resist the particular version of cosmopolitanism that is proposed in this book (but which would not be everyone's preferred definition) is through violence and racial and ethnic hatred. What, if anything, is so wrong with celebrating traditional games such as those organized by the Gaelic Athletic Association in Ireland as long as incomers to the country and to Irish diaspora communities throughout the world do not feel barred from participating? This may be a heavily loaded example, but no more so than the ones summoned as evidence of backlash by the authors.

Chapter 6 examines the limits of globalization but actually devotes a considerable amount of its attention to college sports in the United States – another American 'exceptionalism', to use the word regularly employed by Markovits in his accounts of the failure of association football to develop fully in the United States, but perhaps just as significantly, also another example of American isolationism, the country's own formulation of the backlash against cosmopolitanism.

Regardless of what I perceive to be the American-centred perspective that lies at the heart of this book, the authors conclude that Europe has won and suggest that nothing has confirmed the validity of Immanuel Wallerstein's world system theory 'more powerfully and lastingly than the world of sports, with the possible exception of the English language's becoming the global lingua franca' (316). That said, they suggest that the globalization of sport and the emergence of what they term 'cosmopolitanism' is demonstrated every day as people learn to speak the language of sports other than those with which they grew up. It brings some

quiet satisfaction to this reader, however, that they do so with what amounts to the equivalent of an accent. It seldom sounds quite right. The ‘soccer player kicking ball’ is a perfect example.

There is no denying the amount of secondary research that has gone into this book. One cannot deny, either, that the work is full of thought-provoking arguments, far too many to engage with as one would wish in a short review. However, I am not convinced that it goes beyond similar work by Roland Robertson and Richard Giulianotti, and in my view it suffers from some of the same failings. Whether we use the word ‘globalization’ or soften that with the concept of the ‘glocalization’, there appears to remain a tendency in work of this sort to conjure up many facts – the minutiae of the world of sports – but not enough genuine data which only solid ethnographic research can provide. By all means, let us talk about how sports help to influence global culture. But let us do this on the basis of sustained research into those local cultures that are supposedly being reshaped.

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Bethany Moreton, *To Serve God and Wal-Mart: The Making of Christian Free Enterprise* (2009), 372 (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, \$27.95).

This book explores the fusion of corporate capitalism, evangelical Christianity and political conservatism in the low-wage, low-price service economy epitomized by Wal-Mart, the discount retailer that has supplanted General Motors as the largest private employer in the United States. Moreton portrays the Wal-Mart business model as the product of a distinctive regional political economy, as the chain originated in the rural, almost all-white Ozarks region of Arkansas and expanded into an international powerhouse by adopting the ‘Sun Belt’s signature combination of government subsidy and antigovernment politics’ (31). Instead of the industrial unionism symbolized by mid-century Detroit, working-class residents of the Ozarks moved directly from an agricultural into a service economy, which the Wal-Mart corporation narrated as a small-town, ‘family values’ experience for its employees and shoppers alike. Although the rural Southwest had been a hotbed of the anti-corporate Populist revolt of the late 1800s and the anti-chain store movement of the 1920s, Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton and his successors capitalized on these same attitudes by building a megastore empire organized around the political ideology of ‘Christian free enterprise’, a potent combination of small-town values, faith in both God and the marketplace, and ubiquitous portrayals of the company as an extended family. Moreton argues that the political and cultural accomplishments of Christian entrepreneurship simultaneously laid the foundation for the Religious Right and the Sunbelt corporate economy, most notably as ‘the same areas of the country that first welcomed Wal-Mart have also come to champion “family values” as the ruling metaphor of American public life’ (72).

To Serve God and Wal-Mart joins a recent wave of scholarship that brings the political mobilization of American corporations into the debate about the demise of the New Deal order and the rise of the New Right, which for several decades has been dominated by top-down studies of Republican politicians and grass-roots explorations of the ‘backlash’ of white

working-class and middle-class voters in the cities and suburbs.¹ Most of these books seek to explain the election of Ronald Reagan by unravelling an apparent paradox that Moreton poses in question form: 'Why did working Americans enable the very antigovernment, probusiness policies that undermined their own tenuous place in the middle class?' (4). Her sophisticated and complex answer transforms the paradox into a synthesis by contending that the small-town ideology of family-values Christian capitalism appealed to many ordinary Americans – especially to the working-class women who constituted a large majority of Wal-Mart's employees and shoppers – through a deeply gendered formula that provided dignity and respect to female clerks while maintaining patriarchal authority for male executives and managers. Moreton develops this argument through a full-scale critique of the backlash thesis, especially the version popularized by social critic Thomas Frank, which holds that Republican politicians and their corporate allies successfully manipulated racial and cultural resentments to trick rural and working-class white Americans into voting against their real economic interests.² Instead, she argues that 'there is no bright line dividing hard issues from soft, economic concerns from cultural distractions' (271), and that Wal-Mart's success reveals that 'family values are an indispensable part of the global service economy' (5).

Moreton explores the political culture of Christian free enterprise in 'Wal-Mart Country' from the perspective of both the corporation and its employees. The most compelling chapters in the book trace the emergence of the evangelical ethos of 'servant leadership' (102) in the workplace environment of the retail chain, which re-inscribed traditional gender roles to resolve the tensions of the feminized service economy that was transforming small-town America. As Wal-Mart expanded to become a regional chain during the 1960s and 1970s, its formula paid low wages but provided dignity and flexibility to a workforce that was disproportionately made up of white married women who 'served' their customers on a daily basis, while corporate headquarters ruthlessly pushed the almost all-male managerial staff to breaking point but rewarded them with patriarchal authority inside the stores. Moreton argues that this model re-cast traditional 'women's work' as a corporate environment of conservative family values: 'it sanctified mass consumption; it raised degraded service labor to the status of a calling; it offered a new basis for family stability and masculine authority even as the logic of the market undermined both' (270). She also shows how Wal-Mart developed its own managerial training programmes through an alliance with smaller religious colleges in the Ozarks region, part of a broader corporate initiative that promoted 'free enterprise' by establishing business schools at hundreds of colleges and universities, funding conservative think tanks and foundations, and sponsoring international missions to solidify the neo-liberal free-trade agenda. These fascinating chapters move well beyond the particular activities of Wal-Mart to explain how the political activism of Christian entrepreneurs in the Sunbelt dovetailed with the national mobilization of corporate interests such as the Business Roundtable and the US Chamber of Commerce during the 1970s and 1980s.

The result is a valuable and timely account of the role of both corporations and employees of the non-unionized service sector in the political transformation of modern America,

¹Also see Kimberly Phillips-Fein, *Invisible Hands: The Making of the Conservative Movement from the New Deal to Reagan* (New York, 2009); Shane Hamilton, *Trucking Country: The Road to America's Wal-Mart Economy* (Princeton, 2008).

²Thomas Frank, *What's the Matter with Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America* (New York, 2004).

especially through the key insight that the architects of Christian free enterprise included many ordinary people whose ideology took shape ‘in the cultural apparatus of the Sun Belt service economy: discount stores, back offices, Christian business courses, missionary manuals, Wednesday night Bible study’ (270). But in important ways, the current historiographical obsession with explaining the origins of the New Right is too limited a framework for interpreting the political consequences of Wal-Mart’s brand of capitalism, especially given the triumph of the pro-market agenda within the Democratic party and mainstream liberalism as well. As Moreton recounts, the Clinton administration forged a successful alliance with Sunbelt Republicans and Wall Street corporations to push through the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) treaty in 1993. She also briefly references but does not interrogate the Clinton-era trope of the ‘Wal-Mart Mom’, defined as married female swing voters with conservative positions on cultural issues who nevertheless support government intervention to raise wages and provide health care and other economic benefits to working families – a constituency that never fully abandoned the Democrats or embraced an unqualified free-market conservatism. Readers will also have to look elsewhere for an account of how Wal-Mart’s movement into California and other high-wage, more unionized areas generated extensive political opposition, including from many of the company’s own workers, because *To Serve God and Wal-Mart* shifts from a thorough examination of the chain store’s regional origins directly to its international expansion without a detailed exploration of the national controversies that erupted outside of the comfort zone of Christian free enterprise.³

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Donncha Marron, *Consumer Credit in the United States. A Sociological Perspective from the 19th Century to the Present* (2009), 260 (New York, Palgrave, \$80.00).

Historical studies of consumer credit in Europe and the United States have often served as a vehicle for discussions of national character and of the ways in which the moral and cultural foundations of bourgeois society and modern individualism have been undermined or transformed by the advent of consumerism in the decades following the Second World War. Donncha Marron’s carefully researched, energetically argued and theoretically illuminating sociological study takes a different approach, one that seeks to understand the mechanisms of consumer credit less as an expression of national character than as a technology of governance.

The first two chapters analyse Progressive attempts to ameliorate the ills of pawnbroking and the rise of instalment selling in the retail sector. In both chapters Marron shows how the specific mechanisms for the granting of credit, the various modes of repayment and the

³See Nelson Lichtenstein, *The Retail Revolution: How Wal-Mart Created a Brave New World of Business* (New York, 2009).

spectrum of possible responses to default were carefully calibrated to the perceived capacity of both wage workers and the middle classes to dominate their urges and manage their anticipated income streams, although in every case these representations of the idealized liberal subject were cross-cut by concerns about the impact of race, class and gender on this capacity for self-government.

Marron's central argument in the book is that in contemporary society consumer credit has become the nexus linking the 'processes of identity formation through consumption and the continuous creation of profit and reproduction of capital' (10). The third chapter, which analyses the extension of instalment sales to an automobile industry in which profits were coming to depend more upon style and expressive consumption than productive efficiency, plays a pivotal role in Marron's argument because it is here that he forges the connection between economic change and the emergence of new forms of subjectivity and self-governance. According to Marron, 'It was the technology of the installment plan . . . which transformed the automobile from a vague wish into a realizable object of desire' (58) and which best symbolized the 1920s transition from a political rationality based on deferral and savings to one based on expressive self-realization through credit-based consumption. However, rather than viewing consumerism simply as either a rejection of the Puritan ethic of self-restraint or as an act of subjection to the constraints of monthly instalment payments, Marron argues that this generalization of instalment credit only became possible as middle-class consumers learned to manage, rather than defer, their gratification by imagining in advance how they would have to act in order to be able to fulfil the repayment terms to which they had freely contracted (57–62).

The bulk of the book is devoted to showing how the organization of the American consumer credit system encouraged and then made it possible for the self-reflective, consuming subject to mediate between his unlimited desire to consume and the resources available over time to realize these desires. For Marron, the credit card is emblematic of the separation of consumption from specific needs, its transformation into a vehicle for the actualization of lifestyle and identity, and, ultimately, the commodification of consumption itself, and he argues that the major pieces of credit and consumer protection legislation have sought less to regulate personal choice directly than to facilitate such choice by bringing greater transparency to the credit market. Chapters 6–8 focus, respectively on the history of credit reporting and consumer surveillance, the ways in which risk-based credit scoring supplanted character to become the fundamental measure of creditworthiness, and the forms of lending available to those whose credit scores exclude them from the credit market (as well as the forms of governance applied to these marginal borrowers).

While much of the literature tends to speak in abstract, generalized terms of risk and the risk society, one of Marron's goals is to combat this reification of risk. As he argues, 'Risk pricing [that is, the precise matching of credit rates to the credit profile and assumed riskiness of each individual borrower] cannot simply be reduced to some unilinear, rationalizing process of "actuarialism". . . . Rather, risk pricing coalesces from the articulation of new forms of expertise and profit with new ways within which individuals, as consumers, can be understood and acted upon as risks' (136). I was impressed here by Marron's sustained efforts to historicize risk by demonstrating the role of experts in its discursive constitution, the methodological blind spots and limitations of the concept, the ways in which risk management strategies were pragmatically deployed in response to concrete, domain-specific problems, and the contingent

coalescence of these technologies into the assemblages that have come to make up the infrastructure of the consumer credit industry.

In the concluding chapters, Marron takes up the issue of how the understanding of the riskiness of a population constructed by the credit industry has come to function as a technology for subjective self-government under conditions of uncertainty (16). While we all have credit histories that cannot be altered in the short run, Marron argues that what is important is less this financial past itself than the way we dynamically manage this risk so as to maximize our freedom, i.e. the opportunity continuously to re-forge our identity through future consumption. In more concrete terms, Marron shows how the credit toolkits marketed by the various credit rating agencies give consumers the understanding of credit scoring discourse that they need in order to make foresightful, morally resolute choices about their future financial behaviour so as to maximize their freedom to shape their future identity through consumer choice. But if the neo-liberal subject is characterized by this entrepreneurial attitude towards risk and the moral imperative to maximize consumer freedom, the catch, according to Marron, is that this freedom is illusory and itself a mechanism of governance because the ability to take advantage of credit-based consumption in the forging of the self ultimately depends upon making choices that are consistent with those norms of self-responsibility that have been defined by the credit agencies, their discourses on risk and the technologies they have developed for managing risk (194).

What one ultimately takes away from Marron's study is a genealogy of the neo-liberal subject of consumer society, a somewhat bleak, Foucauldian account of the meaning – such as it is – of freedom in the neo-liberal era, a relentless and illuminating analysis of the diverse strategies of governance at work in the credit sector, and a fresh perspective on the history of consumer credit.

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Karl Appuhn, *A Forest on the Sea. Environmental Expertise in Renaissance Venice* (2009), xiv + 361 (Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, \$60.00).

Appuhn's monograph derives from his doctoral dissertation of ten years earlier. Its first purpose is to explain how the republic of Venice used its mainland holdings to meet the vast and varied wood needs of a great woodless city and its fleets: mercantile and military shipbuilding ('forest on the sea' is how an observer described a 300-vessel Turkish war fleet in 1470), but also buildings and the piles supporting them, lagoon infrastructures, fuel for houses and workplaces, etc. Unable to import much timber or fuel from other states, from the fifteenth century onwards Venice developed a sophisticated system of laws, institutions and practices to administer and preserve forests, especially in the eastern and central provinces of its Italian dominion, which had been acquired primarily in the decades after 1400, and in Istria. Extensive woodlands were thus brought under state control, mostly between the Piave and Tagliamento river basins, and primarily oak and beech; they partly survive today. The behaviour and needs of timber merchants, local communities and institutions, and local and

Venetian landowners introduced complex variables into the destiny of mainland forestry resources. This gave rise to gaps between the intention and reality of state control, but the evolution of the republic's policies and bureaucracy in this sphere anticipated that of other European states until about 1700.

Diverse perceptions of forest resources and approaches to policy long coexisted within the governing patriciate: between a gradually more sophisticated, realistically oriented minority serving in specialist magistracies, and a majority, inclined to credit alarmed rhetorical stereotypes – later to reappear in much Venetian historiography – of perennially scant resources, voracity by users other than the state, and bad overall management. While bureaucracy developed empirical instruments of knowledge about forests (mainly quantitative surveys and closely related mapping, first narrative and then topographic and pictorial), government choices expressed overall a precocious environmental philosophy of mutual dependence between humans and nature, whose central concept was the preservation of the natural world via managerial organicism – an orientation Appuhn links to Venice's republican tradition.

Appuhn relates his case study to the broader debate over the 'relationship between the emergence of market economies backed by strong centralized states and global environmental change' (9). He argues that his research reveals a hitherto unrecognized diversity of approaches and options in European experience, as well as underscoring the valency of environmental history as global history. He compares Venetian forestry policy with that of Tokugawa Japan, which was also committed to optimizing use and husbanding limited resources in meeting escalating needs (and was much more successful in effecting reforestation), and he contrasts it with the profit-based management that characterized northern European attitudes in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that fed developing, consumption-driven commodity markets.

Appuhn's analysis is based on thorough archival research and on historiography that deals with both Venice in particular and wider ranging issues. The period covered, through to 1797, extends beyond the 'Renaissance' of the book's title (but English-language historiography typically associates Venice primarily with that period). The sequence of the six chapters is both thematic and chronological. Although these criteria do not always fully coincide in a *longue durée* approach, introductory and concluding sections in each chapter spell out the main lines of argument.

I would have liked to have seen more precision in specifying the period or date to which some of the statements, quotations and judgements refer (as well as the date of archival material cited in the relevant footnotes) and in expanding the often highly generic archival references supporting figures and tables, which could have gone into the appendix (which is valuable but includes only two pages of data).

Moreover, Appuhn sometimes diverges from mainline historiography concerning Venice, for example in post-dating serious scholarship concerning its Italian dominion and understating its achievements (13–14); in assessing phases, causes and fiscal implications of Venetians' mainland property purchases (127–8); in appraising policy attitudes towards mainland élites (278); in dating demographic trends (136); in inconsistent evaluation of the consequences of seventeenth-century state alienation of commons (177, 217); and especially in overstating the mid-eighteenth-century impact of 'serious-minded bourgeois intellectuals' from the mainland, who 'began to replace the traditional bureaucracy' and who 'imposed Enlightenment ideals of

good and efficient government ... through a series of bold administrative reforms', while 'Venetians successfully refashioned the agrarian sector of the mainland economy' (19).

I also think Appuhn could have broadened his picture in relating forest and timber policy to the overall evolution of the Venetian state and to the political culture of the patriciate. Important issues concerning the aims, methods, results, personnel and mentality of this sphere of policy are discussed with scant cross-reference to other sectors of state action. Some of these still await adequate research, but public finance, the Arsenal, fortifications and the Mint lend themselves to such a comparison and might have suggested different, less optimistic judgements. Appuhn also offers insufficient discussion of the fundamental importance for the long-term destiny of the woodlands of Venetian – primarily patrician – landowners and timber merchants, who are seldom mentioned in government documents critical of non-state users, but who were often at odds in their private capacity with the policy of the state of which they were part. The discussion of Venetians' views of nature and the thesis that they 'remained committed to an organic understanding of the world well into the eighteenth century' (11–12; 272 ff.), while mechanistic views of nature triumphed elsewhere, needs better grounding in the more general history of Venetian philosophical and scientific ideas. Last but not least, the whole nexus between forestry (and lagoon) policy and Venetian republican ideology seems more stated than proven.

With word limits to respect, priority has been given to doubts Appuhn arouses in the perspective of a fellow Venetianist, though his merits in both that perspective and broader debate are certainly much greater than my comments suggest. I feel that greater involvement of Venetianist readers in reviewing a manuscript rewritten at some remove from the main phase of archival research would have consolidated its undoubted value.

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Daryl Dee, *Expansion and Crisis in Louis XIV's France: Franche-Comté and Absolute Monarchy, 1674–1715* (2009), 259 (University of Rochester Press, Rochester, \$80.00).

For decades, a debate over absolutism during the reign of Louis XIV has raged among French early modernists. Between one extreme (absolutism was a set programme successfully imposed on the provinces) and the other (there were limitations on Louis XIV's ability to impose standardization and centralization), historians have wedged themselves with variations on the theme. In *Expansion and Crisis in Louis XIV's France*, Daryl Dee joins these scholars and addresses their contributions to the debate.

Franche-Comté is a good place to study, argues Dee, because its late entry (by conquest in 1674) into the French kingdom forced Louis XIV to coerce collaboration. Under a distant Habsburg monarchy, elites in Franche-Comté had developed a long tradition of autonomy and privilege. Only after securing their obedience did Louis XIV reward them by upholding their interests. Local elites who collaborated with their new king learned that, in exchange for their loyalty, they exercised a degree of local power and enjoyed their privileges in a stable political atmosphere.

In his well-written and tightly organized book, Dee first analyses the political integration of Franche-Comté into the French kingdom and then examines how the relationship between the provincial elites and the monarchy evolved. His particular contribution to an expanding literature on local-centre relationships in early modern France is his examination of what he calls Louis XIV's 'pragmatic opportunism'. Dee shows that absolutism was not a premeditated set of standards and policies. Louis XIV exhibited adaptability, argues Dee, by introducing venality, capitalizing on patronage, and exploiting the existing fiscal system to improve revenue flow during the war-torn years of the late reign. Thus the state apparatus became less centralized, less routinized and more improvised (14). The government did not turn from a legislative to an administrative monarchy, as James Collins has argued in *The State in Early Modern France* (Cambridge, 1995).

Nor did the ministers and officials who 'wrested control' away from elites do so by impersonal administrative command. Dee notes that success depended on effectively co-opting provincial power structures and convincing or coercing elites in place to work with them (178). He argues very convincingly for dialogue and negotiation that went on between royal officials and those Comtois elites willing to collaborate with their new monarch. However, the sub-plots and meta-dramas about coercion and negotiation are missing, especially about those less willing to jump on the French king's wagon. Dee's is a success story, one of struggle and obstacles overcome. The hero, Louis XIV, attempting to establish absolutism without a master plan and with only his adaptability and persistence, brought the stubborn provincials into line and made them realize that they wanted it all along. The provincial elites, faced with an alien political culture, needed to acculturate in order effectively to negotiate their interests.

The elites on whom Dee shines the light are those who, although resistant at the start, successfully negotiated with the king and other royal agents, thus enabling the success of Louis XIV's absolutism. This focus does not account for a host of other *officiers*, elites and people whose opposition was not followed by effective negotiation. How did other people in the province galvanize in response to the shifts in local power dynamics and how did they continue to strategize in their own interests? They did not disappear. Yet their activities, considered marginal by the newly collaborative elites and the king's officials, fade from the picture.

This is a difficulty with the archival records. Dee uses sources produced by power brokers and their willing Comtois partners as they negotiated a mutually beneficial relationship. It is not surprising that he produces a story about their success. This is why he interprets the Comtois elites as *responding* to the new situation, and having to adapt to a new political culture, and yet fails to see the king's adaptability in the same way. Louis XIV was also responding to a different political culture. To advance his own interests, the king needed to learn the vocabulary and grammar of political action in Franche-Comté just as much as elites there needed to speak the king's language.

Dee's analysis, as he contends, does show us the workings of power and politics during Louis XIV's late reign. It does, as it sets out to do, reveal the dynamics of decision-making and the system of everyday practices that characterized Louis XIV's 'pragmatic opportunism'. The book is therefore an important addition to the discussion of the nature of absolute monarchy. For the book to be truly about the relationship between the province and its new monarch, I would have liked to hear more about the workings of power and politics and

the dynamics of decision-making in the province's salons and council chambers, on its estates and in its villages. There, a complex interplay of practices tells a different story about absolute monarchy.

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Michael P. Fitzsimmons, *From Artisan to Worker: Guilds, the French State, and the Organization of Labor, 1776–1821* (2010), xi + 287 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge and New York, £55.00/\$95.00).

In his new book, Michael P. Fitzsimmons depicts the transition from a labour regime characterized by artisans organized into *corporations* to one dominated by mechanized production. Given his expertise on the collapse of the system of privilege and the reorganization of the country in 1789–91, it is scarcely surprising that this work is written from the perspective of the French state. Elegantly, yet concisely written, Fitzsimmons has made a useful contribution to our understanding of the political context of the transformation of the world of work in this turbulent era.

Fitzsimmons interweaves three main arguments. First, he argues that the abolition of the guilds in 1791 was primarily an assault on privilege that fulfilled the principles of 4 August 1789, not a desire to implement liberal ideals (56). Second, Fitzsimmons states that the tentative, contingent manner in which the measure was enacted undermined efforts to close the matter definitively for thirty years. Finally, he contends that the mechanization of production became the chief alternative to a revival of the guild system (57–9).

In addition to a brief but summary introduction and conclusion, this book is organized into four quite lengthy, chronologically organized chapters. The briefest chapter covers the longest period. 'The decline and demise of the guilds, 1776–1791' situates the guilds in the economy and society of old regime France while providing a brief account of Turgot's attempt to abolish the *corporations* in 1774–6 and Necker's reform of the world of work in 1779–81 (7–19) before getting to the meat of Fitzsimmons's account, the guilds' encounter with the Revolution. As is to be expected from the author of three masterful books on the subject, the discussion of the National/Constituent Assembly is detailed and nuanced. It focuses on political concerns associated with provisioning and public order, rather than questions of production. The second chapter explores 1792–9: the era of the National Convention and Directory. The system of licenses (*patentes*) (1791–2) gave way rapidly to ad hoc reforms linked to war production (1793–5) before more thoroughgoing attempts to re-conceive the regulation of labour and support mechanization commenced under the Directory. Chapter three investigates the very real possibility that the guilds would be restored in the period 1800–11 and delineates the role of various Paris police prefects and provincial authorities in establishing limited corporate authorities in several trades associated with provisioning. The final chapter depicts the triumph of mechanization under the late Empire and the early Restoration (1812–21) through the lens of widespread expectations that privileged bodies like the guilds would be revived with the return of the House of Bourbon. Here, Fitzsimmons pays

particular attention to ministerial changes and the political context of proposed legislative action.

Fitzsimmons effectively re-created the process by which the transition from artisan to worker was imposed from above by focusing on issues related to privilege, provisioning and public order. As a result of these interests, he made certain choices about the topics under consideration. Concentration on the actions of the state removed this study rather far from the shop floor and the labourers who made up the world of work. A few artisans – usually wigmakers, shoemakers, butchers or bakers – do speak in their own words, but, generally speaking, workers are depicted collectively as impediments to mechanized production because of their capacity for violence. I would have liked to have seen greater emphasis on the positive contributions of the labouring classes. At the same time, I would have liked Fitzsimmons to have included examples of those artisans who exported their goods, faced foreign competition or mechanized during this era, and who were thus forced to respond to the major economic changes faced by France in the age of revolution. Our understanding of the political decisions concerning the transition would also have benefited from additional consideration of the role of international competition, the contributions of manufactured products to foreign trade, and the impact of the repeated expansion and contraction of French-controlled territory on the market for industrial goods.

The choice of sources reflects Fitzsimmons's statist lens. He used Parisian police records effectively and complemented them with reports from the provinces. The archives of the Ministry of the Interior are mined deeply. Fitzsimmons makes use of some materials from departmental and municipal archives, but he relies more on the periodical press and published primary sources. Insights based on the Bruyard papers from the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam added new wrinkles to the analysis. Fitzsimmons also read widely in the relevant secondary literature, although there are some gaps with regard to labour relations in the Revolutionary era, both among recent works and French-language classics.¹

Fitzsimmons's exploration of the politics surrounding the dissolution of the guilds and the various attempts to restore them belongs in every academic library. He has enriched our understanding of the complicated trajectory by which the guild system was dismantled and stayed that way with this well-written, thoughtful account. By crossing the historiographical divides of old regime, revolutionary decade and nineteenth century, Fitzsimmons has also provided a useful research model for those brave enough to follow it.

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¹For example, Daryl Hafer, *Women at Work in Preindustrial France* (University Park, Pennsylvania, 2007); Lisa DiCaprio, *The Origins of the Welfare State: Women, Work, and the French Revolution*

(Urbana, 2007); and Camille Richard, *Le Comité de Salut public et les fabrications de guerre sous la Terreur* (Paris, 1922).

Patricia Van den Eeckhout (ed.), *Supervision and Authority in Industry: Western European Experiences, 1830–1939* (2009), x + 234 (Berghahn Books, Oxford, £56.00/\$95.00).

Ever the foreman, Van den Eeckhout determines the tone and direction for the authors of this excellent volume. The eight contributions seek to uncover and evaluate the much neglected role of the supervisor in a variety of industrial settings: British mining and printing (James Jaffe) during the industrial revolution; Catalan cotton textiles (Cristina Borderias) in the mid-nineteenth century; Ghent's textile (Peter Scholliers) and artisanal sector (Van den Eeckhout) in the same period; French industry (Jérôme Bourdieu and Gilles Postel-Viney) and British engineering (Joseph Melling) before 1914; British heavy manufacturing and car industries (Richard Coopey and Alan McKinlay) and Belgian mining (Bart Delbroek) in the mid-twentieth century. The editor prods the authors to consider two views: did the foreman add value in the sense that craft skills were complementary to technological progress and its demand for more co-ordinated effort, or did foremen operate as the instrument of capitalist authority and coerce more effort out of labour?

The editor gives a comprehensive review of the literature. While an older generation might be discouraged by the absence of recent research in the area, younger historians may not recognize the terminology and theory behind the labour process debates of the 1970s. The editor makes the argument, slightly forced, that the foreman's role was pushed aside in older studies of the struggle between capital and labour. In retrospect, what is striking is the rigidity of the early models and the attempt to impose a linear history of the rise and fall of the foreman. Van den Eeckhout rightly points out the multiple origins and functions of the foreman across space and time.

The volume unfolds in a series of case studies. I was impressed by the variety of sources used to uncover, albeit partially, the foreman's role. Scholliers uses wage evidence to describe the demand for and supply of supervisors; Van den Eeckhout exploits the archives of the Ghent Conseil de Prud'hommes, a local labour court; Coopey and McKinlay rely on the records of the foremen's mutual benefit society set up by employers. The micro-studies seem to give support to the view that foremen were craftsmen at heart. Melling does not detect a turn to Taylorist principles, engineering employers preferring the tried and tested strategy of labour management which relied on the foreman's expertise. Jaffe traces the strategy to the effort-wage bargain that was the centerpiece of British industrial relations. Developments on the continent were less clear cut. Borderias relates that the (female) spinner coerced effort out of junior workers, while in weaving the foreman took on this role.

Is the case-study approach convincing? Exceptionally, Bourdieu and Postel-Viney use a large survey of firms assembled by the Office du Travail. In the volume's most convincing chapter, the research strategy is standard regression fare. They ask what explains the hiring of foremen. They find that presence was not necessarily related to the progressive emergence of large firms. In the case of nineteenth-century France, it was a common feature of all firms. *Et voilà*: coercion trumps co-ordination. There is a lot of nuance to the findings, because of the non-linear effects of firm size and capital. This helps to clarify some of the confusion in the mechanical older literature.

Looking forward in the conclusion, the editor considers the neglected role of foremen in the developing world. Van Eeckhout throws out the challenge: can we write a

global history of the shopfloor? Undoubtedly, this volume will prove to be a valuable starting point.

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Boris B. Gorshkov, *Russia's Factory Children. State, Society and the Law, 1800–1917* (2009), ix + 216 (University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, \$60.00, paperback \$25.95).

James D. Schmidt, *Industrial Violence and the Legal Origins of Child Labor* (2010), xxiii + 279 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge and New York, £53.50/\$85.00, paperback £23.50/\$27.99).

Boris Gorshkov's account of the rise and decline of child labour in the factories of late Imperial Russia and James Schmidt's survey of the litigation that followed children's industrial accidents in the factories of the Appalachian South of the United States have a perhaps surprising symbiosis. Both books contribute to a growing international history of child labour and argue for the need to revise standard interpretations of its demise. Reading them together suggests a potentially rewarding comparative perspective. Moreover, both books use their subject as a prism to bring perspective to the societies in which children lived and laboured, and in this way they work to emancipate child labour from the ghetto of 'childhood studies' into mainstream history.

Gorshkov's account draws on standard sources: government inquiries, statistics on employment, accidents and injuries, contemporary references, political debates, statutes, and – rare but invaluable – workers' autobiographies. Gorshkov is right to emphasize, as he does in the introduction, that there is little in English on child labour in Russia. His book fills this gap.

Russian experience, it seems, has many parallels with those of other nineteenth-century industrializers, such as Britain, France and Germany. Such similarities are unexpected given the alleged 'backwardness' of late Imperial Russia. Gorshkov begins with the origins of child labour in the predominantly rural environment of the early nineteenth century, where children had worked 'from time immemorial' in agriculture and cottage industries. In this pre-industrial setting child labour was necessary and ubiquitous; thus, when factory work expanded later in the nineteenth century, the employment of children seemed an acceptable – indeed, a natural – response. Nevertheless, Gorshkov draws a clear distinction between child labour in its pre-industrial setting and in the capitalist factories of Tsarist Russia. In the countryside, children's ages and strength determined their jobs, and largely benevolent parents safeguarded their progress. Poverty could make life hard, and children fared badly in families with few adults, where they were required to shoulder grown-ups' burdens. In Russia, extended families provided a safety net if parents died or became incapacitated. Children elsewhere often had to fend for themselves, or help support their families because they were dependent on a single adult male who sometimes failed as a breadwinner. When children exhausted even extended kin, they were in jeopardy. Orphans

provided a first source of factory labour in Russia as elsewhere. Nevertheless, poverty and broken families aside, Gorshkov is adamant that the motive for pre-industrial child labour was educational, not economic.

Gorshkov's rosy account of pre-industrial work resonates with optimistic descriptions from other parts of Europe, and all are susceptible to widespread evidence that child labour in agriculture and cottage industries could be hard, that parents could be cruel, and that rural or feudal employers could be exploitative. However, he is right to emphasize the differences in scale and conditions associated with the advent of capitalist industry. More problematic is his neglect of the key distinguishing characteristic of Russia which, until the 1860s, remained a serf economy, with bonded labour extending into manorial and state factories and mines. Gorshkov trivializes Emancipation as merely mopping up coerced labour. However, many child workers were initially assigned to factories as children of hereditary serfs, which surely conditioned industrial relations and attitudes to juvenile employees.

Rapid industrialization and the movement of families from the countryside to the cities changed the relatively benign setting of child labour. Even before Emancipation, the degeneration of traditional apprenticeship and the growth of factory jobs prompted a precocious concern on the part of state functionaries anxious about labour unrest. Early attempts at regulation were ineffective, not least because there was no means to police the directives, but they put child labour on the political agenda and suggest that the late Tsarist state was not as distant, incompetent and uncaring as standard interpretations imply.

The growth of factories, especially in the textile sector, boosted the demand for labour. Children were adept at the work and preferred by employers for their cheapness and docility. At the same time, migrant families, facing higher costs of urban living, responded in their timeless way by requiring a contribution from their children. As a result, children began work at young ages, and they comprised a significant proportion of the labour force in many factory districts. In 1879–85, about 33 per cent of Moscow province's factory workers began their employment under the age of twelve and a further 31 per cent between the ages of twelve and fourteen (47).

Gone was the gentle introduction to work. Conditions could be horrific. In the large factories, children worked the same hours as adults, and the moving machinery represented an obvious hazard. In small-scale workshops, narrow profit margins intensified exploitation and there was no machinery to alleviate the physical effort. In bast-mating, for example, family work teams laboured continuously, with three two-and-a-half hour breaks for each member every twenty-four hours. They lived, slept and took their food by their frame, among the putrid bast soaked with animal urine (75). Children's health suffered. Gorshkov emphasizes, along with Schmidt, the hideous injuries that befell children working with machinery. Children were disproportionately the victims of industrial accidents, whose likelihood rose at the end of exhaustingly long shifts. However, Gorshkov is not mesmerized by the drama of crushed and torn limbs; he is also conscious of the less dramatic but endemic industrial diseases. The myriad insults of child labour are illustrated in the autopsy of a young match worker: 'his stomach was empty; his lung tissue was feeble, flabby and covered with many purulent tumors; and both his heart ventricles held coagulated blood' (81). The pathologist also diagnosed tubercular haemorrhage of the brain. Examples of abuse began to influence public opinion and ignited a campaign for protective labour legislation.

Gorshkov's account of the struggle for state intervention has a familiar cast of characters. There were do-gooders, here memorably represented by a Dr Vreden, who used economic theory to argue that child labour reduced the wages of adults. There were industrialists who contended that limiting child labour would disadvantage Russian business in international markets, result in job losses, and merely displace children into unregulated employment. There were manufacturers who supported legislation, though only to steal a march on competitors, whom they considered would be more inconvenienced by having to dispense with child employees. Although the actors, speeches and motives are recognizable from other economic contexts, the depiction of late Imperial lawmaking as influenced by public debate, economic theory and humanitarian and social concerns, takes historians by surprise. Similarly, Gorshkov's finding that the pace and timing of Tsarist protective labour legislation conformed to developments elsewhere in Europe implies that Russia was by no means the economic and social laggard that conventional accounts have suggested. In this way, Gorshkov uses the story of child labour to provide new insight into the history of nineteenth-century Russia.

James Schmidt's riveting book is much less standard. It too explores the evolving meaning of childhood by tracing the history of its modern antithesis, child labour. But it does so indirectly, almost through a glass darkly. Schmidt's lens is the litigation that took place when children were involved in industrial accidents in the southern states of the United States between the 1880s and 1920s. The court cases and the accidents that precipitated them show how the law changed the meaning of, and the toleration for, child labour.

Schmidt's argument is novel. Other historians have emphasized the law as a potent force limiting and ultimately extinguishing child labour, but their emphasis has been on protective labour legislation, on top-down benevolence by patrician law-givers. Even Gorshkov's account of 'legislative efforts' veers in this direction, whereas Schmidt's law is from the bottom up and involves employers, their workers, communities and families; it is a troubled thing, struggled over and sometimes contradictory and obscure. Schmidt also rejects economic progress as driving change. It is too easy to cast child labour as a relic of the pre-industrial economy, swept away by rising incomes and benevolent adults who use their new wealth to purchase leisure and schooling for the next generation. Schmidt, like Gorshkov, recognizes that economic development in the form of mechanized workplaces integrated with older conceptions of child labour and gave it new impetus. Yet, indirectly, economic development did pave the way for change, for it was the potent and dangerous mix of machinery and children, with its all too regular tragic outcomes, that forced a re-evaluation of both childhood and work and that in the end suggested their non-intersection.

Schmidt's book is hard to read, but not because of its reliance on case law. The legalities are clearly presented. What is hard to stomach is the catalogue of grisly industrial accidents; severed limbs, spilled blood and the smell of mortification are not comfortable leitmotifs. But they trouble the reader to good purpose, for they make clear how the suffering of several generations of children, trapped if not mutilated in industrial workplaces, changed social as well as legal attitudes and made space for childhood.

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Jane Humphries, *Childhood and Child Labour in the British Industrial Revolution* (2010), 456 (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge and New York, 2010, £57.00/\$99.00).

Jane Humphries' long-awaited survey of child labour during the British industrial revolution – based on the study of working-class autobiography – is a publishing landmark. Autobiographies were first put on the historical map in the early 1970s by David Vincent, whose *Bread, Knowledge and Freedom* (London, 1982) was based on a study of over a hundred working-class memoirs. Vincent's interest in this historical source led in time to the publication, with John Burnett and David Mayall, of *The Autobiography of the Working Class* (Brighton, 1984) – essentially a bibliography, listing the location of over a thousand autobiographies, memoirs and diaries written by working people spanning the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, since the appearance of this comprehensive bibliography, no one has risen to the challenge of working through it to see what can be learned about the lives of the labouring poor throughout the period of industrialization. Humphries has done just that, although one suspects that she has not used the sources in quite the way that Vincent had in mind. Vincent was adamant that working-class autobiographies should be approached as a literary source rather than as an accurate narrative of working-class life. They could not, he argued, be raided for their factual content or be made to stand as a representative cross-section of the labouring poor. Yet Humphries believes they can. She has systematically extracted information about the factory work performed by fathers, mothers and children, the age at which work was started, the number and duration of apprenticeships served, years of schooling and other measurable and quantifiable aspects of working-class life during the period 1627–1878. This could hardly be more at odds with Vincent's philosophy. So what has Humphries discovered? And how convincing is this as a methodological approach?

Childhood and Child Labour is in fact a multi-layered and complex book pursuing simultaneously many different strands of analysis, defying simple summary. It is possible, however, to identify two over-arching themes that run through the narrative. The first concerns change over time – a tracing of the rise of child labour during the early nineteenth century (described by Humphries as the 'crucible of the industrial revolution') and its subsequent fall. The second brings to the fore some of the continuities in the structure and function of the working-class family throughout the period in question. Both are important additions to the historical literature, although to my mind the second succeeds more effectively than the first.

At the core of *Childhood and Child Labour* lies an analysis of changes in the ages at which children started work throughout the period. In preparation for this, much of the first part of the book is devoted to demonstrating that the autobiographies Humphries has to hand may be taken as a representative sample of working-class families. Chapters seven and eight, for instance, which consider the age at which children started work and the kind of work they did, argue that industrialization 'exercised a direct effect on child labour reducing age at starting work', with child labour only declining after 1850 (207). There are some problems here, however. While the autobiographies provide unparalleled detail about the context of child labour, the actual number is relatively small. And although considerable effort is devoted to assessing the extent to which this small sample of autobiographies is representative of English society, there is little attention paid to the ways in which autobiography as a literary form

changed over the period in question. A life history written in the early twentieth century is a very different beast to one written two hundred years earlier. Over the long time-span of this study, different kinds of writers wrote for different reasons. Life-writing was inevitably influenced by prevailing literary and social trends, and the bounds of what might be discussed were enlarged enormously. Does the rise in child labour coincide with the rise of the Chartist autobiography, or other changes in the political composition or ideological convictions of their writers? At any rate, it seems that we cannot get at the way in which 'real life' changed without dwelling upon the way in which the art form that represents that reality also changed over the period in question.

These criticisms notwithstanding, it is clear that *Child Labour* is a detailed work that does far more than retell the pessimistic interpretation of industrialization. Although ostensibly structured on the thesis that industrialization created an undesirable rise in the employment of young children, the book is teeming with other themes and ideas, all helping to produce a rich and rewarding work that deepens our understanding of the working-class family in numerous ways. Some of Humphries's most interesting discoveries turn upon the different contributions that fathers, mothers and sons made to the material and emotional needs of the individuals within the family. Humphries uses the autobiographies to demonstrate (among other things): the strong identification of fatherhood with breadwinning and of motherhood with nurturing; the low, and largely unchanging, participation rates of mothers in the economy; the preference for placing sons rather than mothers in the workplace; the economic rationale that underpinned this preference; the transfer of wages from son to mother to the wider family; and the emotional bonds between sons and their mothers, fathers and siblings. It makes for a fascinating, and quite unparalleled, insight into the interior of family life. Humphries writes about her subjects with humanity and humour, producing an evocative account of the way in which families scraping by on the margins of existence eked out a living for all family members. Above all, *Child Labour* provides a powerful corrective to Vincent's assertion that these sources are best situated in the realm of literature. Here is a book with a diametrically opposed research agenda and methodology, successfully combining the qualitative and the quantitative in a highly original and convincing way. It will give any scholar working on this material pause for thought and will no doubt make an important contribution to the wider field of economic, social and family history during the period of industrialization.

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Kenneth Pinnow, *Lost to the Collective: Suicide and the Promise of Soviet Socialism, 1921–1929* (2010), xi + 276 (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, £31.50/\$49.95).

At the interpretive centre of this study is the difficult relationship between the individual and society, especially between the complexities and disorders of human subjectivity and political aspirations to knowledge and power over human bodies and selves. In Russian studies, as beyond, much recent attention has been focused on these questions of self and subjectivity. Perhaps unsurprisingly, in the study of Soviet history the focus has been mainly on the

individual subject as an *object* of power. Pinnow's book is very much in this emerging tradition (although he clearly has his favourite historians and theorists). Methodologically, therefore, this is a 'different type of social history': not mainly about individual social experience, but about 'the social as a site of governmental action' (13). In other words, this is a book about suicide 'as a problem of modern government rather than an existential drama' (4).

Suicide is an ideal object of analysis for a state believing in the power of scientific knowledge to overcome the maladies of capitalism and create a transformed socialist polity and person. The persistence of wilful self-destruction gave authoritative professionals a perfect terrain to apply tools of reason and science to the body politic and the individual body. Thus, this history of Soviet responses to suicide shows in sharp relief, Pinnow argues, the workings of 'bio-power', whereby an 'all-embracing governmental project', a 'social-science state' (11), used modern techniques to document and transform individuals in the pursuit of a more perfect social order. Pinnow's familiar (even somewhat clichéd) analytical vocabulary of panoptic power, surveillance, transparency, legibility and knowledge is used to underscore – usefully and persuasively – the essential modernity of the Soviet project.

An important related argument – though I am elaborating on suggestions and implications rather than a fully developed argument – is the continuity, and deepening, of a modern project extending from late tsarism to Stalinism. Pinnow bookends his study with backward glances before 1917 and into the 1930s. Pre-revolutionary specialists (mostly liberals, I would add) had already begun to apply scientific techniques to the study of social pathologies with the goal of knowing and healing society. In the 1920s, empowered professionals further developed this effort to monitor, regulate and improve the population. This laid the foundations for Stalinism. Contrary to once revisionist arguments about the rupture between the NEP era and Stalinism, Pinnow highlights continuity: 'the diverse forms of social investigation that arose during the New Economic Policy provided the instruments and outlooks that ultimately helped to create a state with enormous powers' (232). Some readers may find Pinnow's arguments about the Bolshevik effort to bring every individual under the 'watchful gaze' of the centralized state (43), the 'totalizing nature of Soviet politics' (142), and Stalinism as a logical outcome of the Bolshevik project to be overdrawn and uncomfortably close to the old 'totalitarian paradigm'. But the argument is neither unfamiliar – it has been a growing part of post-revisionist scholarship – nor without merit.

The book is organized on fields of practice. Chapter 1 describes the emergence of the 'social science state' and its determination to surveil and transform 'individuals and their social environment' (59). What distinguishes Soviet from pre-revolutionary practices was an apparently greater optimism that modern science could cure the pathologies nurtured by urbanization, industrialization and the instabilities of modernity. Chapter 2 looks at responses to suicide within the Communist Party itself: specifically, the mobilization of 'collective opinion' and mutual surveillance to nurture the emotionally strong, optimistic and collectivist selves appropriate to socialism.

Chapter 3 focuses on the efforts of forensic doctors to explain the causes of suicide. Pinnow's argument is familiar but important: scientific debates were fundamentally about professional authority and the sources of social knowledge. Autopsy was a defining practice and metaphor for forensic doctors: a focus on the biological body that recognized both their special skills and their contribution to the political goal of making the dark complexities of life legible. Chapter 4 examines moral statistics, a discipline that similarly treated suicide as fully

accessible to standardizing and unifying modern knowledge. The final chapter looks at suicide in the Red Army, a particularly suitable site for this totalizing epistemological and political project, one showing that the pursuit of 'information' was not for its own sake (although some Soviet professionals, Pinnow recognizes in passing, did see it this way, at great political risk) but to transform individual subjectivity and thus 'to constitute Soviet reality' itself (188).

Minor themes here are the social and political anxieties often reflected in suicide. I admit to wishing that Pinnow had paid more attention to this evidence, precisely because it could have moved his study deeper into the history of Soviet society itself, but also it might have potentially complicated his argument. This evidence points to a social mood that remarkably resembled a pre-revolutionary one: uncertainty, disenchantment, anxiety and pessimism (among many such terms heard in both Soviet and pre-revolutionary accounts of suicide). Moreover, Pinnow hints that this mood was not just a product of either the 'transition' or the compromises of the NEP, but reflected a deeper anxiety. We see this, for example, in his discussion of rising female suicide. Because suicide was gendered as a male act reflecting the stresses of life outside the home, the Soviet emancipation of women and the rise of female suicide seemed to suggest, at the very least, an unstable boundary between progress and its pathologies and, at worst, to give reason to doubt the progressive nature of modernization itself. The optimistic Soviet answer that this was all part of a transition tried to resolve these doubts with ideological faith and will. But one wonders how convinced everyone was. Certainly, evidence from other studies of the 1920s suggests a good deal of doubt and ambivalence, and not only as disenchantment with the slowness of the revolutionary transformation, but also about the harm inflicted on the individual by modern life itself.

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Charles B. Lansing, *From Nazism to Communism: German Schoolteachers under Two Dictatorships* (2010), x + 307 (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, \$49.95).

Charles Lansing's comparative study of the teaching profession in the German city of Brandenburg an der Havel begins with the surprising defeat of the Socialist Unity Party's candidate for local union chairman in 1950 – a time when the profession throughout the German Democratic Republic underwent a process of sovietization. Local teachers chose to be represented by Johannes S., who had been a pedagogue since before the Great War. To Lansing, this result is not as remarkable as it may appear on the surface. Instead, it highlights two very important characteristics of the teaching profession in the early GDR: personnel continuity across two dictatorial regimes and the failure of these regimes to forge ideologically reliable teaching staffs prepared to impart proper political values to the city's students.

The case study draws upon both German and Russian archival sources to trace the profession's history between 1933 and 1953 in order to determine what role the experience of fascism and war had upon the early East German state. Lansing argues that, in light of the fact that most pedagogues in GDR classrooms had been taught during or before the Third Reich, the 'history of East Germany must be regarded as beginning much earlier than the final collapse

of the Nazi state' (12). In view of the extent to which both states politicized education as a critical means of transforming German society, teachers, more so than other professional groups, represent a valuable means of access to the values and power of the Nazi and Communist regimes. In both cases, the teaching profession helped stabilize the regime and functioned as an integrative force between the state and citizenry.

Lansing identifies critical similarities in the ways in which the different political regimes administered the local teaching profession, both in terms of tactics and results. The city's teachers endured three purges during the Third Reich (e.g. the 1933 civil service law), but Lansing finds that a chronic shortage of qualified educators routinely undermined these attempts to co-ordinate the profession into a politically reliable and racially acceptable institution. Local union leaders and principals contested the drive to purge teachers on political grounds when schools frequently struggled to hire and retain capable instructors, a task that only grew more complicated with the approach of war. Lansing persuasively argues that the hassle of locating enough suitable teachers eventually led the local party to abandon key ideological tenets. In fact, Brandenburg schools rehired a number of teachers whom the regime had deemed politically unfit to educate the nation's youth. Likewise, the initial impact of de-nazification after the war proved negligible. Lansing points to several cases in which known members of the Nazi party continued teaching. As with the purges in the Third Reich, the ongoing struggle to find enough qualified personnel hampered the SED's attempt to produce a professional group committed to the cause of socialism.

Alongside the state's management of teachers, Lansing charts the shifts in official professional representation over time. Here, he notes a remarkable change after the war. The National Socialist Teachers' League functioned as a watchdog for the regime. In contrast, between 1945 and 1953 the Union of Teachers and Educators (GLE) acted as a genuine advocate for the city's teachers. The SED's respect for the GLE's relative autonomy enabled the union to pressure the regime to improve the material circumstances and social standing of teachers.

One of the most interesting aspects of Lansing's analysis is his conclusion regarding the social role of teachers in these dictatorships. In both cases, he identifies the profession as a key integrative force that helped to offset and stabilize local discontent. Lansing points to the lack of teachers' participation in the 17 June uprising as evidence of their stabilizing influence. The ability of teachers to adapt to the political and economic realities of authoritarianism proved to be a fundamental characteristic of the profession in Brandenburg and, as Lansing surmises, the country as a whole. Rather than serving as the fulcrum of political resistance, the pedagogues exhibited both a willingness and an aptitude to survive two distinct German dictatorships. To this end, Lansing could have said more about the nature of teaching materials and precisely what went on inside the classrooms. Such an addition would provide the reader with a greater sense of how the actual art of teaching changed – if at all.

This study will be of interest to historians of Germany and labour history, as well as to those interested in the limits of dictatorship. The inconsistent and largely ineffective methods of managing Brandenburg's teachers in both dictatorships resulted in remarkable personnel continuity from the Weimar era through to the early 1950s. The failed purges and the autonomy of individual teachers and their representative bodies speak to the constraints put

upon centralized authority in Nazi and East Germany, as both governments exercised considerable ideological flexibility in administering their respective education systems.

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Derek Hastings, *Catholicism and the Roots of Nazism: Religious Identity and National Socialism* (2010), xv + 289 (Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, £19.99/\$29.95).

Examining how Munich's 'peculiar' brand of Catholicism shaped the early years of the Nazi movement, Derek Hastings's compelling monograph contributes to three major debates. First, Hastings sheds new light on the well-studied ideological origins of Nazism. While past work emphasizes racist nationalism and cultural pessimism, this study illustrates how Catholic figures blended religious ideas with these previously recognized influences. Second, the author thoughtfully engages the vast historiography on the relationship between Catholicism and Nazism by exploring its less examined genesis. Most significantly, Hastings joins a handful of scholars who increasingly approach this hyperbolic debate with a moderate tone. Finally, the book contributes to the history of the well-documented Catholic milieu, which is a concept used by historians to assess the extensive network of Catholic associations, spiritual practices and cultural beliefs that underpinned support for the Catholic Centre Party and the *Bayerische Volkspartei* (BVP). Hastings overcomes the flaws frequently associated with this concept by approaching religious identity in a flexible manner that accounts for *völkisch* Catholics who were at odds with church orthodoxy.

In the most convincing argument of the book, Hastings contends that 'believing Catholics and their ideals played a central, and hitherto overlooked, role in the development of the Nazi movement in and around Munich' (4). He persuasively proves that early Nazism was not a movement of the small Protestant minority, as many works previously assumed, but a young party dominated by practising Catholics. The first chapter illustrates how Munich's Reform Catholic movements prior to the First World War attacked ultramontanism in favour of *völkisch* nationalism and rejected political Catholicism for more spiritual expressions of religiosity and confessional co-operation. This regionally distinctive religious history created the context for post-war 'religious Catholicism' that bitterly opposed the newly formed BVP as a political representative of Bavarian Catholics. Dissident publicists and priests, such as Franz Schröngamer-Heimdal and Dietrich Eckart, espoused radical forms of anti-Semitic conspiracy in the 'apocalyptic' aftermath of the war. They eventually created a 'Catholic-Nazi synthesis' and developed the notion of Positive Christianity to overcome denominational differences, a concept embraced publicly by the self-proclaimed 'Warrior Christian' Adolf Hitler himself (103). The author's most significant insight is that this initial emphasis on religious Catholicism secured the party's survival in its tenuous early phase by distinguishing Nazism from Munich's other anti-Christian nationalist parties.

The book's second major argument confronts more contested territory by suggesting that after the Beer Hall Putsch in 1923, National Socialism evolved into a secular political religion

with its own saints, rituals, commemorations, ceremonies and messiah figure. Hastings embraces an entire body of work on this subject, which began with Eric Voegelin's original thesis about political religion in 1938. Nazism shifted toward 'secular-liturgical' symbolism in 1923 because Hitler sought a union with Eric Ludendorff and other *völkisch* groups in the so-called *Kampfbund* to facilitate a planned takeover of local and national government. When this putsch failed, these new allies unleashed anti-Catholic tirades that reshaped the approach of the party and angered Catholics who supported the NSDAP partly for religious purposes. Furthermore, Hastings suggests that Hitler's growing messianic self-perception as Germany's saviour led him from active support for Christianity in 1923 to only tolerating it by the time he published *Mein Kampf*. Finally, this study suggests that, while the party's new secular liturgies became distant from the Christian rituals of the early 1920s, their aesthetics bore the indirect influence of Nazism's Catholic origins. While the concept of political religion is not without its detractors, Hastings makes a coherent and logical case for why National Socialism started with a strong Catholic base but grew into a movement with so much scorn for Catholicism of any variant.

This fine scholarship deserves praise for its thorough research, convincing argument and innovative contributions. However, it falls short in its failure precisely to assess how the Catholic-Nazi synthesis penetrated Munich's congregations and parishes. Hastings superbly identifies the contributions of individual Catholic priests, journalists and student fraternities to Nazism and astutely analyses their rivalry with the BVP and the 'explicitly apolitical' Archbishop Michael von Faulhaber (148). None the less, there is little indication about how mainstream Catholics received these competing claims to religious authenticity. Hastings decides against a quantitative study, but readership statistics of Reform Catholic publications, elaborate electoral analysis and membership numbers for traditional Catholic associations would have better illustrated the extent to which congregants embraced a mixture of Christian and National Socialist values. Furthermore, the book provides little indication about whether National Socialism sought the support of Catholic women or how loyal they remained to the BVP and ultramontane clergy. Despite these shortcomings, the book's many attributes render it essential reading for those interested in Nazism and innovative approaches to religious history.

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Pieter C. van Duin, *Central European Crossroads: Social Democracy and National Revolution in Bratislava (Pressburg), 1867–1921* (2009), xiii + 466 (Berghahn Books, New York and Oxford, £58.00/\$95.00).

From the French Revolution to the recent Euro crisis, the nation has proven to be a formidable competitor to rival categories of identity and loyalty. In this monograph, Pieter van Duin visits anew the contest between nation and class. His subject is Social Democracy in Pressburg/Pozsony/Prešporok, a multinational Habsburg city that, by 1950, had become the overwhelmingly Slovak Bratislava. Van Duin's excursion across this rich terrain brings back

stimulating claims and much new information, even if methodological flaws undermine the work.

Van Duin's analysis runs from 1867, when the Dual Compromise gave Hungary autonomy within the Habsburg Empire, to 1921, by which point a newly created Czechoslovak Republic had solidified its hold on Slovakia – a province carved out of the former 'Upper Hungary' that took as its capital the renamed Bratislava. The first 160 pages develop the contexts of Dualist Hungary, 'Pressburg' (as van Duin prefers to call the city before 1918), and Habsburg Social Democracy. Original research does not appear until the next part, a 170-page micro-history of the title subject between 1918 and 1919. A 75-page third part continues this research into the 1920s and provides conclusions. Throughout, the author seeks to highlight the diversity within Social Democracy, its rhetorical strategies and manoeuvres, and the back-and-forth of its engagement with the national question.

The book's overall argument is that a rising national consciousness had, by 1921, not only fractured Social Democracy in Upper Hungary/Slovakia but also crippled the movement as a political force. Magyarization (the aggressive late nineteenth-century Hungarian programme to assimilate minorities) and its resulting system of ethnic inequality worked to discredit earlier, multi-ethnic concepts of Hungarian identity, creating within Social Democracy national cleavages. The 1918 Czechoslovak revolution then hardened these divisions by inverting the ethnic hierarchy. Although quickly splintered into often hostile separate parties, Social Democracy in Slovakia was able to resurrect enough class solidarity to emerge triumphant in the first Czechoslovak parliamentary elections. But the movement soon after suffered a devastating split with the creation of a Czechoslovak Communist Party. Despite the latter's ability to maintain a multinational membership and internationalist ideology, van Duin sees this development as another triumph for the nation. Joining the party was for national minorities a 'hidden' protest against the 'ethnocratic' side of democratic Czechoslovakia as well as an 'escapist' response to the indignities of their status. The party furthermore remained internally divided along ethnic lines.

In a subsidiary argument, van Duin challenges the reputation of 'Pressburgers' as indifferent to national identity. Similarly as in his reading of Communist internationalism as mainly rhetoric, van Duin interprets Pressburger 'opportunism' (switching ethnic identity to fit different situations) as a veil behind which national culture and loyalties were shielded from Magyarization and, later, Czechoslovak oppression. This thesis is a provocative and apparently unintentional twist on Pieter Judson's argument that nationalist narratives, when read against the grain, reveal widespread disinterest in national identity.¹ Van Duin argues in contrast that historians have fallen for the 'myth' of liberal, cosmopolitan Pressburg – a myth that Slovak officials also used to justify assimilating the nationally 'amorphous' Pressburgers. Rather than from national indifference, van Duin attributes the city's relatively good ethnic relations to the economic and cultural strength of the Germans, who were consequently able to act as a buffer between the politically dominant Magyars and the marginalized Slovaks.

The high point of this study is van Duin's account of events in the city between the autumn 1918 collapse of the Kingdom of Hungary and the spring 1919 rise of the short-lived

¹Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria* (Cambridge, Mass., 2006).

Hungarian Republic of Soviets. Particularly valuable is his reconstruction of strikes led by the city's German-Magyar Social Democrats in February 1919, protests that culminated in deadly clashes between Czech soldiers and Pressburgers. Van Duin rejects interpretations by Slovak historians that the strikes were Budapest-directed or even Hungarian irredentist. He makes a strong case that the protests were mainly over local issues, such as the autonomy of the city's university. I also greatly appreciated his discussion of the strike leadership's doomed attempt to gain for Pressburg what Danzig received: autonomy as an internationalized 'free' city.

Unfortunately, the persuasiveness of van Duin's monograph is compromised by source issues, above all his failure to keep up with relevant literature. Despite its critical importance for his study, van Duin disengages from the scholarship on nationalism after the revised edition of Benedict Anderson's seminal *Imagined Communities* (London, 1991). Although his command of Slovak literature is much stronger, van Duin's sources on Hungary are also generally out of date. Particularly striking is how extensively and uncritically he draws on R. W. Seton-Watson's *Racial Problems in Hungary* (London, 1908). Hungarian primary sources, in turn, are entirely missing, a deficit that alone subverts the study's transnational aspirations. Not surprisingly, given such problems, the analysis lacks balance. Van Duin especially overstates the coercive face of Magyarization, paying little attention to its consensual policies such as educational subsidies, which were often popular with non-Magyars. His heavy reliance on a few period German newspapers lets elite voices dominate his narrative while leaving him speculating on developments behind the scenes and in the streets.

The most debilitating problem with this work, however, is van Duin's tendency to reify the nation. He writes, for example, that the national awakener František Palacký 'gave expression to the claims and aspirations of the Czech nation' (400). Van Duin's periodic attempts to nuance the issue notwithstanding, Germans, Slovaks and Hungarians appear in this story by and large as bounded groups. His references to 'denationalization', national 'renegades', 'statistical Magyars' and 'language frontiers' suggest a semi-essentialist understanding of identity. Such analytical practices, of course, are the very target of the recent scholarship on national indifference by Judson and others. Van Duin's failure to address this extensive literature thus makes it hard to accept his conclusions on the undervalued strength of national identity in Pressburg, or even that Hungarian Social Democracy broke apart in response to national oppression.

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Rita Krueger, *Czech, German and Noble. Status and National Identity in Habsburg Bohemia* (2009), x + 290 (Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, £37.99/\$65.00).

After being a 'case of historiographical neglect' for a long time, the Bohemian aristocracy has become a relative widely studied topic in recent years, in Europe as well as in the United States. One of these studies is the book by Rita Krueger to be reviewed here. She takes this social group as an example to describe the 'transition from old order to nationalized society in Bohemia' (4).

Krueger structures her book into six chapters focusing on the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In the first part she describes the aristocratic world of the eighteenth century, concentrating on the question of how flexible aristocratic identity was during this time. A second chapter is devoted to the 'challenges' of this world, i.e. the Enlightenment and its practical applications in Bohemia, the centralizing reforms of the Habsburg monarchs, and the French Revolution. From here, Krueger goes on to introduce learned societies – such as the Patriotic-Economic Society, the Bohemian Society of Sciences, the Patriotic Friends of the Arts and of such institutions as the public gallery in Prague, gardens, the Nostitz Theatre and the Fatherland/National Museum – as examples of how Bohemian aristocrats participated in the 'Enlightenment-inspired project of national reclamation' (127), arguing that aristocrats placed the sciences as well as the arts in the service of the Czech national community. The last chapter covers the first half of the nineteenth century from the *Vormärz*, touching on Austroslavism and the Slav Congress, to the events of the Revolution of 1848. In the epilogue she concludes that, 'although eighteenth-century aristocrats had celebrated a type of plural, polyglot identity that they reconciled with their claims about the Bohemian cultural space, their search for a limited and definable public arena for improvements led them to privilege the Slavic character in Bohemia as counterpart to the German imperial space and to insist on Bohemia's "essential" Czech nature' (220).

What at first hand seems to be a book on the Bohemian aristocracy is actually about national identity. And while recent research on the evolution of national identities in nineteenth-century Cisleithania by Pieter Judson, Jeremy King, Daniel Unowsky and Nancy Wingfield has shown – much to the annoyance of the activists of the national movements – that these identities were shifting and fluid, Krueger approaches the question in a different way. Aside from speaking about 'Bohemia's "essential" Czech nature' (as quoted above), a look at her language helps to clarify this point. She understands the local medium in the eighteenth century to have been Czech (8) and refers to 'the Czech- and the German-speaking populations' (33) as two separate and clearly distinguishable entities. In a later passage, she writes that gains in agriculture or forestry 'were of little use if they could not be implemented by the majority, and thus rational [sic] action demanded that these and other scientific advances be communicated in Czech' (93), and she goes on to lament the 'Bohemian nobility's apparent unwillingness, as a group, to promote Czech, and . . . their inability and disinterest in speaking it themselves' (197). There are other passages though, where Krueger qualifies these assessments. In one place she writes that the learned societies had to use the 'appropriate [language]. This was not a matter of Czech versus German, but a matter of highbrow versus low' (101); elsewhere (34) she notes that 'the Bohemian aristocracy were [sic] flexible in their language skills, using whatever language was appropriate to the situation at hand.' Nevertheless, by leaving it to the reader to decide which line of argumentation s/he thinks more plausible, the text leaves an impression of inconsistency.

These inconsistencies might have been avoided if she had taken a different approach to the aristocracy and built more directly on the results of the recent studies of the social and cultural history of this group, which focus on the self-perception and the logic of behaviour of these aristocratic actors. If one remembers that in the late eighteenth century more than 300,000 people lived on the estates of the Princes Schwarzenberg alone, and that these estates at least partly were located in regions where, until the end of the nineteenth century, people tended to

be bilingual and talked about themselves as 'locals', the unwillingness of aristocrats to favour one language might have been entirely reasonable.

There is another issue that is closely related to these logics of aristocratic comportment: their so-called 'Landespatriotismus', that is, a non-national patriotism that focuses on the Bohemian kingdom and its inhabitants whatever their 'mother tongue(s)' might be. Krueger views organized support for the Fatherland (National) Museum as exemplifying this kind of Landespatriotismus. The institution had numerous names, and it would have been very interesting to know who used which name at what time. Krueger here simplifies things when she refers in passing to the different names, but herself uses 'National Museum' predominantly. Moreover, Krueger speaks about an 'invention of tradition' (164) regarding the museum and its displays, and, drawing on the above-mentioned cultural history of the Bohemian aristocracy, one could argue that this group derived its prestige from being 'masters of tradition'. If one thinks of noble *memoria*, the invention of tradition was nothing new to them. There are passages in Krueger's book where she follows a similar line, for example when she argues with regard to the Nostitz Theatre that 'the justifications for new theatrical establishments were less about linguistic patrimony than connecting to famous and established European traditions for the good of Bohemia' (158). Therefore, paying more attention to aristocratic logics would have helped to draw a more complex picture of the evolution of national identities and would have shown these processes to have been quite contingent.

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Stephen Jacobson, *Catalonia's Advocates: Lawyers, Society, and Politics in Barcelona, 1759–1900* (2009), xvi + 336 (University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, \$52.00).

Among the distinctive professional groups that have contributed to the making of the modern world, lawyers have been without doubt the largest and most influential, constituting the bulk of the nineteenth-century new liberal political class. Lawyers were also active agents, even more so than engineers, in the process of commercial, financial and technological expansion that was an integral part of the Industrial Revolution. They were an enterprising force behind the promotion of cultural modernity in the building of the liberal nation. Despite their historical prominence, lawyers have been under-studied as a professional group of historical agents. Stephen Jacobson's book attempts to fill this gap by looking at the role played by the Catalanian bar in the long nineteenth century.

Catalonia and Barcelona are an adequate setting for a case study of this nature. From an economic and social perspective Catalonia was the most dynamic region in the context of nineteenth-century southern Europe. It boasted one of the earliest processes of industrialization in Europe and the first that matured within the Spanish territory. Barcelona, the regional capital, sponsored an ambitious programme of urban reform that eventually placed the city at the avant-garde of European urban modernization. Among the selective social groups that made possible all these developments lawyers were pre-eminent.

While Jacobson understands the importance of institutions and regulations, his analysis of the Catalonian bar concentrates on individuals, associations, ideas and actions. The goal of his book is not to describe the institutional history of Catalonia's law system, but rather to analyse the role played by lawyers in 'major phenomena of the long nineteenth century: enlightenment, revolution, liberalism, industrialism, and nationalism' (3). To this end, Jacobson organizes the content of the book following the chronological sequences of the major ideological, political and cultural shifts of the long nineteenth century. He begins by considering the modernization of the profession in the age of Enlightenment, turns next to the contribution of lawyers to the liberal revolution and the building of the liberal state, and ends with an analysis of the transformation of the professional group into a powerful conservative corporation that contributed to the making of Catalan nationalism. Jacobson's main argument, which underlies the entirety of his book, is that lawyers can be studied as an independent influential group of active agents who promoted historic change. The author challenges classic functional approaches by social theorists that portray lawyers as mere intermediaries of the dominant social groups at any given moment of the history of modern Europe and America. Beyond the analysis of an influential professional group, this book provides an invaluable contribution to the study of essential transcendental aspects of Spanish and Catalan incorporation to modernity, such as the building of the liberal public sphere, the emergence of modern professionalism, and the construction of a new Catalan national identity.

According to Jacobson, the emergence of the modern profession in Catalonia occurred in the eighteenth century, at the same time as in the most advanced regions of Europe. During that period the Catalonian bar abandoned its attachment to the urban nobility, grew in numbers and influence, embraced the principles of Enlightenment as they applied to legal thought and reasoning, and, above all, 'adopted the lineaments of a professional ethos suited to the needs of private practitioners representing middle-class clients in a competitive environment' (29).

Jacobson discusses the active role of Barcelona lawyers during the first half of the nineteenth century in successive episodes of the Spanish liberal revolution as it worked to establish a constitutional system. Lawyers participated in the revolution as an elitist group whose presence was more noticeable in the ebullient atmosphere of public forums and bureaucratic spaces than in the tumultuous surroundings of the barricades. In the new liberal state the profession again grew in numbers, prestige and agency.

Over the course of the century, once the liberal state reached a sufficient level of stability, lawyers in Catalonia, Spain and the rest of Europe started to shed their revolutionary pasts to become a conservative force in society. This conservatism manifested itself in two ways within Catalonia. First, the leading figures of the profession abandoned the idealistic promises of the revolutionary era and took over such established institutions as the College of Lawyers and the Academy of Jurisprudence, and associated themselves with the dominant political, economic and cultural clientele. The second dimension to this conservatism involved the legal tradition itself. As was the case in other parts of Europe during the second half of the nineteenth century, Barcelona lawyers reinstated a new commitment to the principles and practices of Catalan legal traditions; they 'were convinced that Catalan law was well suited for the industrial age' (135). Conservatism, however, did not mean a return to the past, an interruption of historical progression or a negation of the achievements of political

modernization. As in the rest of Europe, this conservative turn was an outgrowth of, rather than a challenge to, liberalism. Jacobson sees it as the natural consequence of the maturity of the industrial capitalist society in Catalonia. The final steps of this historical evolution were the gradual corporatization of the profession and the involvement of lawyers in the rise of political Catalanism.

Catalonia's Advocates is an impressive piece of scholarship argued with intellectual sophistication; it is meticulously researched, well organized and clearly written. Like any piece of research, its findings and conclusions are not exempt from controversy and flaws. One major question arises when placing the history of the Catalan bar in comparative perspective. Some years ago Daniel Dunan argued that the English bar was an exception to the usual generalizations about the 'professional revolution' of the nineteenth century. Its distinctive professional characteristics developed far earlier; it was at once more competitive and of higher status; and, thanks to these and other differences, it escaped outside intervention, particularly from parliament, with remarkable success. Was the Catalan bar as exceptional as the English when compared with other bars within the new Spanish liberal state? This question remains unanswered due to what I see as the main flaw of Jacobson's study: its almost exclusive concentration on the history of Catalan lawyers.

Notwithstanding these minor issues, Stephen Jacobson has written an innovative and challenging book that will change the way we think about the historical function of professional groups in modern history.

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Michael Ezekiel Gasper, *The Power of Representation: Publics, Peasants and Islam in Egypt* (2009), x + 294 (Stanford University Press, Stanford, £50.50/\$55.00).

The Power of Representation examines a critical but still under-researched period of Egyptian history, the last quarter of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, when Egypt – though still formally part of the Ottoman Empire – was under British occupation. While the years after the defeat of 'Urabi in 1882 are often characterized as a time of political quiescence and withdrawal, Gasper shows that this was in fact a time of great florescence of public debate, especially on economic and social questions. More than this, he contends that Egyptian intellectuals, stung by the foreign occupation and responding to the waning influence of the Ottoman Empire, sought to define the concept of 'Egyptian-ness' and set about constructing the basis for a distinctive Egyptian nationalism.

In pursuing this argument, Gasper gives centre stage to the Egyptian peasant, a subject familiar from the work of Nathan Brown, Timothy Mitchell and others. Drawing heavily on the conceptual insights of Dipesh Chakrabarty and Talal Asad, and Zachary Lockman's work on the Egyptian worker in the nationalist imagination, Gasper charts the shift in the image of the peasant from the unchanging timeless fallah of the 1870s to a vision in which the peasant became integral to the new modern collective identity and whose moral reform and political inclusion were necessary for its realization.

Noting that representation is a 'disciplinary act' (6), Gasper sees this transformation as a political project of an emerging middle class, variously termed the '*afandiyya* or proto-bourgeoisie. Embodied in the 'civilized urbanite', this group put forward its new vision of the nation by creating an 'illusion of societal consensus' (3) through which it arrogated to itself the right to speak for the nation and sought therefore to displace the traditional landowning classes and the Turko-Circassian elite in particular. Couched in terms of a civilizing process and the imperative of scientific agriculture, in this vision the peasant became central to the national imagination, even if it was not the agent of its construction.

Gasper bases his analysis on a close reading of contemporary literature and press, regarding the latter as a particularly dynamic vehicle of public expression during the period, which was 'instrumental in laying the foundations of Egyptian political modernity' (16). Skilfully bringing together the work of well-known writers such as 'Abdallah al-Nadim, Ya'qub Sannu' (publisher of *Abu Naddara Zarqa'*) and 'Ali Yusuf, as well as some less familiar figures such as Zaki 'Awad, Gasper impressively constructs a vibrant and dynamic picture of the public debate surrounding the pressing social issues of the day: the problems of indebtedness and loss of land among the peasantry, changing social relations in the city, the Europeanizing habits of the young urban classes, and the perceived threat of foreign interests. But this is not all. Gasper seeks to take to task the model, already under pressure, of competing Islamic and secular influences, by asserting that this new emerging discourse was set wholly within an Islamic modernist framework (15) and employed an idiom of Islamic sensibility and moral-political categories, with Jamal al-Din al-'Afghani and Muhammad 'Abduh, as ever, setting the tone.

This is an ambitious undertaking. The changing image of the peasant, the rise of the middle classes, improvements in agriculture, and the integral role of an Islamic modernist discourse all brought together to explain the emergence of a new Egyptian identity might at times seem too neat a fit. However, Gasper's thesis still raises important questions regarding the interplay between these different economic, cultural-religious and political discourses. The emphasis accorded to Islamic terms of reference, for example, prompts some consideration of the position of Copts and Jews in Egyptian society, something of which Gasper seems partly aware, but which he does not specifically address (66). Further, while the study is principally concerned with the politics of representation, greater attention to political and economic circumstances and the institutional context might have made the discussion more compelling. Gasper is aware of the importance of political economy (200) and of some institutions, at least the Giza Agricultural School (171), but we are not given a clear picture of either those forces that emphasized agricultural over industrial development or, apart from the world of journalism, the professional infrastructure, which sustained the rising middle class of lawyers, engineers and teachers. This 'objective reality' is generally assumed, but never really addressed in detail, and Gasper's account is particularly thin in the final lunge to the line of the 1919 Revolution.

There are some signs of under-writing in the text. At times ideas are raised but not adequately followed up (such as Sri Lanka [64] and the English Civil War [65]), while elsewhere (such as with the discussions on *ifrat/tafrit*) there is a repetitive quality in the discussion. On occasions, material that perhaps would have better been relegated to a footnote breaks the flow of the argument. There are also some inaccuracies: a confusion between Mahmud Haqqi and his better known nephew Yahya Haqqi (210); Mehmet 'Ali was not a Mamluk (17); and the Taqla Brothers did not go on to publish *al-Ahram* because they were

already doing so (78). Some assertions, such as that concerning the attitude of historians to Dinshaway, are rather too categorical (211).

More irritating are the typographical errors and inaccurate transliterations, which mar the text and the bibliography, particularly the persistent confusion between the initial hamza and 'ayn (Mehmet 'Ali being a particularly jarring example). Arabic terms are probably overdone and the translations are not always accurate (compare 'love of the homeland' [39, 60]). The notes are also occasionally inconsistent and untidy. On many occasions, references to the secondary literature are not sufficiently precise, with citations missing necessary page numbers, too vague or even incorrect (e.g. 231 n9, 250 n18, 252 n69).

These distractions aside, *The Power of Representation* brings together very rich source material drawn from the emerging public space in Egypt and the political, social and economic debates that occupied it. If Gasper may have attempted to do too much, he has nevertheless raised some provocative questions about the reconfiguration of political identity and the construction of nationalism in Egypt at a critical period in its history.

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Max Weiss, *In the Shadow of Sectarianism: Law, Shi'ism, and the Making of Modern Lebanon* (2010), x + 356 (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, \$39.95).

Through an original and innovative analysis of French and Lebanese archival material and a serious engagement with local intellectual production, Max Weiss has written an insightful book about the Shi'i milieu in early twentieth-century Lebanon. The result is a book that takes the reader beyond moralizing along the lines of the 'good Muslim/bad Muslim' binary opposition into a more complex terrain, one that shows the wisdom, struggles, possibilities and constraints of the protagonists to carve a place for themselves in the newly created Lebanese nation-state.

The prologue provides the theoretical framework for the book: sectarianism, religion, and modernity in a colonial setting. Here Weiss argues convincingly that sectarianism is a set of practices and a historical process rather than an 'impermeable condition' (15). He distinguishes between sectarianism from above – the colonial actions – and sectarianism from below – the people's responses and own initiatives in the colonial setting. This distinction brings dynamism to the book, destroys popular conceptions of the colonizers as the only agents of change and the colonized as passive victims, and correctly shows us the many grey zones of colonialism. Finally, he writes of sectarian modernity – 'the institutional and discursive sets of practices and conventions that authorize, strengthen, and perpetuate the politics, culture and affective ties of sectarian politics and modes of identification' (18).

The first chapter provides us with an account of how European travellers, colonialists and locally produced sources perceived the Shi'a in *Jabal 'Amil*, which is located in present-day South Lebanon. The image that is presented through the eyes of these non-Shi'a (often Europeans) is that of a community characterized by xenophobic habits, marginality, illiteracy, severe isolation and almost complete economic deprivation. The author does a great job of

providing different sources to draw attention to these stereotypes, though he does not explain why the Shi'a were presented in this way in the first place. Did these descriptions resonate with aspects of the actual situation in *Jabal 'Amil* or did this stereotyping do 'a particular job'? I find this question relevant, as there seems to be a shift in the image of the Shi'a as ignorant and dirty to one of a community that the colonial power believed deserving of attention in the early 1920s.

Chapter 2 presents a debate among Shi'i religious scholars about the proper forms of ritual mourning, while chapters 3–5 – the core of the book – revolve around the creation of the first Shi'i institution in Lebanon, the *Ja'fari* Personal Status Court in 1926. In these three chapters Weiss shows us – based on a wealth of primary sources – the internal Shi'i debates over the very meaning of personal status generated by the prospect of creating such an institution. Here he rightly concludes that the genealogy of Shi'i activism in Lebanon goes back to at least 1926, and that the time between 1926 and 1959 – when the Lebanese Shi'i leader Musa Sadr appeared to have mobilized Shi'a along communal lines and where most academic books start their stories – was anything but idle time for an oppressed community. Through detailed readings of the court material he also shows us how members of the Shi'i community began practising to be sectarian – how, for instance, disputes over twenty to thirty centimetres of land considered sacred helped establish what it meant to be Shi'i and what belonged to this sense of 'Shi'i-ness' in the newly created Lebanon.

Chapter 6 is divided into two parts. In the first section Weiss discusses the most important Shi'i revolt against the colonial power, the Bint Jubayl Revolt in 1936. Here he argues that, rather than framing this uprising as a nationalist revolt against colonialism, we should instead focus on the rarity of this form of political action and the local socio-economic conditions and the timing of the revolt, which coincided with *'Ashura*. The second section introduces us to two Shi'i religious activists, Jawad Mughniyya and Muhammad Jawad al-Chirri, whose importance has been overshadowed by the rise of the Lebanese Shi'i leader Musa Sadr. Here Weiss breaks new ground by shifting attention to the dynamism that existed prior to the arrival of Musa Sadr in Lebanon in 1959. The question that perhaps other historians need to answer is why, despite all the activism Weiss describes, most Lebanese Shi'a in the community perceived the time prior to Sadr as one of isolation, disorganization and lack of leadership. In other words, what were the historical conditions that enabled Musa Sadr to succeed in mobilizing the Shi'a as a community while others did not?

There is one theoretical concern that I wish to raise here. In the prologue the author argues – drawing on the work of Ayesha Jalal – that there is a need to de-link religion and sectarianism because, although they overlap at times, conflating the two does not advance our understanding of sectarianism, sectarian modernity or religious modernity (18, 62). While I agree with the author that sectarianism is not necessarily about what is popularly understood as religion, the distinction between the two confronts us with several dilemmas. For one thing, it contributes to an essentialization of religion. In other words, which practices are to be considered as religious (or cultural, as the author suggests) and which ones are to be considered sectarian? And who is to decide? Moreover, and related to this, we need to be aware that such distinctions presuppose problematic assumptions about intention, that is, about whether or not the motivations of the actors are 'truly' religious. In the book Weiss carefully reconstructs the complex ways in which Shi'a came to be sectarian, and we see religious discourse playing a large role in the formulation of their self-presentation, their demands and some of their internal

debates. The distinction between religion and sectarianism contributes to the reproduction of popular perceptions of both while neglecting the political consequences of this distinction. In addition, it sidelines the hegemonic voices in Lebanon and elsewhere, who in fact insist on the distinction between the two and who consequently denigrate each other as hypocrites and ultimately unfit citizens of a moral nation. While, as Weiss convincingly shows, sectarianism does not necessarily rest on theological differences (in this case between Shi'ism and Sunnism), 'sectarian entrepreneurs' do creatively use memories of such differences to produce and reproduce sectarianism. As such, sectarianism is deeply embedded in the category we call religion.

However, my concerns on this point do not by any means diminish the value of the book, whose constant reference to the parallels between sectarianism in Lebanon and elsewhere in the global south make this essential reading for anyone interested in both colonial history and Shi'i society and politics in the modern Middle East.

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