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ARTICLES

GERMAN ZEITGESCHICHTE FROM THE MARGINS: THE POST-WAR EXPERIENCE OF NAZI VICTIMS

STEFANIE SCHÜLER-SPRINGORUM

About ten years ago, a remarkable film had a short moment of glory in German cinemas: *Lore*, by Australian director Cate Shortland. It is set at the end of the Second World War and describes the journey of Lore, the eldest daughter of a *Schutzstaffel* (SS) family, through Germany – from the Black Forest to the island of Föhr in the North Sea. When her parents flee, the young girl, a fervent member of the Bund Deutscher Mädel (League of German Girls), is instructed to take her younger brothers and sisters to her grandmother in North Frisia. The film tells the story of this march across a destroyed country and through a destroyed people in deeply impactful images: displaced persons and forced labourers on their way home, bombed-out civilians, Jews, former prisoners of war, Nazis, and concentration camp survivors all crowd the streets, stations, villages, and forests. The film is about violence and rape, trauma and death. By the end, when the siblings arrive on the island, the taciturn Lore has profoundly changed: in the final scene of the movie, at her grandmother's, she throws up the rich, hearty food across the festive dinner table. And she does so at the very moment when her grandmother asserts that the Germans in general, and Lore's parents in particular, are of course not to blame for everything that is happening *to* Germany now – and although she leaves it open as to who really *is* to blame, it is not hard to guess.

In the meantime – in the past decades, that is – this tenacious post-war assertion has been refuted, deconstructed, and also morally condemned time and again; the literature on it could fill a library.

This article is the edited version of my Inaugural Lecture as Gerda Henkel Foundation LSE/GHIL Visiting Professor, given at the LSE on 28 Nov. 2023.

Until recently, contemporary history research in the Federal Republic of Germany focused on the years between 1933 and 1945: initially its pre-war history, then the persecution of Jews and others, until gradually – with increasing distance – its post-war history came into view. This research, however, was primarily directed at Lore and her family, including her parents and siblings, and not with the same intensity at the people she met along the way. The famous ‘coming to terms with the past’ and the historiographic assessment of this process were – and for good reasons – primarily a German–German debate in which other perspectives were only included very slowly and very late. Moreover, I would argue that this process is still far from complete.

We have so far heard just as few of the voices of the men and women vagabonding on German streets in 1945 as we have of those men and women who migrated to the country in the following decades, and who came for very different reasons; they helped to build up Germany’s destroyed economy and with it a welfare state that is still considered the foundation of its ‘functioning democracy’ today. To bring the experiences of former victims of Nazism into the foreground is thus a venture in its own right. But apart from mere ethical considerations and blunt historical curiosity, I would eventually like to ask what all this could mean for the historical narrative of the Federal Republic as a democratic success story.

I will concentrate on four victim groups: Jews, Sinti and Roma, Eastern European forced labourers, and German homosexuals. I will leave out other groups, either because there is little to no research so far on their post-war experiences, or because, as is the case with political opponents of the Nazi regime, this would lead us far into the post-war politics of the two German states during the Cold War. For the sake of focus, I will concentrate on West Germany, more or less until the 1960s – and for the sake of legibility, I will apply a different structure than is normally used when analysing victim groups, since to list their experiences one by one would run the risk of repetition, as well as a certain *déjà vu*. Because surely anyone reading the title of this article will share the same understanding that the post-war experiences of former Nazi victims were quite awful. So what exactly is new here? I am convinced that by reading these experiences together, we will see a panorama that has so far

been amazingly absent from the leading interpretations of post-war German history. In order to facilitate this, the article is divided into three main sections: homecoming/homemaking, compensation, and persecution.

But first, let us take one last look at the overall context and at Lore's family. From *their* perspective, the central message of April 1945 was: 'We have lost'. The war was over and so was the dream of the 'thousand-year Reich', of world—or at least European—domination, including a colonial and settlement empire in the eastern part of the continent. Furthermore, the country was occupied and now partly ruled by people who, until a few weeks ago, had been deemed 'sub-humans'. Worse still, millions of freed slave labourers and prisoners of war could now move freely through the country. All in all, the German delusion of superiority had suffered a severe blow, and Hannah Arendt on her visit to Germany in 1950 was not the only one who was repelled by the general self-pity with which the people bemoaned their own fate and rejected any responsibility for other victims.¹

At the same time, it was precisely at *this* historical moment, one of a crushing catastrophe, that antisemitism and racism acquired a new, additional function in the post-war period, which explains their continued virulence. Never before has Germany—to quote Hannah Arendt again—been as antisemitic as it was *after* National Socialism, after the war, in defeat.² The same can probably be said for racism: Germany after 1945 was no less antisemitic and racist than before, and one could venture the thesis that both antisemitism and racism functioned at that moment as a kind of glue between one phase and the next. To put it simply: both resentments served to maintain a sense of superiority in at least one area—that of national identity. Being German was not bad in itself, neither individually nor collectively; quite the opposite, as the racist disdain towards 'marauding' liberated Eastern Europeans or 'haggling' Jewish displaced persons on the Munich black market seemed to prove—not to mention the plundering and raping Red Army soldiers from the 'depths of the Russian

¹ Hannah Arendt, 'The Aftermath of Nazi Rule: Report from Germany', *Commentary* (Oct. 1950), 342–53.

² Hannah Arendt and Dolf Sternberger, *Ich bin Dir halt ein bisschen zu revolutionär: Briefwechsel 1946 bis 1975*, ed. Udo Bermbach (Berlin, 2019), 100–1.

steppes'. In the end, these resentful gazes provided confirmation that not everything had been wrong. The alleged threat of Bolshevism had now become a reality, at least in the East. And one should not underestimate the additional dynamic that the Cold War would create, which kept this older ideological conglomerate of political, racist, and antisemitic resentments alive and well.

These resentments can be quantified in the nowadays all-too-familiar language of surveys. The US military government's 1947 report on the continuity of antisemitism used refined categories, though unfortunately without defining them. According to the report, 18 per cent of the Germans surveyed were considered 'radical anti-Semites', 21 per cent 'anti-Semites', another 22 per cent 'racists', 19 per cent 'nationalists' (without specifying what was meant by this term), and only 20 per cent largely free of these resentments, which together are probably best described by the term *völkisch*. The authors of the report identified several 'interrelated causes' for this, but pointed out first and foremost:

an overall decline in German morals, accompanied by an increase in nationalism and anti-'foreigner' sentiment in general. The deterioration of material conditions of life and, perhaps even worse, the continued bleak prospects have served to increase resentment of all types as well as the aggressive expression of it. Anti-Semitism is merely one aspect of this complex.³

So this was the ideological, mental, and very real landscape of the Allied occupation zones in which the recently liberated victims of German persecution were trying to find their way through devastated lands, looking for surviving relatives and a way home or abroad. In the early summer of 1945 around 8 million former prisoners in concentration camps, POW camps, and slave labour camps of all sorts, together with millions of expellees from the former German territories in the East, demobilized soldiers, and fleeing Nazis, were living in the more or less lawless space of a largely destroyed country. We should take two additional facts into account that are hardly ever

³ Office of Military Government for Germany (OMGUS) Research Branch, 'Anti-Semitism in Germany, Berlin 1947', reprinted in *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung*, 6 (1997), 353–9.

mentioned in contemporary reports and their later interpretations. First of all, most of the survivors were young or very young, and second, the great majority of them had been abducted (or recruited) from rural areas, from small towns and villages; they mostly belonged to the lesser-educated groups or had not received any education at all. This was especially the case for Jewish or Sinti and Roma youngsters whose persecution had begun before the outbreak of the war. Many of them were the only survivors of their families. Probably all of them had witnessed at least one of the many end-of-war massacres in which German troops and civilians had killed those still in their power at the last minute. To name but one of the best known of these infamous events: the so-called 'Hare Hunt of Celle' of April 1945 saw SS men and part of the population of the town of Celle in Lower Saxony chase down a group of concentration camp survivors who had managed to escape from a train during a bombing raid, killing at least 170 of them.⁴ All over Germany there had been an extreme outpouring of visible violence during the last months and weeks of the war. For sure, this potential for violence did not simply disappear in a few months – and nor did the fear of it.

What did change was the fact that by May 1945, Germany was completely occupied. Given the circumstances, the Allied forces did their best to somehow control the chaos on the streets. Since there was no lack of camp facilities in the country, they decided to concentrate the non-German population, which was now summarized under the new term 'displaced persons' (DPs). For the small Jewish minority among them, a quarter of a million, the DP camps meant first and foremost security under the direct protection of the Allies, especially in the American Zone. Due to persistent antisemitism among members of some of the other DP groups, such as Ukrainians or Lithuanians, it quickly proved necessary to establish Jewish DP camps, and this made it easier for them to cope with the liminal situation they found themselves in – geographically, physically, and psychologically. In addition, this collective coping mechanism was probably an important factor which ultimately softened the long-nurtured wish

⁴ See the section on 'The Massacre at Celle' in Daniel Blatman, *The Death Marches: The Final Phase of Nazi Genocide*, trans. Chaya Galai (Cambridge, MA, 2011), 265–71.

for revenge. As early as June 1945, the president of the Central Committee of the Liberated Jews stated that if Jews avenged themselves, they would ‘descend into the lowest depth of ethics and morality to which the German nation has fallen during the past ten years. We are not able to slaughter women and children . . . we are not able to burn millions of people.’⁵ Their vengeance, some survivors very outspokenly conceded, was to have Germans working for them in the camps, cleaning, cooking, repairing—and it is to the historian Atina Grossmann that we owe an impressively multilayered account of what she calls ‘close encounters’ between Jews, Germans, and the Allies in occupied Germany.⁶

Since the history of the Jewish DP camps is probably the best researched area in the field of German-Jewish post-war history, I will confine myself to these few remarks, insisting once again on the specific transitional situation that only existed thanks to American protection. For example, only weeks after the founding of the Federal Republic, the German police started their brutal raids on the black market in Munich’s Möhlstraße, a practice that continued well into the 1950s.⁷ The market had long been a favourite object of antisemitic projection, which was then extended to the few Jews and other ‘Easterners’ who had stayed behind after most DPs had left the country by 1948, and who needed to find a new place to live. To quote one of many similar-sounding documents of the time, in this case from the Bavarian city of Bamberg, where local officials wanted to get rid of the few Jewish DPs who intended to make a home there: their rejection, they wrote, had nothing to do with antisemitism, but merely with the fact that the population had to be protected against people ‘who feel comfortable in dirt and vermin and therefore constitute a dangerous site of infection’.⁸ In view of this reality, it is hardly surprising that the

⁵ Quoted in Frank Trentmann, *Out of the Darkness: The Germans, 1942–2022* (London, 2023), 90.

⁶ Atina Grossmann, *Jews, Germans, and Allies: Close Encounters in Occupied Germany* (Princeton, 2007).

⁷ Lilly Maier, ‘Der Schwarzmarkt in der Möhlstraße und die Münchner Polizei: Eine Untersuchung im Spiegel der Akten der Polizeidirektion München’, *Münchner Beiträge zur jüdischen Geschichte und Kultur*, 12/1 (2018), 35–51.

⁸ Quoted in Grossmann, *Jews, Germans, and Allies*, 258.

few hundred remaining Jewish families in the last DP camp, Föhrenwald in Bavaria, refused to move out until 1957.⁹ At that time, around 15,000 Jews were still living in Germany – a very small and often poor group who had not been able to emigrate and were either dependent on state welfare or – especially the younger former DPs among them – tried to earn a living as unskilled labourers in bars, laundries, and other small businesses.¹⁰

For the minority among the minority – that is, those Jews who had been living as Germans among Germans until or during the deportations – the situation had been fundamentally different from the outset. Most German Jews had survived in so-called mixed marriages, and therefore had at least partial connections to their neighbours which they could sometimes build on, or professions they could take up again.¹¹ Especially in large cities such as Hamburg, Berlin, or Frankfurt, it was also possible to turn to the Jewish communities that were being rebuilt or to the city administrators, who during the immediate post-war years were anti-Nazis, at least at the top.¹² Nevertheless, they were all too aware of the virulent antisemitism of their own neighbours, having experienced it since 1933. They understood its subtle language and had no illusions about the state of the country. Time and again, for example, there are cases of Jews refusing to accept the special assistance they were entitled to, be it food or housing, for fear of provoking antisemitism. And in fact, it took what today is often called resilience and courage to assert one's rights as a Jew in West Germany. In his impressive moral history of the Federal Republic, Frank Trentmann highlights this in an example from Offenburg in southern Germany: when a secondary school teacher showered a returned concentration camp survivor with a bucket of classic antisemitism in a bar and loudly regretted that this person had not gone up in smoke, various state institutions refused to

⁹ Alois Berger, *Föhrenwald, das vergessene Schtetl: Ein verdrängtes Kapitel deutsch-jüdischer Nachkriegsgeschichte* (Munich, 2023).

¹⁰ For a general overview see Michael Brenner, *After the Holocaust: Rebuilding Jewish Lives in Postwar Germany*, trans. Barbara Harsha (Princeton, 1997).

¹¹ Maximilian Strnad, *Privileg Mischehe? Handlungsräume 'jüdisch versippter' Familien 1933–1949* (Göttingen, 2021).

¹² See Anthony D. Kauders, *Democratization and the Jews: Munich, 1945–1965* (Lincoln, NE, 2004); Tobias Freimüller, *Frankfurt und die Juden: Neuanfänge und Fremdheitserfahrungen 1945–1990* (Göttingen, 2020).

hold him accountable. It took a story in the weekly news magazine *Der Spiegel* to bring about legal proceedings. Antisemitism, one can only state time and again, lived on in post-war pubs and living rooms – and only became a problem when the media took a critical look at it.¹³

But what about those survivors who returned to their homes in small towns or villages where everyone knew everyone else? In the years immediately after the war, if you wanted to recover your apartment or furniture from your neighbours in the larger cities, you could rely on the Allies and the city administration. In the villages, however, this could trigger a tangible conflict, as you had to literally snatch the goods from your former neighbours. Even if local authorities did provide supplies, this was usually based on a compromise: you did not get back all of your furniture (let alone the piano!), and not your whole house, but only the upper floor – while the Nazis who had occupied it after your family's deportation continued to live downstairs.¹⁴ And since many returnees were often the only Jews in the village, most of them agreed to a compromise or completely gave up what was due to them. Anna Junge is currently working on a study of German Jews in the post-war period in northern Hesse, for which she has compiled impressive material from the archives. She emphasizes differences between generations and genders: while younger survivors often managed, by force and stubbornness, to retrieve what was due to them and then left Germany, very few of the older ones (most of whom had survived in mixed marriages) dared to testify against their former tormentors. In order to remain in the village, they needed to adapt: Jewish men, for example, rejoined the traditional associations, while women generally had no choice but to remain silent and avoid attracting attention.¹⁵

Much of what has been said so far connects the surviving Jews' fate to that of the surviving Sinti and Roma and the former forced labourers.

¹³ Trentmann, *Out of the Darkness*, 192–3.

¹⁴ See the remarkable graphic novel Stefanie Fischer, Kim Wünschmann, and Liz Clarke, *Oberbrechen: A German Village Confronts its Nazi Past. A Graphic History* (forthcoming with Oxford University Press). For a general overview see Stefanie Fischer, Nathaniel Riemer, and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum (eds.), *Juden und Nicht-Juden nach der Shoah: Begegnungen in Deutschland* (Berlin, 2019).

¹⁵ Anna Junge, 'Unerwartete Nachbarschaft: Jüdisch-nichtjüdisches Wiedersehen im ländlichen Nachkrieg', (PhD thesis, Technische Universität Berlin, 2024).

Due to their age and persecution, it was extremely difficult for them to build a life for themselves without formal education in a country where official qualifications were – and still are – more important than elsewhere. In the case of the Sinti and Roma, the fundamental hostility they faced was furthermore based on centuries of stigmatization and persecution, which had intensified in Germany since the late German Empire in the context of ‘modern’ crime prevention.¹⁶ During the Weimar Republic, German Sinti and Roma were registered throughout the country; from 1926 onwards, the records of 14,000 individuals, including children over the age of 6, were brought together in a central card index along with photos, fingerprints, and ancestry charts.¹⁷ After 1933, this mixture of police practice and criminal biology was combined with the racist thinking of Nazi biopolitics, which meant that the Sinti suffered from several measures at once: forced sterilization and psychiatrization; persecution as so-called ‘asocials’, ‘work-shy’, or as ‘hereditary criminals’, which could in some cases lead to them being killed in the euthanasia programme; and finally, exclusion under the Nuremberg Laws and ultimately murder in Auschwitz.¹⁸

The card index, which grew to 30,000 names during the Nazi period, was preserved and continued to be used in the Federal Republic.¹⁹ This has to be kept in mind in order to understand why the few surviving Sinti’s reaction to the liberation was completely different to that of their

¹⁶ See Marion Bonillo, ‘Sinti und Roma im Deutschen Kaiserreich 1871 bis 1918: Eine Minderheit im Fokus der verschärften “Zigeunerpolitik”’, in Oliver von Mengersen (ed.), *Sinti und Roma: Eine deutsche Minderheit zwischen Diskriminierung und Emanzipation* (Bonn, 2015), 49–70.

¹⁷ Eveline Diener, *Das Bayerische Landeskriminalamt und seine ‘Zigeunerpolizei’ (1946 bis 1965): Kontinuitäten und Diskontinuitäten der bayerischen ‘Zigeunerermittlung’ im 20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt am Main, 2021), 41–65.

¹⁸ Michael Zimmermann, *Rassenutopie und Genozid: Die nationalsozialistische ‘Lösung der Zigeunerfrage’* (Hamburg, 1996); Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, ‘Apotheose des Rassismus? Über das Verhältnis von Rassendenken, Rassenpolitik und Nationalsozialismus’, in Manuela Bojadžijev et al. (eds.), *Rassismusforschung: Handbuch für Wissenschaft, Studium und Praxis* (forthcoming; Baden-Baden, 2024).

¹⁹ For the blatant continuities in state policies see Gilad Margalit, *Germany and its Gypsies: A Post-Auschwitz Ordeal* (Madison, WI, 2002), 65–82; Sebastian Lotto-Kusche, *Der Völkermord an den Sinti und Roma und die Bundesrepublik: Der lange Weg zur Anerkennung* (Berlin, 2022), 47–59.

Jewish peers. Given their long experience with state representatives of all kinds, they were afraid of medical personnel, uniforms in general, and trucks and trains, so that they often fled on foot from hospitals and reception camps in order to avoid registration. As a result, they had absolutely nowhere to go, no communities – which is why there are hardly any facts, figures, or reports from that period. The Allies did not understand at all why they behaved the way they did.

In the few interviews about this period, which have been analysed by Anja Reuss, survivors unanimously describe themselves as completely disoriented, driven by and filled with fear: ‘And then we were outside, we didn’t even dare go out on the street, we were still afraid that they would catch us . . . we were no longer able to think properly’.²⁰ In search of family members, they too eventually returned to the places from which they had been deported. Many German Sinti had already been settled in impoverished ghettos on the outskirts of the cities in the 1920s, and they now tried to reclaim their homes – in vain. Such was the lot of a young girl who returned to her family’s pitch in the town of Neubrandenburg only to discover that local farmers had converted her family’s wagons into pens for chicken and pigs. The local mayor, who was of course aware that she and her family had been deported to Auschwitz, did not assist her in any way.²¹ The utter desolation of the Sinti survivors led them to form even closer-knit and more segregated groups. They went where they could meet other Sinti and only gradually, by word of mouth, became aware of the full extent of their catastrophe.

Only a little support was provided to them by other Nazi victims’ associations or by the first municipal contact points – partly due to lack of papers (in Berlin, for example, support was linked to proof of residence), and partly due to old prejudice. In the end, it depended on the officials in charge. In particular, those among them who had been persecuted themselves, as Jews or political opponents, often called for better treatment and granted small sums of money or benefits out of compassion or care – while the rest reacted in more or less the same way as before 1945.²² And since there were no superordinate facilities

²⁰ Anja Reuss, *Kontinuitäten der Stigmatisierung: Sinti und Roma in der deutschen Nachkriegszeit* (Berlin, 2015), 63–80; quotation on p. 76.

²¹ *Ibid.* 77.

²² Margalit, *Germany and its Gypsies*, 83–122.

similar to the DP camps for Jewish survivors, surviving Sinti were forced to somehow reintegrate directly into everyday life in Germany. Their attempts often failed. Even those who had already led sedentary lower middle-class lives for generations had to start from scratch. The restlessness expressed in the files and interviews in Anja Reuss' book, the frequent changes of work and residence, the alcoholism and – again and again and above all – the utter poverty, are striking.²³

Utter poverty seems to have linked the Sinti to the group about whom we know least: the approximately 250,000 to 300,000 former forced labourers who, for whatever reason, remained 'stuck' in Germany and mostly lived in the poorer districts as 'homeless foreigners'. But they were by no means invisible. Their story has met with so little historiographical interest because the continuities between the Nazi era and the Federal Republic have so far been considered more from the perspective of the perpetrator society.²⁴ Moreover, in this case the continuities – or what Rita Chin, Maria Alexopoulou, and others have called 'racist knowledge' – are still part of our present.²⁵ In the spring of 1945, around 6 million forced labourers were living on German soil; by autumn, almost 5 million had already left the country for their homelands. The problem was that not all of them wanted to return home – perhaps they had become emotionally attached to Germany, or perhaps the persons they had been emotionally attached to in their places of origin were no longer alive; perhaps they had collaborated with the Germans and could no longer return, or perhaps they did not want to live under Communist rule. Or perhaps they were too ravaged in body and soul to want anything at all. According to a letter from the Polish former forced labourers' organization, many had 'lost their health due to the hard work and malnutrition', and some had also lost their courage to face life.²⁶ Natascha Wodin, to give only one example,

²³ Reuss, *Kontinuitäten der Stigmatisierung*, 139–51.

²⁴ For a discussion of continuities and differences in the policing of foreign workers see Ulrich Herbert, *A History of Foreign Labor in Germany, 1880–1980: Seasonal Workers, Forced Laborers, Guest Workers* (Ann Arbor, 1990), 186–92.

²⁵ Rita Chin et al. (eds.), *After the Nazi Racial State: Difference and Democracy in Germany and Europe* (Bloomington, 2009); Maria Alexopoulou, *Rassistisches Wissen in der Transformation der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in eine Einwanderungsgesellschaft (1940–1990)* (forthcoming with Wallstein Verlag).

²⁶ Alexopoulou, *Rassistisches Wissen*, 147.

tells in her book *She Came from Mariupol* the story of her mother, who committed suicide in the 1950s at the age of 36 after years of forced labour, illegality, isolation, and endless hostility.²⁷

In 1951, up to a quarter of a million former forced labourers were still living in West Germany, although an unknown number might have arrived after the end of the war. This vagueness is based on the fact that local authorities no longer wanted to recognize DPs as victims of the Nazis and simply claimed that they were foreigners ‘who came here later’—which in many cases was an outright lie, as Maria Alexopoulou has proved in her analysis of the foreigners’ files for the city of Mannheim.²⁸ Thus the memory of forced labour was also consciously erased, even though (or perhaps because?) it had been present everywhere—in towns and in the countryside, in factories and families.

After the war, the continued presence of former labourers on German soil was resisted at all levels of government and with common racist arguments. An allegedly high crime rate, a negative attitude towards ‘honest work’, and a tendency towards ‘asociality’ were repeatedly cited.²⁹ But in reality, many were simply too old or too ill, both mentally and physically, and had thus not been able to move on to the United States or Canada. Only after a massive international campaign was this group of non-returnees given the status of ‘homeless foreigners’ in April 1951.³⁰ This status did not grant them any political rights, but it put them on an equal footing with German citizens in many areas. They now had free choice of place of residence and almost equal access to the labour market—only itinerant trade was expressly excluded. At the same time, however, they were still subject to the *Ausländerpolizeiverordnung* (APVO) of 1938, so that despite their privileged status, they were de facto at the mercy of the ‘alien police’, who made life difficult for them with every trick in the book. For example, even though officially they could freely choose where to live, the local police refused to issue them residence permits. If they were allowed to stay,

²⁷ Natascha Wodin, *Sie kam aus Mariupol* (Reinbek, 2017); published in English as *She Came from Mariupol*, trans. Alfred Kueppers (East Lansing, MI, 2022).

²⁸ Alexopoulou, *Rassistisches Wissen*, 130–4.

²⁹ Ibid. 110–15.

³⁰ Anna Holian, ‘A Missing Narrative: Displaced Persons in the History of Postwar West Germany’, in Cornelia Wilhelm (ed.), *Migration, Memory, and Diversity: Germany from 1945 to the Present* (New York, 2017), 32–55, at 36.

they did so in the most appalling circumstances. In Mannheim, for instance, former DPs were often housed until the 1960s in old forced labour barracks, while single men lived in a former bunker. Many seem to have lived out their lives in welfare institutions such as homeless shelters or men's homes, and the term 'asocial' abounds in the files. In other words, National Socialist biopolitics continued not only in the language of state institutions, but in everyday life.³¹ The integration of the 'homeless foreigners' into the West German labour market has hardly been researched to date. Sometimes it is described as almost non-existent, sometimes as somewhat positive, mainly thanks to the job opportunities offered by the Allied armed forces.³² In the 1960s, their stories in German archives increasingly start to merge with those of the new foreigners arriving in the country. This again points to another important topic: the privileged status of the 'homeless foreigner' theoretically also entitled them to preferential treatment when applying for German citizenship. By now, it will presumably come as no surprise that this request by the Allies was deliberately forgotten by German institutions. Nor did the authorities consider it necessary to notify former forced workers of the possibility of acquiring a new, better status, which meant that most did not apply for it in the first place or later had to fight for it in vain.³³

However, this had serious consequences with regard to the question of compensation. Although German citizenship was not a prerequisite for this, it was extremely helpful when applying as a racially or politically persecuted person under the 1953 Federal Compensation Act. Compensation for foreign forced labourers was postponed until after peace treaties had been concluded with their countries of origin, and finally came at a time when most of them had already died. Individual claims, even if only for lost wages, were almost always unsuccessful; a female former slave worker in Mannheim, for example, was told that she would first have to provide proof of her exact working hours during the war years.³⁴ In general, German courts denied that forced labour had been 'racist' persecution, but rather maintained that workers had been recruited for their professional aptitude. Incidentally,

³¹ Alexopoulou, *Rassistisches Wissen*, 137–67, 170–5.

³² *Ibid.* 107–9, 168–9.

³³ *Ibid.* 139–40.

³⁴ *Ibid.* 180.

similar arguments are found up until the 1960s in court rulings on compensation for Sinti and Roma: their persecution had not been racially motivated either, but had merely served to 'prevent crime' or had been carried out for 'military reasons' (in order to prevent espionage), as the Federal Court of Justice ruled in 1956 with regard to the first mass deportation of German Sinti in 1940 to the area of the later Belzec death camp in south-east Poland.³⁵

Expatriated as a group in 1935, Sinti and Roma benefited from the support of the Allies until 1949, who, on request, issued them with 'concentration camp ID cards' and thereby documented both their persecution and their German citizenship. However, after 1949 (and sometimes even before), these cards were withdrawn by the German authorities unless 'real proof' could be provided. For example, Otto Rosenberg, who had survived Auschwitz and other camps as a teenager, was now expected to prove that the rest of his family had been gassed there, or that his mother, who had died of exhaustion after liberation, was really buried there.³⁶ A similarly brutal approach was taken to pension applications. Anja Reuss tells us of a Sinti woman whose baby had been murdered in Auschwitz and who herself had been severely harmed by her imprisonment in a concentration camp. She had to submit to a medical examination every two years in order to maintain her claims, and when her menstruation resumed, her pension was reduced.³⁷ Frank Trentmann's apt remarks about compensation proceedings before German courts in general also apply to all these cases: 'Individual experiences of persecution were reduced to percentage points of disability and resulting benefits'³⁸ – if acknowledged at all. These were humiliating and often retraumatizing experiences for all victims. In the case of Sinti and Roma, the dividing lines between persecution, compensation, and prejudice were to a certain extent fluid: for example, the central police files developed during the Nazi

³⁵ The full text of the verdict is reproduced in Tilman Zülch (ed.), *In Auschwitz vergast, bis heute verfolgt: Zur Situation der Roma (Zigeuner) in Deutschland und Europa* (Reinbek, 1979), 168–71. See also Hans-Joachim Döring, 'Die Motive der Zigeuner-Deportation vom Mai 1940', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 7 (1959), 418–28.

³⁶ Reuss, *Kontinuitäten der Stigmatisierung*, 93.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 107.

³⁸ Trentmann, *Out of the Darkness*, 183.

era and other persecutory Nazi records served as credible evidence in compensation proceedings. There was also a tendency to pay out compensation not in money, but in material goods.³⁹

Such examples once again show how fundamentally important Allied protection had been for Jewish survivors. For example, under US pressure, Jews were allowed to (re)acquire German citizenship, and by 1952, 70 per cent of the Jewish DPs still living on German soil had made use of this option.⁴⁰ From the summer of 1945 onwards, they were provided for fairly well, especially as private Jewish organizations also supported the survivors to the best of their abilities. And, as is well known, the Luxembourg Agreement of 1952 determined that payments amounting to billions were to be made to the State of Israel and the Jewish Claims Conference for the benefit of victims. In addition, the Federal Republic of Germany committed itself to the individual restitution of assets – a process that was notoriously slow to begin and has not yet been completed. Individual compensation claims, however, followed a similar pattern and were a bureaucratic and psychological nightmare for the victims.⁴¹ These procedures may appear somewhat less brutal or cynical in comparison to the groups of victims I have already discussed, but it is hard to imagine how they would have turned out without the watchful eye of the USA or the dreaded ‘world opinion’ monitoring the German treatment of Jews after 1949.

Domestically, on the other hand, it was clear and unmistakable that the care for Jewish DPs, the Luxembourg Agreement, and the compensation payments and restitutions were lending new impetus to anti-Jewish resentment – a new theme that was nonetheless easily linked to old antisemitic notions.⁴² It is therefore hardly surprising that after the founding of the Federal Republic, this completely

³⁹ Margalit, *Germany and its Gypsies*, 83–122.

⁴⁰ Atina Grossmann, ‘From Victims to “Homeless Foreigners”: Jewish Survivors in Postwar Germany’, in Chin et al. (eds.), *After the Nazi Racial State*, 55–79, at 76.

⁴¹ Svenja Goltermann, ‘Kausalitätsfragen: Psychisches Leid und psychiatrisches Wissen in der Entschädigung’, in Norbert Frei, José Brunner, and Constantin Goschler (eds.), *Die Praxis der Wiedergutmachung: Geschichte, Erfahrung und Wirkung in Deutschland und Israel* (Göttingen, 2009), 427–51.

⁴² Werner Bergmann and Rainer Erb, *Anti-Semitism in Germany: The Post-Nazi Epoch Since 1945*, trans. Belinda Cooper and Allison Brown (New Brunswick, NJ, 1997), 225–71.

unconcealed aggression was unleashed against a Jewish representative of the compensation proceedings. Philipp Auerbach had survived Auschwitz and served as the Bavarian State Commissioner for Racially, Religiously, and Politically Persecuted Persons between 1946 and 1951. He sometimes used his position to grant payments according to need rather than according to administrative procedure. After being driven out of office by an antisemitically motivated court case, he committed suicide in prison in 1952.⁴³ Hans Habe, a journalist who had returned to Germany from exile, commented bitterly: ‘Thus a . . . controversial but innocent man became the first victim of Nazi justice seven years after our victory over Hitler’s Germany.’⁴⁴

Here, as in other cases, anti-Jewish media agitation shaped the public treatment of Nazi victims. A particularly popular topic in the first post-war decade were the Jewish *Greifer* (‘catchers’)—men and women, forced by the Gestapo to cooperate, who tracked down Jews in hiding in Berlin and handed them over to their murderers. The best known of them, Stella Goldschlag, was sentenced in a Soviet trial in 1946 to ten years in a camp and, after her release, to another ten years in prison in West Berlin. Of the hundreds of Berlin Gestapo members, only sixteen were held responsible for the deaths of more than 55,000 Jewish Berliners. Even though some were tried in court, all of them were released before 1950.⁴⁵

This was not an exception, but a pattern. As the work of Philipp Dinkelaker has shown, more Jews accused of betraying other Jews under Gestapo pressure were tried in the former capital of the German Reich than were German perpetrators. Shortly after the war, the last head of the Reichsvereinigung der Juden in Deutschland (Reich Association of Jews in Germany; formerly Reichsvertretung der deutschen Juden, or Reich Representation of German Jews) was imprisoned and then executed by the Soviets, and at least fourteen former Jewish auxiliaries were held in Gulag camps or received lengthy prison sentences of twenty-five years. In the trials of subaltern Jewish auxiliaries of the

⁴³ Hans-Hermann Klare, *Auerbach: Eine jüdisch-deutsche Tragödie oder wie der Antisemitismus den Krieg überlebte* (Berlin, 2022).

⁴⁴ Quoted in Grossmann, ‘Victims’, 72.

⁴⁵ Doris Tausendfreund, *Erzwungener Verrat: Jüdische ‘Greifer’ im Dienst der Gestapo 1943–1945* (Berlin, 2006).

Berlin Judenrat (Jewish Council) in the 1950s, the city's courts based their sentences on antisemitic preconceptions, as Philipp Dinkelaker sharply observes: 'Cementing the *Völkisch* image of Jews as a collective with shared interests, individual survival to the detriment of others was understood as a base motive, a particularly reprehensible betrayal that aggravated punishment.'⁴⁶ As we know, this directly contradicts German judicial arguments when the fate of the perpetrators was at stake.

I am fully aware that it is probably neither historically nor ethically convincing to place the cases of Auerbach or the Reichsvertretung auxiliaries under the rubric of 'persecution'. Of course, there is a fundamental difference between a constitution that deems the 'dignity of man' to be 'inviolable' and a state that enacts racist laws, pursues deadly antisemitic policies, and denies disabled and mentally ill people the right to live. These trials took place in a democracy and in a state of law. However, as we have already seen, below the officially applicable norms there was a wide margin of interpretation—the famous German administrative *Ermessensspielraum*—in which members of victim groups were treated quite differently from other Germans.

As already shown, there was a fundamental continuity between the persecution of Sinti and Roma in the Nazi state and their treatment in the first years of the Federal Republic—the only major, but decisive, distinction being of course that they were no longer subjected to genocide. Immediately after 1945, the same German authorities who had dealt with them during the war endeavoured to circumvent the Allies' protective measures. Without identity papers, they could be—and often were—deported across the border to the East. After the founding of the Federal Republic, this policy became more radical and they were monitored and regulated in accordance with the APVO, which meant that they could be banned from staying in one place, but also from 'wandering around'. In short, the Sinti and Roma had once again become objects of so-called crime prevention, and the police only needed to get used to the new terminology: *Landfahrer* (vagrants)

⁴⁶ Philipp Dinkelaker, "'Worse than the Gestapo'? Jews Accused of Collaboration during and after the Shoah' (PhD thesis, Technische Universität Berlin, 2022), 236. Dinkelaker's thesis will soon be published by Cornell University Press.

instead of *Zigeuner* (Gypsies), who continued to be recorded separately in police statistics.⁴⁷ Only during the 1970s can we witness the beginning of a slow change, thanks to incipient activism.⁴⁸ Internal police guidelines from 1970 still record a biological understanding of crime, despite relabelling: 'Travellers are persons who move around the country with vehicles due to an ingrained tendency to wander. The temporary or permanent establishment or maintenance of a dwelling does not necessarily invalidate the person's status as a traveller.'⁴⁹ In 1979, the genocide of the Sinti and Roma was publicly acknowledged for the first time by a representative of the German government at a commemorative event, and only in 1982 was their special registration finally abolished. But the history of trauma and the denial of life chances that affected Sinti and Roma even after the period of persecution has not yet been written.

This can also be said about the last group of victims I wish to discuss: homosexual men. They were persecuted not on racial grounds, but in the context of Nazi biopolitics, which aimed to eradicate everything that stood in the way of creating a 'healthy *Volkskörper*'. In addition to this, a homosexual panic among masculinist organizations such as the SS caused its leader, Heinrich Himmler, to intensify persecution. In contrast to the groups discussed so far, homosexuals could theoretically avoid persecution by trying to disappear into the 'national community' and live as inconspicuously as possible. However, the desire to denounce them in those years set narrow limits. During the Nazi era, tens of thousands were convicted under Paragraph 175 of the German Criminal Code, which was tightened in 1935. Approximately 15,000 homosexual men were sent to concentration camps, where they were often on the lowest rung of the prisoner hierarchy, tortured cruelly by the guards, and despised by most of their fellow inmates. Thousands died in the concentration camps, and some were only released from prison long after May 1945.⁵⁰ But, in contrast

⁴⁷ Margalit, *Germany and its Gypsies*, 56–82.

⁴⁸ Silvio Peritore, 'Politische Emanzipation, Erinnerungsarbeit und Gedenkstätten', in von Mengersen (ed.), *Sinti und Roma*, 185–200.

⁴⁹ Lotto-Kusche, *Der Völkermord an den Sinti und Roma*, 54.

⁵⁰ Burkhard Jellonnek, *Homosexuelle unter dem Hakenkreuz: Die Verfolgung der Homosexuellen im Dritten Reich* (Paderborn, 1990); Burkhard Jellonnek,

to the other victim groups discussed here, they at least had homes to go back to, sometimes also families and friends. After short-lived attempts to gain recognition as Nazi victims, which mostly failed due to their exclusion by victims' organizations, it became clear after the founding of the state that the law would not be changed.⁵¹ On the contrary, the Federal Republic explicitly retained Paragraph 175 in its 1935 Nazi wording until 1969, and, as is well known, it was not completely abolished until 1994.

This led to a phenomenon that I would like to call a persecution frenzy, without which the picture of the post-war period would not be complete. In only twenty years, between 1949 and 1969, around 50,000 sentences for homosexual behaviour were handed down in the Federal Republic—more than during the German Empire and the Weimar Republic combined. In addition, no compensation was granted to these victims of Nazi persecution, neither for the time spent in prison nor for such dramatic procedures as castration, which some homosexual men had undergone during the war years to avoid being sent to a concentration camp.⁵² Like so many other persecuted people, most of the surviving homosexual and queer victims of National Socialism never lived to receive state recognition of their suffering and often died impoverished, isolated, and in poor health—not only because of the physical harm they had suffered during the Nazi era, but also because of repression in the post-war period, which was only marginally milder. Even castration continued to be seen as an acceptable alternative to preventive detention once convicts had served their sentences. It seems easy to prove that social homophobia was also radicalized *after* the Nazi era, presumably not least due to

‘Nationalsozialistische Homosexuellenverfolgung in Stadt und Land: Die ländlich strukturierte Pfalz, das städtische Würzburg und das Ballungszentrum Düsseldorf im Vergleich’, in Alexander Zinn (ed.), *Homosexuelle in Deutschland 1933–1969: Beiträge zu Alltag, Stigmatisierung und Verfolgung* (Göttingen, 2020), 49–59.

⁵¹ See e.g. Susanne zur Nieden, ‘Die Aberkannten: Der Berliner Hauptauschuß “Opfer des Faschismus” und die verfolgten Homosexuellen’, in Frei, Brunner, and Goschler (eds.), *Die Praxis der Wiedergutmachung*, 264–89.

⁵² Alexander Zinn, ‘“Gegen das Sittengesetz”: Staatliche Homosexuellenverfolgung in Deutschland 1933–1969’, in Zinn (ed.), *Homosexuelle in Deutschland*, 15–48.

propaganda and socialization *during* the Nazi period: expert opinions, psychiatrists, criminologists, and, finally, the media provide ample illustrative material.⁵³ On the other hand, it is much more difficult to reconstruct the consequences for those affected. These included the destruction of social and family ties that often followed from a conviction, or the loss of a job or of educational opportunities (convicted students were expelled from universities, for example). In short, homosexual men faced the fear of social disgrace as well as the psychological pressure of permanent disguise – the fury of denunciation had by no means subsided in the 1950s and 1960s and remained a very effective tool of threat and blackmail until 1969.

To conclude: during a discussion of contemporary history from the margins on a panel at the 2023 German Historians' Convention, Julia Noah Munier emphasized that the persecution of homosexuals took place not so much on the margins, but right at the heart of the 'success story' of the Federal Republic – and not only in social terms, but also ideologically. It was precisely the heterosexual 'model of marriage and family', she argued, which, as the nucleus of the now democratic society, promised salvation through purification.⁵⁴ At the same time, of course, it required a negative counter-pole – namely, the 'homosexual youth seducer', the different variants of which Frank Biess has recently presented to us in his fascinating book *German Angst*.⁵⁵ But fear was by no means the only German emotion of the post-war period, and at least from the perspective presented here, it was not even the dominant one. If we consider the persecution furore against homosexuals, and add to it – which I have *not* done here – the written outpourings of hatred against communists, and later against the so-called '68ers and the German terrorists of the 1970s, in which people fantasized about every conceivable way of killing their enemies; if we consider these

⁵³ Julia Noah Munier, *Lebenswelten und Verfolgungsschicksale homosexueller Männer in Baden und Württemberg im 20. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 2021).

⁵⁴ See the conference report by Lukas Sebastian Sievert and Andreas Charis, 'HT 2023: An den Rändern des Erfolgs – Segregierte Geschichten der (frühen) Bundesrepublik', *H-Soz-Kult* (25 Nov. 2023), at [<https://www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/fdkn-140099>], accessed 3 Feb. 2024.

⁵⁵ Frank Biess, *German Angst: Fear and Democracy in the Federal Republic of Germany* (Oxford, 2020).

two quite violent resentments – homophobia and anti-communism – together, then we find an eerie contrast to the radiant satisfaction of the economic miracle up until the 1970s: a subcutaneous but passionate need for punishment that at times came to the surface, coupled with a contempt for Sinti and Roma as well as Eastern Europeans that was fed by an astonishingly unbroken sense of superiority. By contrast, it is more difficult to get to the heart of feelings towards Jews in the post-war period, not least because such feelings were made taboo by the Allies. They were as varied as antisemitism is, and in the post-war period they were nourished by resentment of the living proof of German guilt, as well as envy – which could easily turn into philo-semitic admiration. However, all these groups were united by the majority society's feeling that they should *not be there*. Even though this was the most taboo topic in post-war Germany, 37 per cent of respondents to a 1952 survey agreed with the statement that it would be better not to have Jews in the country, while 44 per cent were 'undecided'. At least up to the 1960s, there was a (silent) majority of Germans who preferred not to share their country with their Jewish fellow citizens.⁵⁶ In this respect, Munier's thesis should prompt a discussion of what functions antisemitism and racism had for the *centre* of society in the early Federal Republic, and not just how they played out on its fringes, where a few hundred thousand people were treated badly for a while.

This question is important for various reasons. The narrative of the unsightly continuity of the elite is incomplete if it is written only as a history of ideology and mentalities, or as an institutional history, without taking into account the perspective of those who paid a very real price for it. As Frank Biess and Astrid Eckert have recently postulated, the narrative of continuity as a whole changes when the various forms of exclusion are systematically considered.⁵⁷

In contrast, this perspective brings into view factors that have so far played no role at all in the different narratives of the Federal

⁵⁶ Werner Bergmann, 'Sind die Deutschen antisemitisch? Meinungsumfragen von 1946–1987 in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland', in Werner Bergmann and Rainer Erb (ed.), *Antisemitismus in der politischen Kultur nach 1945* (Opladen, 1990), 108–30, at 115.

⁵⁷ Frank Biess and Astrid M. Eckert, 'Why Do We Need New Narratives for the History of the Federal Republic?', *Central European History*, 52/1 (2019), 1–18.

Republic, be it as a success story or recently in more self-critical variants.⁵⁸ In a remarkable essay, Lauren Stokes points out that there were not only a quarter of a million former forced labourers in the post-war years of the Federal Republic, but that new immigrants came into the country *before* this situation was regulated by the ‘guest worker’ treaties.⁵⁹ Given the great need for labourers, foreigners were tolerated even without papers, while the official rhetoric was very different, as we have seen. At the local level, the authorities turned a blind eye when entrepreneurs employed foreign workers illegally, without residence or work permits. The famous discretionary power of the administration could thus work both ways. Economic requirements and the ability to work were decisive here – making it possible to undermine the racist practices that were so vehemently upheld against others, mostly weaker persons, at the same time. But ‘racist knowledge’ also served to keep the costs of labour low: accommodation in barracks, twelve men to a room, hardly any washing facilities, and so on. Even if one knows this in theory, accounts of the living conditions of foreign workers until well into the 1970s should be compulsory reading in every German history lesson. After all, it was not only their labour that made the economic boom possible, but also the living conditions that were thought to be acceptable for them on racist grounds.

Foreign workers were at the same time well aware of these historical roots, as there existed another kind of knowledge in Germany: that of those ‘stranded’ after the war, of course, but also that of many of the new arrivals. After all, Italians, Greeks, and Yugoslavs came from formerly occupied countries where the SS and Wehrmacht had committed many outrages against civilians. They quickly learned to relate their own experiences to the (war) knowledge about ‘the Germans’ that was available in most European countries. They then transferred that knowledge to their colleagues from further afield, as a first-generation Turkish labour migrant recalled: ‘Only then did I understand why the police and the Germans were so unfriendly to

⁵⁸ Annette Weinke et al. (eds.), *Demokratisierung der Deutschen: Errungenschaften und Anfechtungen eines Projekts* (Göttingen, 2020).

⁵⁹ Lauren Stokes, ‘The Permanent Refugee Crisis in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1949–’, *Central European History*, 52/1 (2019), 19–44, at 30–2.

us! With such a past! . . . When we came here, it had only been twenty years since the war.⁶⁰

Migrants used the murderous German past to account for the otherwise inexplicable hostility that surrounded them, and which they perceived as deeply inhumane. Lore's children, however, coming of age in the 1960s and working through the Nazi past of their family and their nation in the late 1970s and 1980s, had no idea how present this past still was in their country. It is about time we took note of this.

⁶⁰ Dilek Güven, 'Das jüdisch-muslimische Morgenland: Antisemitismus und Bilder von Juden unter Deutschtürken verschiedener Generationen', *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung*, 33 (forthcoming, 2024).

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**A COMMON VISION OF GEOGRAPHY?
PËTR KROPOTKIN AND THE ROYAL
GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, 1876–1921**

PASCALE SIEGRIST

Upon entering Lowther Lodge, home of the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) in South Kensington, the visitor passes through a portrait gallery. In the midst of eminent academics and explorers, one finds a bearded face that few would expect among the fellows of a gentlemanly society: that of Pëtr Alekseevich Kropotkin. Kropotkin's fame nowadays is as a Russian revolutionist and leading theorist of anarchism rather than a British geographer, but he in fact collaborated intensively – though informally – with the RGS and was on excellent terms with many of its leading members throughout the thirty years he spent in British exile and even after his return to Russia.

This remarkable connection has, on the one hand, been interpreted as emblematic of a contradiction between Kropotkin's professed revolutionary ideals and his everyday lifestyle. Martin Miller claims that, in England, Kropotkin

began a pattern of writing accounts in scientific journals and attending teas with members of the establishment while simultaneously living the life of a revolutionary militant. In a sense, he belonged to both worlds, the one he was working to destroy and the one which was to replace it in the future.¹

On the other hand, George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumović, Kropotkin's more sympathetic biographers, make an argument for 'Kropotkin's consistency' by relating an episode in which the ideological differences inevitably came to the fore. At a banquet held by the RGS, the anarchist sternly refused to toast the king and was embarrassed when the whole assembly rose to add a cheer for 'Prince Peter Kropotkin' – 'a tribute to the courtesy and tolerance of English geographers', the authors argue.² Or potentially a provocation, since Kropotkin had been born into an

¹ Martin A. Miller, *Kropotkin* (Chicago, 1976), 134.

² George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumović, *The Anarchist Prince: A Biographical Study of Peter Kropotkin* (London, 1950), 227. It is interesting to note that

aristocratic family but had rejected his noble title. The cordial reception of the Russian radical has similarly led historians of geography such as Federico Ferretti and Gerry Kearns to see evidence of a ‘wider liberal tradition’³ in the RGS, being aware of how important it was ‘for intellectual societies to cultivate dissent.’⁴

In this article, I further assess the extent to which these contacts created problems of ‘consistency’ for both parties, and I argue that notions of ‘liberalism’ and ‘tolerance’ fail to offer a satisfactory explanation for both sides’ willingness to bridge their obvious political divides. The unlikely cooperation between the revolutionary and the establishment society has implications reaching beyond the anecdotal interest of incidents such as the banquet. Informal associations were significant in an age when the professionalization of science was only just taking off – and, as we will see, geography as a discipline was a latecomer in terms of its institutionalization. Scholars remind us of the role of learned societies as networks of sociability: Felix Driver insists on the informality of gentlemanly science and its notions of expertise,⁵ and Vincent Berdoulay urges us to ‘put more emphasis on ideologies than on institutions proper’ and to focus on the ‘circle of affinity’ beyond a scientific community.⁶ Politics were never absent from such circles.

For this reason, this article also aims to resist arguments – sometimes put forth by either Kropotkin or members of the RGS themselves – that science and politics were neatly separable. Both sides understood their scholarly efforts as imminently political, and increasingly so over the nearly fifty-year period in question. Placing their geographical projects within their respective political and intellectual contexts, I show how Kropotkin’s attempts to establish a scientific basis for his anarchism

Kearns and others who subsequently took up the anecdote replace ‘king’ with ‘queen’, suggesting an earlier date – or perhaps scepticism.

³ Federico Ferretti, ‘The Correspondence Between Élisée Reclus and Pëtr Kropotkin as a Source for the History of Geography’, *Journal of Historical Geography*, 37/2 (2011), 216–22, at 216.

⁴ Gerry Kearns, ‘The Political Pivot of Geography’, *Geographical Journal*, 170/4 (2004), 337–46, at 341.

⁵ Felix Driver, *Geography Militant: Cultures of Exploration and Empire* (Oxford, 2001), 46–7.

⁶ Vincent Berdoulay, ‘The Contextual Approach’, in David R. Stoddart (ed.), *Geography, Ideology, and Social Concern* (Oxford, 1981), 8–16, at 14.

and the Geographical Society's endeavours to professionalize and re-define its subject overlapped in a number of respects. This allowed for a fruitful debate; yet although both parties were aligned on the level of epistemology, their agreement nonetheless also encountered obstacles and hit clearly defined limits when it came to content. The informal connections between Kropotkin and the Royal Geographical Society thus provide a way to access the underlying political scripts of nineteenth-century geography and address the question of the place of Kropotkin—and anarchism—in British political culture more broadly.

Scientific Networks as an Entry Point

Kropotkin had not come to England as a scientist. He was an escapee from prison in Russia, where he had been arrested in 1874 (ironically on his way back from a lecture to the Imperial Geographical Society) for his involvement in a radical circle. England was an obvious destination for the relative freedom it granted to political refugees.⁷ But despite the presence of a considerable exile community of Communards and other revolutionaries, Kropotkin found the situation in 1876 dire and he soon left again, thinking, 'better a French prison than this grave.' According to his memoirs, 'for one who held advanced socialist opinions, there was no atmosphere to breathe in.'⁸ It was as a scientist that he first gained a foothold in Britain.

Kropotkin was a geographer and explorer of some renown. As a member of the Russian Imperial Geographical Society, he had published on the orography of Asia, studied the effects of glaciation in Finland, corrected the Humboldtian hypothesis on the orientation of mountain rims in Siberia, and predicted the existence of a land mass in the northern Arctic.⁹ With the special permission of the tsar,

⁷ Cf. James W. Hulse, *Revolutionists in London: A Study of Five Unorthodox Socialists* (Oxford, 1970), 1–3. Hulse traces this tradition back to Voltaire and quotes Kropotkin's positive mentions of Britain as a place of exile for radicals across Europe.

⁸ Peter Kropotkin, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, 2 vols. (London, 1899), ii. 251.

⁹ Pëtr Kropotkin, *Obshchii ocherk orografii Vostochnoi Sibiri* (Saint Petersburg, 1875); Pëtr Kropotkin, *Issledovaniia o lednikovom periode: S kartami, razrezami i risunkami v osoboi broshiure* (Saint Petersburg, 1876).

he had even been allowed to continue his research in prison before he escaped. Soon after his arrival in London, Kropotkin, looking for a source of income, approached the subeditor of *Nature*, John Scott Keltie, to offer his services as a translator. Under a pseudonym he produced notes for the journal on recent scientific publications in Russian, German, French, and the Scandinavian languages, but was soon forced to reveal his identity when asked to give his views on his own work. Not only was Keltie strangely unconcerned to have employed a notorious fugitive, according to Kropotkin's account, he was indeed 'very much pleased to discover the refugee safe in England.'¹⁰ This suggests that Keltie shared the widespread sympathy among British liberals and even some conservatives for the victims of Russian despotism.¹¹ The Society of Friends of Russian Freedom was able to draw on an important current of public hostility to the tsar's regime, which reached back to the days of Alexander Herzen's exile in London in the 1850s and 1860s.¹² Kropotkin's Russianness may well have made his politics more palatable in Victorian polite society, which prided itself on its liberal cosmopolitanism and celebrated eccentricity.

When Kropotkin found himself imprisoned again—his apparent preference for a French jail over London having been granted when he was arrested in Lyon in 1883—Keltie and other British scientists also petitioned for him to be released and allowed to work.¹³ Keltie and Kropotkin continued to discuss problems of geography for the rest of Kropotkin's life, most of which he spent in England. Ferretti sees Keltie as 'a sort of literary agent for Kropotkin in Great Britain',

¹⁰ Kropotkin, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, ii. 187.

¹¹ Keltie took a lively interest in Russian affairs; e.g. in RGS Collections, CB7, Keltie to Kropotkin, 25 Dec. 1880, he states that he is in contact with Russian emigrants; and in another letter written on 12 Feb. 1893 he asks: 'Do you see my Russian friends from time to time?'

¹² John Slatter, 'Our Friends from the East: Russian Revolutionaries and British Radicals, 1852–1917', *History Today*, 53/10 (2003), 43–9; also John Slatter, 'The Correspondence of P. A. Kropotkin as Historical Source Material', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 72/2 (1994), 277–88, at 286: '[the Society] successfully changed British attitudes towards Russia by turning previously largely Russophobic British public opinion into a more nuanced attitude—support for the Russian people but opposition to its oppressive government'.

¹³ Kropotkin, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, ii. 273.

having introduced him to editors such William Robertson Smith and James Knowles.¹⁴ In so doing, Keltie was a crucial connection not only for Kropotkin's contributions to the society's *Geographical Journal*, but also to the country's most important scientific and general interest publications, among them *The Nineteenth Century*, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, and *The Times*.

Keltie was also Kropotkin's point of access to the Royal Geographical Society. The Scottish geographer joined the society in 1883 and became its assistant secretary in 1892. His correspondence with Kropotkin, held at the RGS archives, contains mentions of visits, enquiries about each other's health, and regards to wives and children. Kropotkin's association with the society is in fact best thought of as a personal connection; the relationship was never formally recognized and it is difficult to tell which party would have been more interested in officializing ties. After his return to England in 1886, Kropotkin became a regular visitor to the society, frequently gave lectures, and published over forty articles in the *Geographical Journal* on topics ranging from the teaching of physiography to the desiccation of Eurasia. His expertise was undoubtedly most in demand when it came to the Russian Empire, where he had been on expeditions to some of the remotest parts. He met many of the RGS's most influential fellows – assistant secretaries like Henry Walter Bates, librarians like Hugh Robert Mill, and presidents like Douglas W. Freshfield and Halford Mackinder, who nowadays is mainly known as one of the founding fathers of geopolitics.¹⁵ It appears that there was even talk of offering him a fellowship in 1892. Woodcock and Avakumović claim – without providing sources – that Kropotkin refused the fellowship, his reason being that 'he could not join a society under royal patronage.'¹⁶ This seems unlikely for a man who had been a member of a society under imperial patronage. Besides, while he is explicit on his reasons for turning down the invitation to become secretary of the Russian Geographical Society, his memoirs (which are not

¹⁴ Federico Ferretti, 'Publishing Anarchism: Pyotr Kropotkin and British Print Cultures, 1876–1917', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 57 (2017), 17–27, at 22.

¹⁵ Gerry Kearns, *Geopolitics and Empire: The Legacy of Halford Mackinder* (Oxford, 2009), 263–95 offers a detailed comparison of Kropotkin's views and Mackinder's 'geopolitics'.

¹⁶ Woodcock and Avakumović, *The Anarchist Prince*, 227.

devoid of tales of sacrifice and suffering for the cause) fail to mention an English offer of a fellowship.¹⁷ The only document directly referring to this episode tells a rather different story; in a letter to Keltie and Freshfield, all Kropotkin writes is:

I feel extremely obliged to you for the steps you took in asking my admission to the fellowship of the Geographical Society. I need not say that I always take the greatest interest in the Society's work and if I can be useful in any way in aiding it, I shall always be delighted to do so.¹⁸

This makes it sound improbable that Kropotkin would have refused formal admission to the society, and more likely that the 'steps taken' failed to pave the way for this outcome.

Although there is no evidence that Kropotkin had enemies within the society, his name is strangely absent from its internal publications. There is no mention of him in the council minutes of the period in which his nomination would have been debated; neither does he appear on any of the lists of referees published during the forty years of his acquaintance with Keltie—even in those fields (orography, Siberia) where his expertise was undoubtedly recognized. The fact that Kropotkin's anarchist friend Élisée Reclus was featured in both the council minutes and the referee lists—and was even awarded the society's gold medal 'for eminent services rendered to Geography as the author of *Nouvelle Géographie Universelle*' in 1894¹⁹—implies that there was no categorical exclusion of radicals from the highest honours bestowed by the RGS (although it might have been more complicated for an anarchist living and agitating in Britain).

However, even liberals like Keltie seem never to have taken Kropotkin's political engagement very seriously, or at least they pretended not to. When Kropotkin was refused entry into Switzerland in 1913, Keltie sardonically commented: 'it is very stupid of the Swiss to make such

¹⁷ State patronage as a possible source of conflict goes entirely unmentioned in the chapter of his memoirs devoted to his rejection of the position of secretary of the Russian Geographical Society in 1871; Kropotkin, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, ii. 7–17.

¹⁸ RGS Collections, CB7, Kropotkin to Keltie, 30 Jan. 1892.

¹⁹ A list of RGS medals and awards since 1832 can be found at [<https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/QSDT4>].

a fuss about an old man like you who are past your plotting days.²⁰ No RGS member ever made an effort to engage with anarchist political positions, and they tried to keep it to a bare minimum when they had to. Keltie famously opened his obituary for Kropotkin by stating that ‘this is not the place to deal in detail with Kropotkin’s political views, except to express regret that his absorption in these seriously diminished the services which otherwise he might have rendered to Geography.’²¹

Towards Anarchist Science

If Keltie politely held that the RGS’s *Journal* was ‘not the place’ for politics, the question remains whether Kropotkin regarded the Royal Geographical Society as ‘the place to deal with his political views’. Even if Ferretti makes a well founded argument that Kropotkin used academic, and specifically geographical, outlets to promote the anarchist cause, his prime motivation for connecting with learned societies was scientific. We should not underestimate the sincerity of Kropotkin’s passion for science. In a letter to Keltie he enthused:

The idea of opening the discussion on the Desiccation of Asia pleases me so much that this morning, as soon as I got your letter, I sat to write down the main points, and to sketch two maps showing the extension of the Caspian Sea at the end of the Glacial Period.²²

His correspondence with Keltie—as well as with anarchist scientists such as Reclus²³ and Marie Goldsmith²⁴—leaves no doubt that his interest in science was genuine and that his geographical scholarship

²⁰ RGS Collections, CB7, Keltie to Kropotkin, 15 Dec. 1913.

²¹ John Scott Keltie, ‘Obituary: Prince Kropotkin’, *Geographical Journal*, 57/4 (1921), 316–19, at 317.

²² RGS Collections, CB7, Kropotkin to Keltie, 2 July 1903.

²³ Ferretti, ‘Correspondence’.

²⁴ Michel Confino (ed.), *Anarchistes en exil: Correspondance inédite de Pierre Kropotkine à Marie Goldsmith, 1897–1917* (Paris, 1995); Michel Confino and Daniel Rubinstein, ‘Kropotkine savant: Vingt-cinq lettres inédites de Pierre Kropotkine à Marie Goldsmith. 27 juillet 1901–9 juillet 1915’, *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, 33/2 (1992), 243–301.

was not just a means of securing a livelihood, as sometimes suggested. The case of scholars with more formal affiliations, such as the biologist Goldsmith or Lev Mechnikov, professor of geography in Neuchâtel, illustrates that scientists with professed anarchist leanings did not position themselves in opposition to institutionalized academia. Moreover, as I have mentioned, notions of professionalism took hold in geography only gradually, and Kropotkin's position beyond the academies and universities was hardly exceptional.

In most of his letters to Keltie, Kropotkin asks him for books or maps held at the society; he also made extensive use of its facilities, where he could freely pursue his scientific work. His loose ties to the RGS were easily compatible with his ideal of an anarchist research community. In *The Conquest of Bread* (1892) he criticizes the promotion of science by the state—'Should [the scientist] ask help of the state, which can only be given to one candidate in a hundred, and which only he may obtain, who promises ostensibly to keep to the beaten track?'²⁵—and praises the model of the voluntary learned society. However, in its current form, even this model is subjected to harsh criticism:

What is defective in the Zoological Society of London, and in other kindred societies, is that the member's fee cannot be paid in work; that the keepers and numerous employees of this large institution are not recognised as members of the Society, while many have no other incentive than to put the cabalistic letters FZS (Fellow of the Zoological Society) on their cards. In a word, what is needed is a more perfect co-operation.²⁶

It seems more than likely that this was a veiled address to a 'kindred society' that Kropotkin knew far better than the Zoological Society. Yet Kropotkin, too, was able to distinguish between his ideals and the reality of the scientific community of his time. When asked to give his opinion on the award of the RGS gold medal to the geographer Pëtr Semenov, he replied: 'Semenoff [*sic*] is a Russian functionary and ready to serve under liberal and reactionary ruler alike and of course has no personal sympathy of mine, but scientifically, I think . . . your

²⁵ Peter Kropotkin, *The Conquest of Bread and Other Writings*, ed. Marshall S. Shatz (Cambridge, 1995), 101.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 102

choice was not bad.²⁷ Miller goes so far as to claim that ‘Kropotkin only made the most rudimentary attempts to relate anarchism to modern physical science’ and gives the example of an analogy between the equilibrium of the planetary system and the harmony of spontaneously moving individuals.²⁸ This is probably more telling of the author’s understanding of science than of Kropotkin’s.

A comparison of Kropotkin’s writings published in scientific journals with those in the anarchist press does reveal significant differences, however, and not just of tone. In his *Geographical Journal* article ‘The Great Siberian Railway’ (1895) he discusses purely technical and geological aspects of railway construction with an underlying enthusiasm for the project, omitting the authoritarian nature of its conception²⁹ – a position which seems to run against the idealized vision of a railway network continuously growing together from free agreement that he envisioned three years earlier in *The Conquest of Bread*.³⁰ Similarly, *Fields, Factories and Workshops* (1898) argues for an increase in food production but, unlike the comparable figures and calculations in *The Conquest of Bread*, leaves out the revolutionary justification of such claims.³¹ In a letter to Hugh Robert Mill, he harshly criticizes the censorship of science in Russia, but does not refer to any restrictions, official or conventional, imposed on scientists in Britain.³² The boundaries between adapting to different audiences and self-censorship can be porous. However, the above examples also illustrate that the subjects he addressed in both his anarchist writings and his geographical texts tended to overlap. Moreover, Kropotkin’s own understanding of the relationship between politics and science – and geography in particular – evolved considerably over the period in question. This is mirrored to some extent in his relationship with the RGS.

²⁷ RGS Collections, CB7, Kropotkin to Keltie, 1 May 1897.

²⁸ Martin A. Miller, ‘Kropotkin’, in John A. Hall (ed.), *Rediscoveries: Some Neglected Modern European Political Thinkers* (Oxford, 1985), 85–104, at 95.

²⁹ Peter Kropotkin, ‘The Great Siberian Railway’, *Geographical Journal*, 5/2 (1895), 146–54.

³⁰ Kropotkin, *The Conquest of Bread*, 117; Kropotkin gives the tsar’s decision to build the Saint Petersburg–Moscow connection in a straight line as a negative example.

³¹ For a comparison of the two, see Hulse, *Revolutionists in London*, 61.

³² RGS Collections, HRM 3, Kropotkin to Mill, 6. Mar. 1895.

Kropotkin saw himself as a scientific geographer and a militant anarchist at the same time. His interest in geography had been kindled during his journeys in Siberia as a young tsarist official in the 1860s and – if we are to believe his retrospective account – it was the very same experiences that lay at the source of his political orientation. His encounters with peasants and political prisoners made him ‘appreciate how little the state administration could give to them’³³ and that the central government only worsened their plight. While both his scientific and political engagement date back to the 1860s, a close reading of his scientific output suggests that it was only during his English exile that he began to develop a theory explicitly combining the two.

Throughout his career as a scientist, Kropotkin, a prince who had abandoned his noble title, regarded the production of science by elites as problematic.³⁴ In the early 1860s he felt that the pursuit of scientific inquiry raised a moral dilemma between the joy he derived from geographical exploration and the fact that the funds enabling him to pursue his research had to be taken from the hungry.³⁵ Only in the future anarchist society, with the division of labour abolished, Kropotkin foretold, would science cease to be a luxury, leaving everyone able to indulge in its pleasures. Nonetheless, there was a significant evolution in how he conceived of his own role as a scientist towards the end of the century: he came to recognize that science itself and he as a scientist could be useful even in the present.

Having – critically – read Henri de Saint-Simon, Auguste Comte, and Herbert Spencer and imbibed the positivist spirit of his age, Kropotkin became increasingly optimistic about the possible social benefits of scientific progress. Geography was especially important in Kropotkin’s scientific worldview for its broad disciplinary sweep, propaedeutic qualities, and progressive teleology. As I will discuss

³³ Kropotkin, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, i. 196.

³⁴ Peter Kropotkin, *Modern Science and Anarchism*, trans. David A. Modell (Philadelphia, 1903), 5: ‘Besides, it must not be forgotten that men of science, too, are but human and that most of them either belong by descent to the possessing classes, and are steeped in the prejudices of their class, or else are in the actual service of the government.’

³⁵ Kropotkin, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, ii. 19–20.

below, the very same properties were singled out by RGS members seeking to champion their discipline. Kropotkin proposed ‘objective’ analysis of the resources of a given terrain to improve their distribution; he looked at ways of rationalizing food production; and he studied the role of migration patterns in speciation. The deduction of general laws using scientific methods thus became the focus of his political work too. The fact that his scientific work could be made relevant to his anarchist project reinvigorated it and gave it a renewed justification. In 1894 he boldly stated that:

The philosophy which is being elaborated by the study of sciences on the one hand and anarchy on the other, are two branches of the same great movement of minds: two sisters walking hand in hand. And that is why we can affirm that anarchy is no longer an utopia, a theory; it is a philosophy which impresses itself on our age.³⁶

Given this unbridled faith in science as a force for progress, Matthew S. Adams has noted that ‘[i]n terms of his overarching methodology, Kropotkin appears to the modern reader as a quintessentially Victorian thinker.’³⁷

But Kropotkin also pursued more specific aims in associating anarchism with science – first, as a response to the scientific pretensions of Marxism. Anarchism was not bourgeois, utopian, or backwards; instead, it was more scientific than Marxism because it had rid itself of all metaphysical elements, relying exclusively on the deductive-inductive method.³⁸ Second, buttressing his anarchist ambitions with a scientific grounding also allowed him to target public opinion outside the socialist camp. Adopting the vocabulary of science endowed anarchism with a sense of calm rationality. This seemed particularly urgent in an age when anarchism had extremely bad press – in 1895, the *Gentleman’s Magazine* described anarchism as ‘a malignant fungoid

³⁶ Pierre Kropotkin, *Les temps nouveaux: Conférence faite à Londres* (Paris, 1894); translation from Caroline Cahm, *Kropotkin and the Rise of Revolutionary Anarchism 1872–1886* (Cambridge, 1989), 2.

³⁷ Matthew S. Adams, *Kropotkin, Read and the Intellectual History of British Anarchism: Between Reason and Romanticism* (Basingstoke, 2015), 50.

³⁸ Kropotkin, *Modern Science and Anarchism*, 38.

growth on the body politic.³⁹ More generally, in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, politicians and the emerging mass media stirred up an image of anarchists as fanatics, terrorists, and assassins, thus giving the movement its first—decidedly negative—publicity. Although the most notorious acts of propaganda by the deed occurred outside Britain,⁴⁰ there was a widespread moral panic, reinforcing the British uneasiness with revolutionary immigrants.⁴¹ When the German anarchist Johann Most was tried for endorsing the assassination of Alexander II in a newspaper article, the Grand Jury deemed the piece ‘brutal and un-English.’⁴² Recognition by eminent British academics—and especially by the largest scientific society in London—was intended to have a positive effect on Kropotkin’s prestige and that of anarchists more generally. Haia Shpayer-Makov has shown how Kropotkin’s affiliation with science, alongside his aristocratic origins and manners, was a crucial ingredient in his overwhelmingly positive image in Britain as an ‘anarchist saint’ by the early decades of the twentieth century.⁴³

I have alluded to the very prominent role played by geography within this scientific project.⁴⁴ Kropotkin promoted a holistic understanding

³⁹ Cited in Haia Shpayer-Makov, ‘The Reception of Peter Kropotkin in Britain, 1886–1917’, *Albion Quarterly*, 19/3 (1987), 373–90, at 373.

⁴⁰ One exception being the Greenwich bomb incident; for a (geographical!) reading of it, see Ronald R. Thomas, ‘The Home of Time: The Prime Meridian, the Dome of the Millennium, and Postnational Space’, in Helena Michie and Ronald R. Thomas (eds.), *Nineteenth-Century Geographies: The Transformation of Space from the Victorian Age to the American Century* (New Brunswick, NJ, 2003), 23–39.

⁴¹ Hermia Oliver insists that although London became ‘the headquarters of international anarchism’, this remained very much an immigrant phenomenon: ‘anarchist beliefs had nothing in common . . . with the English radicalism of the 1860s or later’, nor with the federalists or the Manhood Suffrage League. Even later anarchist tenets in England did not grow out of the English General Council of the First International in 1864, but were only very slowly established by the exile community and their converts. Hermia Oliver, *The International Anarchist Movement in Late Victorian London* (London, 1983), 5 and 148.

⁴² Cited *ibid.* 18.

⁴³ Shpayer-Makov, ‘The Reception of Peter Kropotkin’, 379.

⁴⁴ This being another difference between the Marxist and anarchist conceptions of science; cf. Yves Lacoste, *La géographie, ça sert, d’abord, à faire la guerre* (Paris, 1976), 96.

of science—a synthesis that came close to collapsing science into geography as well as into anarchism:

Anarchism is a world-concept based upon a mechanical explanation of all phenomena, embracing the whole of nature—that is, including in it the life of human societies and their economic, political, and moral problems . . . Its aim is to construct a synthetic philosophy comprehending in one generalisation all the phenomena of nature—and therefore also the life of societies.⁴⁵

In this ‘world-concept’, geography was the all-encompassing model that described the relationship between man and his environment in all its aspects, ranging from the more efficient organization of production through to decentralization, a justification of federalism, and even ethical lessons. While Kropotkin was arguably more interested in making anarchism more relevant through the medium of geography, his redefinition of geography’s potential paralleled the RGS’s quest for relevance in a number of significant ways. It is here that we have to look for reasons why the society’s engagement with Kropotkin was not called into question as the latter increasingly turned his back on a purely physical understanding of geography and, from the late 1880s onwards, his political and scientific agendas became ever more entangled. On the contrary, the evolution in Kropotkin’s thought seems only to have reinforced his connection with the RGS.

Shared Epistemologies, Different Programmes

Kropotkin frequented the Royal Geographical Society in a time of important transformations that touched upon the identity and function of the discipline. In 1885 Keltie published an influential report on the state of geography in British schools and universities, which he described thirty years later as the beginning of a ‘crusade’ for ‘the improvement and elevation of geography and a better recognition of the subject in education.’⁴⁶ The two aspects of this crusade were seen

⁴⁵ Kropotkin, *Modern Science and Anarchism*, 53.

⁴⁶ Cited in J. M. Wise, ‘The Scott Keltie Report 1885 and the Teaching of Geography in Great Britain’, *Geographical Journal*, 152/3 (1986), 367–82, at 367. John

as interdependent—higher standards of research would result in a higher standing in schools and universities, and vice versa. Both were equally dependent on a more precise definition of the proper object of geography.

In the late nineteenth century, the outlines of ‘geography’ remained inchoate. To a large extent, this was due to the nature and structure of the Royal Geographical Society itself as the main body representing the subject—a body composed of adventurist explorers and arm-chair scientists. Driver tellingly describes the tensions between its members’ conflicting aspirations: ‘the RGS was a hybrid institution, seeking simultaneously to acquire the status of a scientific society and to provide a public forum for the celebration of a new age of exploration.’⁴⁷ While the latter ensured much of geography’s popularity, it also threatened its scientific soundness. Within the RGS, a faction of geographers—incidentally those most likely to be in touch with Kropotkin, and often more middle-class in background—were making the case for professionalization and institutionalization; yet this redefinition was not to be made at the expense of the discipline’s characteristic breadth.

Maintaining the synthesis of physical and human geography meant searching for a new and intellectually plausible narrative that would provide the field with the same coherence it had once enjoyed, but which the discredited teleological accounts of the beginning of the century could no longer offer. The historian David Livingstone has referred to this attempt to justify geography as a broad church—combining its identity as a physical science with that of a social science—as the ‘geographical experiment’.⁴⁸ In this wider context, the

Scott Keltie, *Geographical Education: Report to the Council of the Royal Geographical Society* (London, 1885).

⁴⁷ Driver, *Geography Militant*, 24. David Livingstone goes further and claims that its high-ranking membership ‘made the RGS rather different from some of the other scientific societies and gave it a rather dilettantish, amateurish image’; David N. Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition: Episodes in the History of a Contested Enterprise* (Oxford, 1992), 158–9. On its 150-year anniversary, the RGS celebrated its history of pioneering explorations with a publication: Ian Cameron, *To the Farthest Ends of the Earth: 150 Years of World Exploration by the Royal Geographical Society* (London, 1980).

⁴⁸ Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition*, 175–8.

RGS geographers came up with strikingly similar strategies to those developed in Kropotkin's 'scientification' of anarchism. While the trends and the larger debates were indeed comparable, however, we must also be careful to distinguish between some of their answers.

The first line of attack in the campaign to ensure geography's legitimacy, as I have mentioned already, was to establish a better grounding in the academic landscape. Keltie's 1885 report on geographical education in Britain had pointed to the desolate state of teaching in schools and made a case – through comparison with Continental Europe – for establishing chairs of geography at British universities. The Royal Geographical Society sponsored the lectureships in geography at Oxford and Cambridge for the first fifty years of their existence and fought for its admission as a Tripos exam subject.⁴⁹ While Mackinder, who held the position at Oxford, was beginning to attract a growing number of students to his lectures by 1893, the situation in Cambridge was much less promising. John Young Buchanan withdrew from the lectureship, finding it disappointing, and freely admitted that the new lecturer would need to be more apt at enthusing undergraduates for geography. The RGS was looking for a popular and engaging speaker, and it seems likely that some thought of appointing Kropotkin to the position – a man who, in part through his political activity, was widely seen as fitting the bill. This rumour has frequently been taken up in scholarship, yet it can only be traced back to a few lines in the memoirs of John Mavor (a Canadian friend of Kropotkin's), written over three decades later. In his recollections, Mavor claims that Kropotkin refused the position because he 'did not care to compromise his freedom.'⁵⁰ Once again, and for reasons that are open to speculation, Kropotkin's own account is silent on the affair.⁵¹ Judging from his correspondence with Hugh Robert Mill, it seems more likely that

⁴⁹ David R. Stoddart, 'The RGS and the Foundations of Geography at Cambridge', *Geographical Journal*, 141/2 (1975), 216–39.

⁵⁰ John Mavor, *My Windows on the Street of the World* (London, 1923), 75.

⁵¹ Mavor claims that William Robertson Smith, editor of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and professor of Arabic at Cambridge, was the one to suggest Kropotkin's appointment. There is no evidence for this in his correspondence, held in Cambridge University Library, and the only biography, Bernhard Maier, *William Robertson Smith: His Life, his Work and his Times* (Tübingen, 2009), does not mention the confirmed connection between Kropotkin and

he sought employment in the University Extension Programme—a range of summer and evening classes aimed at the public. In a letter written in 1893, the same year as the vacancy at Cambridge, Kropotkin gives a list of lectures for his planned application and thanks Mill ‘for the interest you took.’ Yet he is uncertain about the prospects of success: ‘we shall see what will be the results.’⁵² The episode is significant because it shows how Kropotkin was interested in promoting the cause of geography at universities; his famous 1885 essay ‘What Geography Ought to Be’ was in fact a complement to the Keltie report.

Education was certainly a major concern in Kropotkin’s thought, and his emphasis on geography was also linked to its supposedly exceptional ability to shape young minds.⁵³ Unlike ancient languages or mathematics—the former being irrelevant and the latter too complex—geography opened the path to understanding the world, including in an ethical sense. In ‘What Geography Ought to Be’, Kropotkin argued that [geography] must teach us, from our earliest childhood, that we are all brethren, whatever our nationality’, and that, against war, egoism, and national jealousies, it could serve as ‘a means of dissipating these prejudices and of creating other feelings more worthy of humanity.’⁵⁴ Only geographical knowledge could change the perception of people who

from their tenderest childhood . . . are taught to despise ‘the savages’, to consider the very virtues of pagans as disguised crime, and to look upon the ‘lower races’ as upon a mere nuisance on the globe—a nuisance which is only to be tolerated as long as money can be made out of it.⁵⁵

While agreeing with Keltie’s report on the relevance of geography and the need for a holistic approach to teaching it, Kropotkin struck

Robertson Smith. Henry Yule Oldman was appointed lecturer instead of Kropotkin.

⁵² RGS Collections, HRM3/12, Kropotkin to Mill, 17 Nov. 1893.

⁵³ Élisée Reclus pursued a similar educational project involving the construction of a large globe; Gary S. Dunbar, ‘Élisée Reclus and the Great Globe’, *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, 90/1 (1974), 57–66.

⁵⁴ Peter Kropotkin, ‘What Geography Ought to Be’, *The Nineteenth Century*, 18/106 (1885), 940–56, at 943.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.* 942.

a very different note in his open critique of imperialism. Keltie had pleaded for geography with the argument that ‘the interests of England are as wide as the world’, and so the subject was ‘a matter of imperial importance.’⁵⁶ Mackinder joined the debate with an even more explicitly imperialist defence of geography in schools,⁵⁷ and it has been pointed out that the very symbolism of the RGS’s seal connected ‘the quest for and acquisition of secret knowledge about exotic lands with military conquest and power.’⁵⁸ Kropotkin’s supplement to Keltie’s report flatly rejected such propositions, but the important point is that at no stage did Kropotkin frame his own opinion in opposition to Keltie’s; rather, he presented his argument as a contribution to the common struggle for the recognition of geography’s relevance.⁵⁹

A similar pattern – endorsing a comparable framework while filling it with largely different content – also runs through the second, more profound aspect of ‘the geographical experiment’. Livingstone has shown how geographers became involved in the most hotly debated scientific theory of the day: when reconceptualizing their field and placing it on a new theoretical foundation, they turned to Darwin’s theory of evolution. Its reasoning was inherently geographical – Livingstone and Withers point out that ‘[i]n the “Darwinian Revolution,” questions of biogeographical distribution, the relationships between organisms and habitat, and explanations rooted in the determining agency of geographical difference are central.’⁶⁰ By

⁵⁶ Keltie, *Geographical Education*, 83. The first issue of the RGS journal stated as the society’s *raison d’être* that it was ‘paramount to the welfare of a maritime nation like Great Britain, with its numerous and extensive foreign possessions’. Cited in Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition*, 167.

⁵⁷ For an excellent comparison of Kropotkin’s and Mackinder’s responses to the Keltie report, see Kearns, ‘The Political Pivot’.

⁵⁸ Helena Michie and Ronald R. Thomas, ‘Introduction’, in Michie and Thomas (eds.), *Nineteenth-Century Geographies*, 1–22, at 5.

⁵⁹ He sardonically comments that ‘[o]ur mercantile century seems better to have understood the necessity of a reform as soon as the so-called “practical” interests of colonization and warfare were brought to the front. Well, then, let us discuss the reform of geographical education.’ Kropotkin, ‘What Geography Ought to Be’, 491.

⁶⁰ David N. Livingstone and Charles W. J. Withers, ‘On Geography and Revolution’, in David N. Livingstone and Charles W. J. Withers (eds.) *Geography and Revolution* (Chicago, 2005), 1–23, at 2; cf. David R. Stoddart, ‘Darwin’s

linking the physical aspects of geography with its human ones, evolutionary theory provided geographers with the conceptual umbrella they had previously lacked, as well as opening their discipline to a larger, often no less teleological vision of processes in the natural world. It was also where their interests intersected with Kropotkin's project.

Kropotkin's engagement with Darwinism is well known and came to dominate the work of his later years. The list of possible university extension classes he submitted to Mill in 1893 includes a series of lectures on 'The Origin and Evolution of Institutions for Mutual Protection and Support'. This is in fact one of the first mentions of his interest in the topic and a preliminary to the series of articles that would become *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (1902). In these texts, Kropotkin rejected Huxleian readings of Darwin, which interpreted the 'struggle for existence' as leading to inevitable clashes between individuals as well as races, thereby offering a naturalist justification for capitalist competition, war, and racism. Kropotkin worried that 'there is no infamy in civilised society, or in the relations of the whites towards the so-called lower races, or of the strong towards the weak, which would not have found its excuse in this formula.'⁶¹

Kropotkin's own anarchist formula has been summed up as 'Darwin without Malthus'.⁶² He acknowledged the principle of the struggle for existence, but held that more weight needed to be given to environmental conditions and to other species as possible opponents in this struggle. Seen from this angle, the capacity for cooperation displayed by individuals, groups, and entire species became an instrument of survival. The Siberian tundra had convinced him that in an inclement environment, the communal struggle of societies and herds of animals trumped individual feats of strength. At all times, he insisted that his promotion of the role of sociability in evolution came closer to

Impact on Geography', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 56/4 (1966), 683-98.

⁶¹ Kropotkin, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, ii, 317.

⁶² Daniel P. Todes, *Darwin Without Malthus: The Struggle for Existence in Russian Evolutionary Thought* (Oxford, 1989) argues that this type of reading was embedded in the Russian reception of Darwinism; a similar view is found in Alexander Vuchinich, *Darwinism in Russian Thought* (Berkeley, 1988).

Darwin's own views, which had been perverted by his proselytizers. In his memoirs, Kropotkin notes that RGS members supported him in this, claiming that Keltie's predecessor as secretary, H. W. Bates, wrote to encourage him to publish his account: 'That is true Darwinism. It is a shame to think of what they have made of Darwin's ideas. Write it, and when you have published it, I will write you a letter of commendation which you may publish.'⁶³

The support for Kropotkin from RGS members can also be accounted for by another similarity in their specific readings of Darwin. Like Kropotkin, the group of geographical innovators became worried that a focus on the physical features of a habitat alone threatened to look a lot like the crude environmental determinism of old. But to establish a more integrative vision of geography that would leave room for history and culture as influences on the course of evolution, a causal connection other than determinism was needed between the environmental and social aspects. To explain how certain accomplishments in the social world could lead to long-lasting advantages in the process of natural selection, they proposed a slightly modified version of Darwinism – one that included Lamarckian elements. The idea that changes occurring during an individual's lifetime could be passed on to offspring was important not only in restoring a possible role for environmental factors in the process of natural selection, but also in foregrounding agency – which in Kropotkin's case was especially relevant to the evolutionary rewards for altruistic actions.⁶⁴ Livingstone again has underlined the inspiration of neo-Lamarckian evolutionism as 'perhaps the key ingredient'⁶⁵ in the story of geography's academic institutionalization, discussing the cases of Mackinder, Friedrich Ratzel, and William Morris Davis. Strangely, he leaves Kropotkin out of this particular debate, even while acknowledging that his theory represented 'a naturalisation of morality that was tantalisingly analogous in its conceptual structures to that of the Darwinian imperialists.'⁶⁶ Perhaps 'conceptual structures' alone cannot serve as a foundation for institutional cooperation after all. From the RGS's

⁶³ Kropotkin, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, ii, 318.

⁶⁴ Cf. Álvaro Girón, 'Kropotkin Between Lamarck and Darwin: The Impossible Synthesis', *Asclepio*, 55/1 (2003), 189–213.

⁶⁵ Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition*, 189.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* 255.

point of view, Kropotkin, with his prominence as an exotic society figure, would have been useful in resetting the terms of the debate; but officializing him and the political ideals he associated with geographical reform would have been a step too far.

Conclusion

The debates on education and evolution rallied scientists from a wide range of political backgrounds; however, political frameworks on all sides continued to set the limits of the terms of debate, and these were never crossed. The scientific nature of anarchism remained contested. Geographers certainly did not recognize it; Keltie diplomatically concluded that '[Kropotkin] was a keen observer, with a well-trained intellect, familiar with all the sciences bearing on his subject; and although his conclusions may not be universally accepted, there is no doubt that his contributions to geographical science are of the highest value.'⁶⁷ But Kropotkin's claim to be proceeding in a strictly scientific way was not universally accepted among anarchists either; Errico Malatesta for example berated Kropotkin: 'you have a theory and you look for facts to group together and support that theory.'⁶⁸

It was the very specific circumstance of a broad debate on the limits and possibilities of geographical thought that allowed Kropotkin to take a surprisingly prominent place in the forums of the Royal Geographical Society. Kropotkin and his RGS counterparts were essentially discussing similar problems within the confines of the same paradigm, and this assured their mutual interest in each other's work. But the fact that Kropotkin was in conversation with imperialist conservatives like Mackinder as well as liberals like Keltie underlines that what united them was an adherence to a novel conception of geography rather than a common liberal tradition. While this certainly required a degree of tolerance, or at least a willingness to overlook many of Kropotkin's inferences, to treat politics as the driving force behind their association would be to massively overstate the case. And Kropotkin seems to have been well aware of this. Despite his own pleas for the interdependence

⁶⁷ Keltie, 'Obituary', 319.

⁶⁸ Cited in Cahm, *Kropotkin*, 13.

of geography and anarchism, he often neglected to mention the latter: his obituary for Reclus mirrors the one that Keltie would eventually write for Kropotkin, in that he briefly alludes to the deceased's political activities but praises his achievements in geography at length.⁶⁹ Scholars have suggested that Kropotkin's aristocratic origins and his position as a champion of people facing political persecution in Russia account for his relatively easy integration into British educated circles. But I think it is equally important to pay attention to reasons internal to the discipline of geography, given that many of the arguments put forward by Kropotkin in the popular press coincided with the reform strategies of the RGS. The interest of the Royal Geographical Society in its unorthodox associate has still not completely faded—the *Geographical Journal* reviewed the first two English-language biographies of Kropotkin,⁷⁰ and Nellie Heath's portrait of him, gifted in 1904, is still on display at Lowther Lodge. However, the recent rediscovery of Kropotkin as a geographer has come from the more marginal and explicitly radical side of the profession.⁷¹

For Kropotkin as a public figure, if not for anarchism, the legitimation he sought by reformulating his anarchist project through a realignment of his scientific project seems to have been relatively successful. The RGS provided contacts and networks, thereby granting him access to a larger audience. Eventually there was a shift in his popular perception which mapped onto the geographical area where

⁶⁹ Peter Kropotkin, 'Obituary: Elisée Reclus', *Geographical Journal*, 26/3 (1905), 337–43.

⁷⁰ G. R. C., review of George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumovic, *The Anarchist Prince: The Biography of Prince Peter Kropotkin* (London, 1950), in *Geographical Journal*, 117/2 (1951), 241–2; David Wileman, review of Martin A. Miller, *Kropotkin* (Chicago, 1976), in *Geographical Journal*, 144/3 (1978), 504–5.

⁷¹ This rediscovery, in the English-speaking world, has centred on the journal *Antipode* and the work of Simon Springer—e.g. 'Anarchism and Geography: A Brief Genealogy of Anarchist Geographies', *Geography Compass*, 7/1 (2013), 46–60. Geographers also took part in the various conferences commemorating the centenary of his death. For my critique: Pascale Siegrist, 'Historicising "Anarchist Geography": Six Issues for Debate from a Historian's Point of View', in Gerónimo Barrera de la Torre, Federico Ferretti, Anthony Ince, and Francisco Toro (eds.), *Historical Geographies of Anarchism: Early Critical Geographers and Present-Day Scientific Challenges* (London, 2017), 129–50.

he spent much of his later years; in the words of Nicholas Walter: '[i]n continental Europe Kropotkin was thought of as an anarchist who happened to be a scientist, in the Anglo-Saxon world he was thought of more as a scientist who happened to be an anarchist.'⁷² This is almost a paraphrase of Kropotkin's own letter to Marie Goldsmith, to whom he remarked that 'in England they know me as a scholar rather than as a political writer.'⁷³ His conscious effort to present himself as a heroic but humble figure played no small part in creating an image of a serious and dedicated scientist, and some of his letters to editors reveal how deeply he cared about his reputation as such.⁷⁴ However, the evolution of his reception should not be seen as England having 'tamed' Kropotkin.⁷⁵ As far as he was concerned, this was less a moderation of his revolutionary enthusiasm than a strategic reorientation—one that corresponded to a deeply felt renewal of his interest in geography once he had turned it into a political tool. If Kropotkin the scientist was a public figure known for integrity and as a moral authority, there was always hope that one day Kropotkin the anarchist would be too.

⁷² In his introduction to Peter Kropotkin, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, ed. Nicholas Walter (Mineola, NY, 2010), p. x.

⁷³ Kropotkin to Goldsmith, 15 Aug. 1909, cited in Confino (ed.), *Anarchistes en exil*, 364.

⁷⁴ The Kropotkin–Keltie correspondence, held in the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), f. 1129, op. 2, d. 74, contains a long exchange on a letter to the editors concerning one of Kropotkin's 'Recent Science' summaries in *The Nineteenth Century*.

⁷⁵ Hulse, *Revolutionists in London*, 9.

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BOOK REVIEWS

BERNHARD JUSSSEN, *Das Geschenk des Orest: Eine Geschichte des nach-römischen Europa 526–1535* (C.H. Beck: Munich, 2023), 480 pp. ISBN 978 3 406 78200 8. €44.00

The ‘Middle Ages’ is a concept deeply embedded in both the academic and the public understanding of the past in Europe, North America, and elsewhere in the world. It organizes how people think about the past, and thus affects their perception of it, whether they realize it or not. It is, of course, not a concept that was used in the sources from this period—nobody ever thought they were living in the Middle Ages—and in this exciting new book, the Frankfurt historian Bernhard Jussen makes the case that it is high time to abolish it. ‘This book is a provocation’, proclaims the dustjacket, and so it proves to be.

Perhaps the most visible innovation of the book concerns the sources that it highlights. Throughout, Jussen centres not the written sources that most historical work tends to privilege, but visual imagery, using a ‘media studies’ (*Mediologie*) methodology. Each chapter is based around a key image or set of images which Jussen regards as especially telling and treats as a historical sign or *Geschichtszeichen*. These images are used neither to illustrate nor to confirm a written text, but as focal points in their own right, as keys to contemporary perception. By breaking away from the ‘canonical’ written sources in this way, Jussen aims to open up fresh perspectives.

The first two chapters work as a pair. They are focused on the commemorative image of a sixth-century widow named Turtura (or ‘Turtle Dove’), praised for her fidelity to her dead husband; and on the thoroughly traditional ivory diptych of Turtura’s contemporary, the Roman consul Orestes, from which the book takes its name. Jussen’s argument is that the tension between these two representations shows the true transformation of the Roman world. This transformation had very little to do with migrants, invasions, or ‘barbarians’. Rather, the

key was the change in the sacral system (*Sakralsystem*), as Christianity gradually supplanted and overturned established Roman traditions, and this was a change that the Romans brought about themselves.

At the heart of this shift was the revolution it brought about in kinship structures. Jussen proposes that ancient Roman society had been dominated by male ancestry, expressed legally through the role of the *paterfamilias*, and materially through wax casts of dead grandparents' faces and family lineages painted on walls (though very little of this material culture has survived). The form of Christianity that took over in Rome regarded this ancestor veneration with outright hostility. Instead of claims of ancestry and descent, it put the married couple at the heart of society, promoted spiritual kinship in the place of bonds of flesh and blood, and entrusted commemoration to specialists housed in institutions, rather than to the family at the graveside. Turtura's image was painted after her death, yet pointed to the future, whereas Orestes, with his mastery of an ancient symbolic code, was already living in the past.

The third chapter moves to ideas of kingship, and the imagery associated with it. Jussen points out how the misuse of this imagery has in the past led historians astray. A handful of idiosyncratic images of tenth- and eleventh-century Ottonian kings and emperors that depict them as Christ-like were long used by historians to underpin a reading of these rulers as 'sacral'. In reality, the Ottonians and their successors made far fewer claims to sacrality than their imperial peers in Constantinople, whose coins, from the sixth century, were minted with images of Christ and Mary. That was an iconography which Western rulers deliberately avoided. Conversely, the figure of the ruler on horseback, central to Roman imperial imagery, vanished from sculptural representation in both East and West, but Jussen points out that in the West it remained vibrant in other media, such as seals.

Chapter four is devoted to monasticism, viewed through the famous St Gall Plan devised by the monk Gozbert in the ninth century. Jussen highlights two features of this drawing of an idealized monastery: its inclusion of numerous altars, and the absence of an enclosing wall. The multiplication of altars shows how far Western European society was entangled in an economy of salvation that converted financial resources into spiritual welfare through clerical

ritual, while the lack of an enclosure demonstrates how monasteries were supposed to be thoroughly integrated into wider society. Jussen emphasizes that the *Rule of St Benedict* that was so influential in the West was what we might think of today as an inclusive and accessible form of monasticism, which eschewed the dramatic asceticism popular in other monastic practices. That, thinks Jussen, was linked to the way monasticism in the Latin West became mainstream.

The fifth chapter is inspired by a celebrated early fourteenth-century fresco in Siena's town hall, the Palazzo Pubblico. This fresco depicts personified virtues, including a representation of Concord or Unity holding a carpenter's plane to smooth over disagreement and dissent. From this image, Jussen develops a discussion of urban collective organization and self-representation as a form of participatory government and indeed civil society, which he sees as being in irreconcilable tension with traditional forms of top-down governance.

The book closes with another pair of chapters. Chapter six studies the popular motif of the mourning widow at her husband's graveside who encounters an attractive man. The tale was told, and represented, in various ways, including numerous woodcut prints from the fifteenth century on. But in all of them it reflected a challenge to the world-view of the faithful widow Turtura, for this widow was not quite so unequivocally loyal to her spouse. The final chapter looks at a painting by Hans Holbein the Younger in the early sixteenth century, *An Allegory of the Old and New Testaments*. Jussen reads this painting as a frontal attack on the conventions of figural representation promoted by the established Catholic Church, and thus as part of the reworking of the sacral system first established in the sixth century.

Given that the book's shape effectively reproduces a narrative of the Middle Ages – a millennium between ancient Rome and the Reformation, dominated by Catholic Christianity – what, then, is Jussen's objection to the concept? The answer lies in its connotations and associations. For instance, Jussen argues that the term skews discussion of artistic production at the court of the Carolingian kings. Conventional periodization insists that 'medieval' art was religious. That makes it harder to see that in fact these Carolingian debates freed artists from some of the burdens placed upon them by conventions of representing the sacred which remained embedded in Constantinople.

However, the central issue for Jussen is kinship and family structure. The association between the Middle Ages and family structures such as clans and lineages has, in his view, blocked the reception of anthropologically inspired research on kinship, to which research Jussen has himself made many distinguished contributions. This research presents more or less the opposite picture of the received wisdom about the Middle Ages: that this 'millennium of the turtle dove' (p. 61) was characterized by surprisingly weak kinship structures, with huge consequences both politically and culturally, since Jussen regards kinship as foundational to the social order more broadly.

In such a bold and wide-ranging book, there are of course points at which specialists may cavil. Jussen's focus on long-term kinship structures that were established in the sixth century and endured thereafter perhaps understates the subsequent changes in these structures prior to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The formal prohibition on priests' marriage in the eleventh century, for instance, was a quite radical step that finds little discussion here. Put differently, does it really make sense to talk of the Latin West in the twelfth century (and indeed later) as 'post-Roman'—in other words, as still meaningfully contained within a late Roman legacy?

Equally, one could argue that in other respects, the book is not long-term enough. For instance, one of the key features of kinship in the Latin West was monogamy, that is to say, the rule that both men and women can only be married to one person at a time. Many people today take this rule for granted, yet in reality it is far from a cultural universal, and in many parts of the world it is not the accepted framework for the social order. Marital monogamy was not, however, a product of the sixth century, or even of Christianity. It had deeper roots in pagan Roman culture, linked, perhaps, to Rome's distinctive private property regime. Its survival and indeed hardening in these post-Roman centuries shows that sixth-century Christianity did not, after all, change everything about kinship in Western Europe.

This book, then, certainly provokes counter-arguments. Yet it is not only a very stimulating read, but its central observation merits serious reflection. The notion of the Middle Ages takes its meaning from a world-view that supposed that modern society had much

more in common with antiquity than with the time of political chaos and religious intolerance 'in between'. Variants of this argument are still alive and kicking. But Jussen's insight is that today's pluralist civil society – the vantage point from which he suggests historians in the Western world now survey the past, after the end of the Cold War – actually has less in common with ancient authoritarian empires than with the collaborative and associational networks that replaced them, and whose origin and development this book is devoted to exploring and explaining.

As Jussen suggests, these are resonances and associations that the concept of the Middle Ages obscures, and was indeed designed to obscure. It might be argued that historians of the Middle Ages have signed a Faustian pact that on the one hand gives their research a recognized and, to some limited extent, protected place within the discipline, but at the price of explicitly coding it as not actually relevant for their colleagues, or for that matter everyone else. We do not share the *Weltsicht* (world-view) of the generations around 1800, so is it not time that historians started seriously thinking about approaches to the distant past that better suit our contemporary conjuncture, just as Bernhard Jussen does here?

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ISABELLA CHWALKA, *Kein Interesse? Fremd- und Selbstwahrnehmung in der deutschen und englischen Historiographie des 12. Jahrhunderts*, *Orbis mediaevalis*, 19 (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2022), 446 pp. ISBN 978 3 847 11349 2. €65.00

This rich study of twelfth-century historical writing in England and Germany sets out with a very particular goal in mind: to find the image of the Other through which English and German authors conceptualized and judged one another. That no such stereotypes – more redolent of more recent periods of Anglo-German enmity – in fact emerge should not distract from the wealth of evidence and analysis accumulated in this book.

The book opens with Walter Map's twelfth-century comparison of the material foundations of royal power in the Latin West: English kings were rich, the French lacked everything except 'bread, wine, and joy!', while the German king had given everything away to the church except his military strength (p. 1). The remarkable anecdote is alas, for Chwalka, a red herring, 'at once the best and worst example' (p. 14) of evidence one could accumulate to assess perceptions of the Other. Eschewing such caricatured outliers, she seeks instead to 'compile as many testimonies as possible, especially the unspectacular ones' (p. 14). She draws upon a remarkable corpus of chronicles (sixty-four in total). The first section of the book (pp. 39–152) lists all mentions of England and Germany by authors writing in the opposing realm. Strict chronological limits attempt to standardize the material: only events from 1111–97 are included for the Holy Roman Empire and from 1100–99 for England (though these restrictions are occasionally relaxed). The second section (pp. 153–389), the richest part of the book, drills down into several case studies, selected because they proved to be the most frequently mentioned events in the statistical analysis. The conflict between Pope Alexander III and Frederick Barbarossa, and the imprisonment of Richard the Lionheart, are examined in the chronicles of both realms. The marriage alliances of Emperor Henry V and Henry the Lion, and Thomas Becket's martyrdom, form a further case study for the German authors; the Investiture Contest, especially Henry V's expedition to Rome in 1111, serves the same purpose for their English counterparts.

The book is interspersed with rich summaries of the pertinent scholarship regarding the events and chronicles examined (no mean feat given the sheer volume of the latter). There are intriguing historiographical asides. The classic volumes on medieval historical writing in each realm reflect different scholarly priorities: Wilhelm Wattenbach and Franz-Josef Schmale offer a survey divided by region (p. 39), Antonia Gransden by the reign of kings (pp. 86–90), a distant echo of the similarly regnal-focused approach of her English sources (though one should add that Gransden offered further subdivisions by genre and authorship). The summary of the German-language scholarship concerning twelfth-century English–German relations is particularly useful (pp. 27–31), highlighting how previous interpretations have been indebted to modern notions of international politics. English historians—in contrast to their medieval forebears—have paid far less attention to these relations than their German peers. Karl Leyser, Benjamin Arnold, and Joseph P. Huffmann are highlighted as the obvious exceptions, but their work could have been given more weight, and Timothy Reuter is strangely absent from this section. In an intriguing observation elsewhere, Chwalka does point out that Reuter and Björn Weiler appear to use different terminology for the empire depending on whether they are writing in English or German (p. 26, n. 58). The force of this potentially significant observation is undercut by the fact that only a minority of their publications have been consulted, a lapse with consequences to which I shall return.

The discussion of English and German identity is less convincing. The manifold difficulties entailed in disentangling the layers of regional, national, and imperial identity in twelfth-century Germany are correctly pointed out. But the discussion is surprisingly short (pp. 21–2) and the omission of work by Len Scales and Reuter is regrettable, not least because their arguments would have added nuance to Chwalka's claim that notions of English national identity were 'no less complicated and controversial' (p. 22).¹ The date of inception for English national identity has certainly been much debated, and the lands ruled by the English crown did fluctuate. But to suggest that, as

¹ Len Scales, *The Shaping of German Identity: Authority and Crisis, 1245–1414* (Cambridge, 2012) and essays by Reuter cited below.

a result, a 'unified *gens* did not exist for England' (p. 24) goes too far. The attempt to balance out the two scholarly debates—'while for the German Empire it is a question of the relationship between imperial and/or national consciousness . . . for the people of England the question of Norman or English identity is in the foreground' (p. 23)—is not convincing. The lack of reference to any of the essays collected in Timothy Reuter's magisterial *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities* is surprising and unfortunate.² In one particularly important contribution, Reuter argued that the unification of the English kingdom pre-1066 had produced a *Wirgefüh* (a feeling of unity in law, custom, and language). This was largely absent in Germany, where various *gentes* were bound together more by their link to a common ruler than by connections with one another.³ Such unity has consequences for how one considers Chwalka's sources.

This corpus consists of, as she well recognizes, a heady mix of annals, monastic chronicles, royal biographies, and both national and universal histories. The inclusion of Orderic Vitalis and Robert of Torigni, but not Gislebert of Mons (or, indeed, Godfrey of Viterbo) requires more justification. John of Salisbury's *Historia Pontificalis* is another striking omission: an author familiar with the English royal court who had much to say on the empire (as Reuter's highly pertinent essay on this subject—not cited—attests).⁴ At a more fundamental level, there are differences in the weighting of historiographical genres in the two realms which surely influenced the results of Chwalka's statistical analysis and which would have been better addressed directly (reading relevant essays by Weiler, Reuter, and Nicholas Vincent would have helped).⁵ More attention should have been paid to the link

² Timothy Reuter, *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities*, ed. Janet Nelson (Cambridge, 2006).

³ Timothy Reuter, 'The Making of England and Germany, 850–1050: Points of Comparison and Difference', in Reuter, *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities*, 284–99, at 298.

⁴ Timothy Reuter, 'John of Salisbury and the Germans', in Michael Wilks (ed.), *The World of John of Salisbury* (Oxford, 1984), 415–25.

⁵ See various comparisons made in Björn Weiler, 'The King as Judge: Henry II and Frederick Barbarossa as Seen by their Contemporaries', in Patricia Skinner (ed.), *Challenging the Boundaries of Medieval History: The Legacy of Timothy Reuter* (Turnhout, 2009), 115–40, at 135–40; Björn Weiler, 'How Unusual

Reuter highlighted between the remarkable English unity mentioned above and the fact that English writers, no doubt influenced by Bede and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, were more inclined than their German counterparts to view the past through the prism of the royal court. References to Henry Bainton's comparison of such texts to a '[n]ativity story for the nation' and Robert Swanson's identification of kingship as the historiographical focus in England (as opposed to bishops in Germany and cities in Italy) hint in this direction (pp. 88–9).

In contrast to their modern successors, the statistics show a greater interest among twelfth-century English historians in the empire than vice versa. The conclusion holds true at the extremes and in the round. All the English chronicles bar one (the *Gesta Stephani*) included at least one reference, whereas a third of the German sources did not mention England. Eight German authors mentioned England just once, and only two German writers included more than ten references (the figure is twelve for England). The range, among English historians, is enormous: a single remark in the *Annales Plymptonienses* and Richard of Hexham's *De gestis regis Stephani* compares to a staggering eighty-nine in Roger of Howden's *Chronica*. Chwalka is commendably forthright about the methodological pitfalls which lie behind the raw statistics.⁶ A single reference in her survey could equate to a fleeting mention of the emperor in a sentence's subclause or a thematic, detailed, and reflective set piece. In the example she provides, Orderic Vitalis chronicled a sequence of events spanning twenty-seven years, linked together in the person of Henry V. Because the account is not interrupted by references to other topics, the five pages of discussion

was Matthew Paris? The Writing of Universal History in Angevin England', in Michele Campopiano and Henry Bainton (eds.), *Universal Chronicles in the High Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2017), 199–222; Nicholas Vincent, 'The Strange Case of the Missing Biographies: The Lives of the Plantagenet Kings of England 1154–1272', in David Bates, Julia Crick, and Sarah Hamilton (eds.), *Writing Medieval Biography, 750–1250* (Woodbridge, 2006), 237–58.

⁶ For another attempt to apply a statistical approach to twelfth-century historical writing which presents comparable methodological problems, see Grischa Vercamer, *Hochmittelalterliche Herrschaftspraxis im Spiegel der Geschichtsschreibung: Vorstellungen von 'guter' und 'schlechter' Herrschaft in England, Polen und dem Reich im 12./13. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden, 2020); see also my review of this title in *GHIL Bulletin*, 44/1 (2022), 80–7.

(in the modern edition) count as a single ‘unit of meaning’ (p. 142). A greater number of mentions thus often reflects an author’s narrative style, rather than necessarily their interest in the topic. William of Malmesbury’s *Gesta regum Anglorum* provides only two references, for example, but they prove to be among the most interesting.

How might one explain the greater interest displayed by English authors if we take the statistics at face value? While Chwalka is correct to point to more intense bonds forged between England and the Continent by the Norman Conquest and the Papacy, other hints offered in her conclusion take us back to the more intriguing differences between the historiographical cultures of the two realms. English authors often prove to be better known and their background and sources easier to trace, their duties at court granting them access to oral and written material included in the composition of what were often lengthier histories. Again, the contrast is not simple or absolute: visits to the royal court, and journeys to Italy, are recorded for Ekkehard of Aura, Burchard of Ursberg, Otto of Freising, Rahewin, and Arnold of Lübeck. A subtler suggestion offered is that we can detect a greater ‘or at least more verifiable mobility’ (p. 152) among English writers. Rachel Koopmans has indeed drawn attention to how many of the authors in Chwalka’s English corpus swapped information and inspiration in what was often a remarkably tight-knit social circle, one surely bound together more closely than in the far larger, more disparate regions of the German kingdom.⁷

Chwalka’s analysis bears much richer fruit once we proceed to her case studies, where the thorough exploration of the historical background, the chronicles, and their sources pays dividends. The account of English reactions to the Investiture Contest and to the Salian emperors is fascinating. Henry V’s campaign to Rome in 1111 and his scandalous imprisonment of Pope Paschal II received far greater attention than events at Canossa. William of Malmesbury offers a remarkable description of the latter: Henry IV is refused an audience by a pope disgusted by the emperor’s depraved debauchery with his sister. Malmesbury himself had more time for him: here

⁷ Rachel Koopmans, *Wonderful to Relate: Miracle Stories and Miracle Collecting in High Medieval England* (Philadelphia, 2011).

was a powerful, intelligent, well-read, and charitable ruler, comparable to the ancient Caesars, who had fought in sixty-two battles and nearly always triumphed against his enemies. On the endless *investiturae controversia* (Investiture Contest)—compared by Malmesbury to a hydra—the example of Orderic Vitalis in turn offers an abrupt reminder of the gap between the priorities of modern scholarship and those of our sources. For Orderic, like Malmesbury, incest triumphed over investiture. Investiture appears only once in a list of Henry IV's manifold offences, and the crime is not mentioned at all in relation to Henry V. Rudolf Schieffer was astonished that Orderic had appeared to mix up Henry IV and Philip I of France (the latter excommunicated for adultery).⁸ As Chwalka shows, Orderic knew his target: lewd details of Salian licentiousness had travelled beyond the seemingly limited circulation of polemical texts within the empire and reached as far afield as St Evroul and Malmesbury.

The discussion of Richard the Lionheart's captivity by English and German authors is equally impressive, adding nuance to previous conclusions reached by Knut Görich and John Gillingham. Görich suggested that the capture of the English crusader king by Leopold V, duke of Austria, had been justified by German authors with reference to Richard's dishonourable conduct at Acre when tearing down the duke's banner. In fact, only two sources mention this. Other chroniclers wrote of insulting behaviour by the king towards Leopold, the German contingent as a whole, and God, or they condemned his actions elsewhere. Rare references are made by the chroniclers here to broader national categories. Otto of St Blasien suggested that the German and Italian knights left Acre, decrying *Anglicam perfidiam* (English perfidy); the *Chronica regia Coloniensis* claimed Richard questioned the bravery of the Germans as a people; the Marbach Annals named him an enemy of the empire. An impatient reader might think we have finally stumbled upon the much looked-for construction of the Other. Ludwig Schmutge and Günther Blaicher guide us in this direction, arguing that the experience of crusading led to the formation of more precise and vicious national caricatures (see pp. 236–7).

⁸ Rudolf Schieffer, 'Worms, Rom und Canossa (1076/77) in zeitgenössischer Wahrnehmung', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 292 (2011), 593–612, at 609.

Have we found, with such remarks, the beginnings of a stereotype that would, far in the future, be wielded by the likes of Napoleon to cut perfidious Albion down to size? Not quite. Accusations of infidelity, Chwalka cautions, were applied to numerous targets. The febrile conditions of the crusader camps before Acre had not, in fact, incubated the seeds of later English-German enmity.

Where German authors passed over Richard's actual imprisonment with a discreet silence, their English contemporaries felt duty-bound to defend their king's conduct. Yes, Richard had insulted Leopold's honour, but quite right too! Richard may have cut down the duke's tent, but Leopold should not have placed it so close to the king's pavilion or refused Richard's request to move it a short distance. It was sheer folly for him to demand an equal share in the spoils; he was a duke, not a king. The justice of Richard's cause was all too apparent when Leopold died in 1194 following a tournament accident, a gruesome death reported with relish by English authors lapping up the gossip spread by hostages returning from Austria. According to William of Newburgh, they had milk and honey on their tongues when reporting the news. Henry VI received a variety of negative judgments: angry, envious, impressionable, and comparable to Pharaoh, and even Saladin, in his lack of Christian honour and imperial dignity. Negative generalizations feature again. Ralph of Diceto called the Austrians foul-smelling barbarians who spoke a horrible language and resembled wild beasts living in squalor. Such remarks were again atypical. The German princes campaigning for Richard's release received a positive press, as did Henry VI once he was thought to be planning a new crusade.

The care with which Chwalka has dissected these accounts will be readily apparent. An equally significant service rendered by her book is to shine a light on the rich exchange of information which underpinned these narratives, with chroniclers drawing upon an array of letters, chronicles, personal experience, and foreign contacts. The importance, for English authors, of the histories written by Marianus Scotus, Sigebert of Gembloux, Ekkehard of Aura, and David the Scot is clear (direct references by their German peers to English histories prove rarer). Eyewitness testimonies were also crucial: Eadmer described the encounter of Archbishop Ralph d'Escures with Henry V; Malmesbury

claimed to have heard stories about Gregory VII from a monk who had heard them from Abbot Hugh of Cluny (Henry IV's godfather and a witness to Canossa); the Cologne Chronicle described a delegation sent to Rouen to speak with Henry II of England in 1168; and Ralph of Coggeshall drew the details of Richard's imprisonment from the king's chaplain, Anselm. The evidence for such contact and exchange, even within the remit of Chwalka's analysis, is considerable. They surely represent 'the tip of the iceberg'⁹

Yet Chwalka's assessment of these contacts is surprisingly downbeat. The theoretical discussion of 'communication' is an unwelcome detour from an otherwise useful set of observations (pp. 77–8). Particularly influential for Chwalka is Andreas Bihrer's concept of *mittlere Entfernung* ('middle distance', p. 16): an intermediate zone where the Other could be constructed in a more dynamic and varied manner. Conflict and contact between England and Germany are judged not to have been as intense or immediate as between England and France, nor as remote—in a somewhat dramatic leap—as between the Latin West and the Mongols or China (p. 16). This model takes us to her conclusions which—like the book's hesitant title—often strike a surprisingly negative tone, given the wealth of evidence and insights which precede them. On the one hand, significant omissions are rightly pointed out. No suggestion is found of the imperial overlordship so fiercely debated by twentieth-century historians, nor a 'centre of perception' (p. 145) or particularly obvious geographical patterns. The overall conclusions, however, are often too starkly formulated; as per Bihrer's model, 'constant contact—as well as constant awareness' (p. 242) did not exist. France is the necessary foil here: unlike England's 'immediate neighbour, the empire was not the constant focus of the scribes' (p. 385). Personal contacts between England and the empire 'had no measurable influence on the acquisition of information about the Other in German sources' (p. 85). Among German authors, a 'consistent interest' in developments in the English polity could not be proven (p. 241). Although 'a large amount of information on England and a variance of opinions could be found' (p. 242), the triggers to

⁹ Quotation from Timothy Reuter, 'All Quiet Except on the Western Front? The Emergence of Pre-Modern Forms of Statehood in the Central Middle Ages', in Reuter, *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities*, 432–58, at 445.

discuss English events were external (the crisis of the papal schism or Richard's imprisonment). More negative stereotypes stemmed from 'emotionality due to insecurity' or were 'persuasive stylistic devices' (p. 243) for self-reassurance. Authors oscillated between 'indifference and tense attention' (p. 244). Fundamental notions of the Other, comparable to the prejudicial stereotypes formed in relation to Slavs or Muslims, cannot be found, nor a fixed image of foreign rulers: chroniclers did not have 'firmly established ideas about the Other . . . [nor] thought deeply about the differences between the two nations' (p. 397). Walter Map's humorous anecdote, it seems, was indeed atypical.

Yet if readers flip back to the initial statistical analysis, they will find an array of fascinating examples: stragglers, whose voices have been drowned out in the book's quick march towards the selected case studies. Important themes emerge from this more diverse set of material. Many English authors, for example, recognized the (growing) significance of the princes in the governance of the empire (that Ralph of Diceto explicitly discussed the office of imperial chancellor and its applicability to Thomas Becket is relegated to a footnote: p. 319, n. 1,345). The English portrayal of princely opposition to Henry VI, which sought to protect the *honor imperii* against his arbitrary tyranny, fits neatly into this pattern. References to the imperial episcopate would also have made for an intriguing case study. Orderic Vitalis' observation that the archbishop of Mainz travelled with 500 knights could have led to a broader discussion of one of the most potent German stereotypes in the period, that of the bloodthirsty militant Teutonic bishop (studies of which, by Reuter and Scales, were not consulted).¹⁰ Comments by Walter Map and William of Malmesbury that German kings were weak because they had given too much away to the church will thrill any scholars still engaged in the *Reichskirchensystem* debates (Malmesbury claimed that they had done so specifically to escape the control of the lay nobility). It is really worth stressing here the sheer amount of material referred to by Chwalka,

¹⁰ Len Scales, 'Germen Militiae: War and German Identity in the Later Middle Ages', *Past and Present*, 180 (2003), 41–82; Timothy Reuter, 'Episcopi cum sua militia: The Prelate as Warrior in the Early Staufer Era', in Timothy Reuter (ed.), *Warriors and Churchmen in the High Middle Ages: Essays Presented to Karl Leyser* (London, 1992), 79–94.

but left untapped, ranging from discussions of Carolingian and Ottonian ancestry (for both English and German rulers) to attempts by German kings to introduce taxes based on English models. Ralph Niger – in his descriptions of the Magi at Cologne, campaigns in Italy, and the imperial episcopate – is indeed recognized as having shown a ‘marked interest in German history’ (p. 137). We miss out too on Walter Map’s incredible suggestion that Henry V, having slain his brother and quarrelled with the princes, faked his own death and retired to a monastery. Map even cites an expletive – *Tpwrut Aleman* – ‘reckoned to this day by all Germans as the worst of insults . . . a reproach which constantly causes many quarrels between them and foreigners.’¹¹ The material fits Reuter’s highly pertinent characterization of Walter Map’s initial anecdote as ‘seemingly unusable: imprecise, historically inaccurate, cliché ridden’ – but nonetheless illustrative of the capacity of these authors to compare and contrast.¹²

To only judge the extent of contact and awareness between England and Germany by either the final case studies, or by reference to models of the Other, would be to miss out on far too much of the rich bounty that Chwalka has unearthed from her sources (before one even begins to think, beyond her remit, of what could be gleaned from other genres of sources or areas of economic, religious, intellectual, and artistic life). The absence of any reference throughout the book to Robert Bartlett’s *Making of Europe* – in a study concerned with the Other in the Latin West – is inexplicable and perhaps also significant for the work’s framing and ultimate conclusions.¹³ As Bartlett argued, twelfth-century Europe bore witness to a high degree of integration and mobility of the kind Chwalka has observed between England and Germany. Hostile notions of the Other did exist, but were directed more often towards those beyond the edge of this increasingly homogenous core – by English authors looking north and west, and by their German counterparts towards the east. Chwalka’s search for such an Other in two polities at the centre of this zone might always

¹¹ Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium: Courtiers’ Trifles*, ed. and trans. M. R. James, C. N. L. Brooke, and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1983), 458.

¹² Reuter, ‘All Quiet Except on the Western Front?’, 452.

¹³ Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change 950–1350* (London, 1993).

have proved elusive. Yet, paradoxically, one should not take her conclusion—nor the book's title—at its word. What she has uncovered instead is more nuanced and arguably more interesting: a pair of vibrant historical cultures enriching one another through fleeting, but nonetheless significant exchanges of information, documents, and personal experiences, whose authors displayed a breadth of vision when writing about their European neighbours that compares favourably with that of their modern successors. *Kein Interesse* is not without its faults: the lack of reference to works by not only Bartlett and Reuter, but also Weiler, Scales, and Thomas Förster is regrettable and significant.¹⁴ But it remains a valiant comparative study whose approach, interpretations, and conclusions reward close reading and prolonged reflection.

¹⁴ In addition to the works cited above, particularly relevant are Timothy Reuter, 'The Medieval German *Sonderweg*? The Empire and its Rulers in the High Middle Ages', in Reuter, *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities*, 388–412; Timothy Reuter, 'Modern Mentalities and Medieval Politics', *ibid.* 3–18; Timothy Reuter, 'Past, Present and No Future in the Twelfth-Century *Regnum Teutonicum*', in Paul Magdalino (ed.), *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, (London, 1992), 15–36; and Thomas Förster, *Vergleich und Identität: Selbst- und Fremddeutung im Norden des hochmittelalterlichen Europa* (Berlin, 2009).

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FRANZISKA KLEIN, *Die Domus Conversorum und die Konvertiten des Königs: Fürsorge, Vorsorge und jüdische Konversion im mittelalterlichen England, Europa im Mittelalter*, 37 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021), xii + 308 pp. ISBN 978 3 110 68714 9. £91.00

In any society in which religion is a differentiating factor, converting from one religion to another has particular significance. For a relatively long time after their conversion (and sometimes permanently), converts see themselves, or others see them, as belonging not only to one community but as embodying much of their old world – the one they have left behind. Their milieu, their religious and social practices, and of course suspicion towards them from the ranks of their new religion mean that converts often occupy a distinct place within society. In 1232, the English king Henry III established a dedicated institution on what was then the edge of the city (today Chancery Lane, at that time *Newestrete*) to accommodate, educate, and provide for Jews from all over the country who had converted to Christianity. It was called the *Domus Conversorum* – the ‘first royal home for converts in the Latin Middle Ages’ (p. 23). There is nothing left of the building itself; the former headquarters of the Public Record Office (now the King’s College Maughan Library) were built on the site in the nineteenth century. It is just about possible, however, to reconstruct its history – albeit with gaps and discontinuities, and often only from later sources.

The history of the *Domus Conversorum* is the subject of this excellent book by Franziska Klein, which came out of the PhD thesis she completed at the University of Duisburg–Essen in 2017. Equipped with a highly reflective methodology, the author has structured her study clearly and justified her approach very well throughout. First, Klein explains her sources. Apart from a more detailed report by Matthew Paris on its founding, there are very few thirteenth-century records pertaining to this establishment. An almost uninterrupted sequence of bills, admissions orders, and receipts from the house itself, however, has survived. These date from 1331, and offer insight into the institution’s occupancy, staffing, and financial situation. This

Translated by Marielle Sutherland (GHIL).

sequence comes to an end in 1609 (p. 25), but it is interesting to note that the Domus Conversorum survived the (by no means complete) expulsion of the Jews in 1290. A large number of its residents found their way to England from different European countries (including Spain, Portugal, the Ottoman Empire, France, and the Holy Roman Empire), although we know very little about their reasons for doing so (p. 229–30). In 1308, forty-one men and ten women were admitted to the institution. In terms of the gender ratio, the house was unequivocally male-dominated in the late Middle Ages and the early modern period (p. 230).

The first section examines the prevalence of, and resources involved in, welfare for converts in England in the thirteenth century, the aim of which was to prevent a decline in their social status (p. 29). This section begins with a detailed inventory of the Domus Conversorum, which is recognized not only as a central institution that cared for converts but also in its capacity as a foundation—in Michael Borgolte’s sense of a ‘total social phenomenon [*totales soziales Phänomen*]¹—and as a self-contained establishment for poor relief (p. 25). According to this inventory, the Domus by no means grew ‘out of nothing’ but followed a tradition on which it left its own mark (p. 27). Klein’s understanding of welfare for converts is decidedly not one of ‘individual action’ but of social practice—endowed with a strong sense of social commitment.

The second section is entitled ‘Alternatives to Royal Welfare’. Extending the perspective she has set out thus far, Klein turns to those converts who did not benefit to the same degree from royal welfare but pursued independent careers—for example, in royal service. Other alternatives to royal welfare were, Klein observes, marriage, the priesthood, or—strikingly, of course—crime (pp. 111–19). Section three is entitled ‘Crossing and Drawing Boundaries: Challenges and Questions around English Policies on Jews and Conversion’. Klein profiles English welfare policy against the background of royal Jewish and conversion policies, raising questions about the status of Jews and converts in the Kingdom of England, and particularly their relationship to the Crown. Klein stresses that baptism was a ‘conflict generator’

¹ Michael Borgolte, *Weltgeschichte als Stiftungsgeschichte: Von 3000 v.u.Z. bis 1500 u.Z.* (Darmstadt, 2017), 9.

(pp. 162, 166), a concept she illustrates in very different ways. As an example of a property dispute deriving from a conversion, she cites a case from the mid thirteenth century: an argument between Josce, who was a Jew from Canterbury, and his daughter. Josce was unenthusiastic about his daughter's conversion plans. When she and her husband announced they were going to convert, he promptly withdrew the dowry of 30 marks he had given her upon their marriage. He then received orders from the Crown to return the money, although it is unclear whether the converts were allowed to keep it or whether it was ultimately seized by the king. As well as such property disputes, Klein describes other obstructions to conversions, kidnappings, and cases of converts threatening Jews.

The fourth section explores planning, control, and the handling of contingencies, investigating the functions and effects of welfare for converts in England. Central to this was education in the Christian faith, which converts received at the *Domus Conversorum* (p. 211). The many measures Klein lists include general facilitation of work and careers, but above all support from the Crown for careers in the Church and for marriages (p. 212). Section five turns to the broader history of the *Domus Conversorum* after the expulsion of the Jews from England. Here, Klein establishes that despite its unquestionable significance, the year 1290 did not represent an immediate turning point in the existence of the *Domus Conversorum*. However, during this year—as documented by fewer payments from the Crown and numerous reports on catastrophic living conditions in the house—the institution found itself at a crisis point, and this lasted until the mid fourteenth century (p. 225). Crucial in the survival and gradual transformation of the institution was not least the fact that it became an important site of the royal chancery. Exactly when the Crown began storing chancery records (especially rolls) in the chapel of the *Domus Conversorum* can, according to Klein, no longer be established, but it had already been reported that Philip Gerardyn ‘venit coram Cancellario . . . in capella domus conversorum London [came to the Chancellery . . . in the chapel of the *Domus Conversorum* in London]’ (p. 234). For the years following, Klein continues, records of legal transactions are legion, and consequently, the chapel of the house acquired the title *capella rotulorum*, or Rolls Chapel. At the end

of the fifteenth century, it even replaced the Tower in its role as 'document repository' (p. 234). Whereas the converts thus featured less and less from the fourteenth century, becoming more an accessory to the house than the centre of its work, the Masters of the Rolls, and with them the royal chancery, increasingly shaped the character of the site (p. 236). Further architectural changes were made in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries before, in the nineteenth century, the famous Public Record Office building was erected, the home of the British National Archives until 1974.

At the end of her book, Klein rightly points out that despite all her emphasis on welfare, we must not forget that there were also converts who were neither recipients of aid nor employees of the Crown. Such people, whose existence is confirmed by isolated sources, still represent a blind spot in the study of English conversion policy, for they are mentioned in the sources only in exceptional cases. Further studies on converts in England, Klein argues, are needed to examine this group more closely, coming at it from a local angle instead of from her rather centralized, royal perspective. Our knowledge of converts at the parochial level is still rather hazy in terms of both their everyday integration into the majority society and their contact with Jews; a cursory glance at the Husting Rolls of Common Pleas reveals there is great potential for research in this area. More generally, there is in fact a considerable gap in research on the inclusion of converts in the Christian community beyond the Iberian Peninsula and the Kingdom of Naples, and the few short studies completed thus far have not been able to fill it. Research on converts primarily needs to use regional sources to focus on localizing this phenomenon of poor relief and Jewish policy.

Klein's book contains a wealth of valuable insights, not least the fascinating idea put forward in its conclusion: that it was no accident that the increased separation between Jews and Christians and the stepping up of welfare for converts came at around the same time, but rather that both phenomena had the same root cause. Both were a reaction to a proximity between Christians and Jews that the Christian society increasingly considered problematic. The most powerful stories of personal fates in the book—in my opinion—are those that are ambiguous: descriptions of the majority society's ineradicable

resentment towards newly converted Christians, such as in the case of Henry of Winchester, perhaps the most famous of all thirteenth-century English converts. King Henry III himself was involved in Winchester's conversion; he lifted him from the baptismal font and knighted him. Henry of Winchester played a crucial role in the buying and selling of Jewish bonds. In 1261, he was ordered by the king to store the bonds in six chests. Nonetheless, as Klein convincingly shows, his Jewish origins always went before him, like a stain on his character (p. 182). Following an objection by Thomas de Cantilupes (c.1220–82), the Bishop of Hereford, he was denied a decisive role in investigations into counterfeit coins. Thomas even threatened to resign from the counsel if this 'convert and Jew' were to be given such power over the lives of Christians (p. 182).

It is also worth drawing attention to the book's appendix; in it, there are transcriptions from the National Archives that document the distribution of converts in 1255; reprints of a letter from the convert Alicia of Worcester to Robert Burnell, the chancellor and bishop of Bath and Wells (c.1275–92); a report on the state of the *Domus Conversorum* and the number of residents in 1308; and a petition by the convert Andrew to Edward II (c.1315). An index of names, places, and institutions rounds off the study, which, in its interplay between specific individual cases and general inferences, is key to our understanding of how the English monarchy dealt with England's Jews, even beyond the history of the *Domus Conversorum*. The book is one of the most important new publications on Christian converts in the Middle Ages since Jean-Claude Schmitt's *The Conversion of Herman the Jew*.²

² Jean-Claude Schmitt, *The Conversion of Herman the Jew: Autobiography, History, and Fiction in the Twelfth Century*, trans. Alex J. Novikoff (Philadelphia, 2010; French original 2003).

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DAVID BLACKBOURN, *Germany in the World: A Global History, 1500–2000* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2024), xxv + 774 pp. ISBN 978 1 631 49183 2. £40.00

Making sense of German history has remained a challenge far into the twenty-first century, and is certainly not confined to parochial undertakings at German universities, but has become somewhat of a global enterprise in itself. Several decades ago, master historians of the post-war West German generation such as Thomas Nipperdey, Hans-Ulrich Wehler, and Heinrich August Winkler launched their multi-volume works on modern Germany, roughly since the late eighteenth century, and in many respects, those books have remained the gold standard in the field.¹ They share a combination of energetic writing, erudite knowledge of specialized research, and a guiding interpretation that, despite some differences between the three, may be broadly characterized as a modified reckoning with the German *Sonderweg*. Back then, when Nipperdey and Wehler were still conceiving and writing their first volumes, two young British historians self-confidently stepped up and challenged prevalent notions that Germany had diverged from a liberal-democratic trajectory of modernity in the nineteenth century with the ‘failure’ of the 1848 revolution, Bismarck’s authoritarian empire, and the ensuing Wilhelmine deformations that fed into the Third Reich. These are but ‘Mythen deutscher Geschichtsschreibung’, David Blackbourn und Geoff Eley lamented – historiographical myths about alleged ‘peculiarities of German history’, as their enormously influential treatise was titled in the expanded English edition of 1984.²

Fast-forward four decades, and both Blackbourn and Eley have long since moved to the United States and risen to the ranks of highest

¹ Thomas Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800–1918*, 3 vols. (Munich, 1983–92), vol. i published in English as *Germany from Napoleon to Bismarck*, trans. Daniel Nolan (Princeton, 1996); Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Deutsche Gesellschaftsgeschichte, 1700–1990*, 5 vols. (Munich, 1987–2008); Heinrich August Winkler, *Germany: The Long Road West*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 2006–7). See also: James J. Sheehan, *German History, 1770–1866* (Oxford, 1989).

² David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *Mythen deutscher Geschichtsschreibung: Die gescheiterte Revolution von 1848* (Berlin, 1980); David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford, 1984).

eminence in the field of German and European history, although their academic ways have parted. While Eley has emerged as a rare flag-bearer of Marxist historiography, David Blackbourn has moved to the centre (or always stood there) and continued his challenging of established perspectives through much more sophisticated intellectual approaches, often taking up views from the margins: Württemberg rather than Prussia in his PhD on the Centre Party; ordinary Roman Catholic folk in a small town rather than the state bureaucracy otherwise hailed as modern and liberal in his study of apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Marpingen; and the transformation of German waterways in what still stands as a pioneering book on the history of landscapes in his *Conquest of Nature*.³ With his most recent publication, *Germany in the World*, Blackbourn continues his quest to make sense of German history somewhat against the grain, albeit in a different way: not just with the synthetic scope of a book that presents an *histoire totale* of Central Europe across five centuries (a bold claim made quite explicitly in the introduction),⁴ but by taking up a conceptual challenge that has now arrived in the mainstream of historiography and has been widely discussed for more than two decades – namely, global history and its impact on Germany, a nation long considered a mere continental player aside from the few decades of formal colonial rule between 1884 and 1918.

With this intellectual effort, Blackbourn addresses two admonitions to the profession, particularly in Germany, that he has consistently been making for a long time: the ‘lack of sense of space’ in much conventional writing (certainly in Nipperdey and Wehler), and the shrinking of the time span of German history – in particular, the neglect of the nineteenth century (unimaginable in the good old times of the *Sonderweg*!) in favour of the twentieth, or what German historians often call *Zeitgeschichte*. While the publisher’s claim on the dust

³ Cf. David Blackbourn, *Class, Religion and Local Politics in Wilhelmine Germany: The Centre Party in Württemberg before 1914* (New Haven, 1980); David Blackbourn, *Marpingen: Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in Bismarckian Germany* (Oxford, 1993); David Blackbourn, *The Conquest of Nature: Water, Landscape, and the Making of Modern Germany* (New York, 2006).

⁴ ‘I have cast my net wide. Politics, war and peace, economics, culture, gender, education, science, the environment, race, religion – all have a place’ (p. xxv).

cover that the history of Germany ‘has often been told as if it began in 1871’ is grossly overblown, taking the Reformation as a starting point is a remarkable endeavour, also vis-à-vis the aforementioned grand viziers’ storytelling, which started only with the decomposition of the Holy Roman Empire or even, in Nipperdey’s famous first sentence, with Napoleon. Perhaps it represents a trend born in Nashville, Tennessee, as Blackbourn’s colleague at Vanderbilt, Helmut Walser Smith, opted for a similarly wide chronology in his own account, which centred on the nation rather than the global.⁵ Still, only about one third of the roughly 650 pages of text is devoted to the three ‘early modern’ centuries, including some material in part II that covers the transformative period 1780–1820. The story becomes more expansive towards the present, with the nineteenth century unfolding over 160 pages and, finally, the twentieth century (from 1914) over 280.

The meaning of global in this book is wide rather than narrow, reaching far beyond specific schools or approaches, and its author is certainly not in the post-colonial camp. He includes Germany’s European interconnectedness, with a lot of attention paid to the classic theme of German–French exchanges and entanglements. Indeed, the notions of transnational and entangled history seem to describe this approach best, its truly global reach notwithstanding. Driven by genuine intellectual curiosity and an astounding ability to digest tons of specialized literature, Blackbourn tells fascinating stories about Germans out there in the world, beyond the borders of the German lands in Central Europe. He explores the influences not just of German military power and violence abroad, but the enormous soft power of German culture, be it in ideas and institutions of education (the university, yes, but also the kindergarten!) or in realms of ‘high culture’ such as classical music or ‘world literature’, the claim to which may be traced back to Goethe. Indeed, Germans themselves would blush in the light of so much praise being heaped on their country, especially in the chapters on the long nineteenth century, from Weimar classicism to the cultural and scientific advancements of the *Kaiserreich*. The book is also about the other direction – about ‘the world in Germany’,

⁵ Helmut Walser Smith, *Germany: A Nation in Its Time. Before, During, and After Nationalism, 1500–2000* (New York, 2020).

to invert its title – with regard to Germany taking in French or American influences, or other nationals, as in the waves of migration that have increasingly shaped the country since the late 1950s.

Yet what does David Blackbourn tell us, and how does he do it? The book starts out as an impressive panorama of vignette biographies of Germans who ventured abroad in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Readers will encounter sailors, merchants, and soldiers, often commissioned by non-German enterprises or armed forces, as individuals or in larger constellations, forming German-speaking colonies in Portugal, Latin America, and just about anywhere in the populated world and on its margins. Indeed, the first third of the book, roughly, is a testament to a major trend in German history (and beyond) over the last two or three decades: the attention to the lives of individuals and their experiences of the world. This focus on subjectivities has transformed early modern history (for example, with its attention to egodocuments), as well as our understanding of the twentieth century with the massive impact of *Zeitzeugen* (witnesses of the past), especially in the history of the Holocaust and its aftermath. Beyond its interest in the global, Blackbourn's account may be seen as a major attempt to bring this microhistorical approach to fruition in a larger synthesis. The result is compelling and captivating, and yet offers clear proof of what this kind of narrative cannot achieve. There is little effort to account for institutions such as the Holy Roman Empire, or the estates of late feudal society, and a near absence of structural explanations. Sometimes Blackbourn appears to turn in this direction, only to come up with yet another biographical story in the next sentence.

The fabric of the book changes significantly, however, as the story progresses into the nineteenth century. Individual actors retreat, a different kind of storytelling is woven into the larger narrative, and the author increasingly includes a more systematic kind of consideration. By the time we reach the twentieth century, this mode of writing has become all but dominant. In the chapters on the Third Reich and the Holocaust, readers will encounter the type of research-based factor analysis they may be familiar with from Nipperdey or Wehler. The Holocaust chapter starts with a brief reference to Victor Klemperer's diaries, but quickly shifts to four main characteristics, or 'four things

on which most historians agree' (p. 498) in systematically assessing the Shoah. Readers now are provided with the orientation in the research landscape that was absent from the early modern chapters, while individual voices, or exemplary stories of lives of ordinary people, rarely come up, including Jewish lives in the years of persecution and mass murder. Overall, the narrative of the book in its second half turns more towards the well-established, both in the way the story is crafted as well as in its content and subject matter. Compared to Michael Wildt's recent history of Weimar and Nazi Germany, with its 'postmodern' view from the margins of the empire and through the eyes of marginalized people,⁶ Blackbourn's twentieth-century account is much more 'centred', mainstream, and sometimes even conventional.

In a still different sense, what kind of German history is it that David Blackbourn maps out in this impressive tour de force? True to his beginnings as an anti-*Sonderweg* historian, he does not see Germany as having taken a different course from other European nations over the many centuries. The myriad global Germans in the early modern era and into the nineteenth century are testimony to an entangled nation, much as the British and Portuguese are well known to have been. Then again, it is more complicated, as we are often reminded that Germans abroad mostly stood in service of other countries, and therefore the notion of Germany as a latecomer to global aspirations, and colonial ones in particular, is not off the table. When did it all start to go wrong, if not with German isolation, or the failed revolution in 1848? Blackbourn goes along with current mainstream research in pointing to some radicalization in the late Wilhelmine period (albeit with less emphasis on radicalized, and racialized, science), and otherwise looks to the First World War and the ensuing peace settlement. With regard to colonialism, the litmus test is the connection between colonial violence, especially in the genocidal campaigns against the Herero and Nama in Southwest Africa (1904–7), and the Holocaust. Blackbourn remains cautious, and sometimes vague, when he attributes 'colonial levels of violence' to the conduct of the Wehrmacht (p. 490), and turns a question of causation into an issue of memory when he finds that violence in

⁶ Michael Wildt, *Zerborstene Zeit: Deutsche Geschichte 1918–1945* (Munich, 2022).

Eastern Europe during the Second World War ‘recalls what had been done to Nama and Herero’ (p. 482).

The final chapter on post-1949 Germany, divided and reunited, even comes with a classic redemptive storyline, reminiscent of Heinrich August Winkler’s *Long Road West*, as its title reads ‘The German Question Answered’. The issue of reconciling liberal democracy with a nation-state may well have been answered for good. But so many other German questions remain open, and not least questions about Germany in the world, and the world coming to Germany. Will the German empire of global industrial and trade domination soon collapse? Will ethnic Germans and immigrants alike finally manage to strike a balance between acknowledging diversity and constructing collective identities and communal spirits that go beyond ethnic origin? In the meantime, David Blackbourn’s global history of Germany is indispensable reading for anyone seriously interested in the history of that country – a history that in post-*Sonderweg* times still holds a firm place in general discourses on the trajectories and predicaments of modernity.

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JONATHAN PARRY, *Promised Lands: The British and the Ottoman Middle East* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2022), xvii + 480 pp. ISBN 978 0 691 18189 9. £40.00

The entanglement of empires and the mentalities of those involved in such exchanges have been the focus of many studies in recent years.¹ Seen through this lens, regions of multicultural engagement, such as the Ottoman Empire, have become major research areas. These studies test and refine concepts like geopolitics, international law, and Orientalism and demonstrate their impact on the local and transnational context.²

Jonathan Parry's book *Promised Lands* is another exciting contribution that connects the mentality of British actors in the Middle East with British geopolitical engagement in the Ottoman Empire during the first half of the long nineteenth century. The impact of British mentalities on broader European politics has been described and analysed recently;³ Parry now offers a history of Britain's oriental politics from Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 to 1854, the first year of the Crimean War.

The author offers a multifaceted description of individual actions in the Ottoman territories and explores the global impact of different perceptions of these areas. The title of the book, *Promised Lands*, is a biblical reference. The plural form emphasizes the diversity of the region, which is often oversimplified as the Middle East (p. 3). But the title carries a second connotation. Most of the actors, despite dire conditions, were motivated by their hope of improving the regions through their personal efforts and by exporting the boons of (Western) civilization (pp. 380–1). They believed they were destined to recreate the Promised Land.

Adopting a history of mentalities approach, Parry outlines the lives, career paths, and cultural endeavours of many actors linked

¹ E.g. Martin Thomas and Richard Toye, *Arguing about Empire: Imperial Rhetoric in Britain and France, 1882–1956* (Oxford, 2017).

² E.g. Lauren Benton and Lisa Ford, *Rage for Order: The British Empire and the Origins of International Law, 1800–1850* (Cambridge, MA, 2016).

³ E.g. Andreas Rose, *Zwischen Empire und Kontinent: Britische Außenpolitik vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg* (Munich, 2011).

to the Ottoman Empire. Most of the twelve chapters of the book are divided into subsections, each of which is narratively structured around one person who was active in a particular region and at a particular time. The author describes their biographical background, political activities, and thinking, embedding their actions in the broader picture of local and transnational politics. The use of publications and personal, business, and diplomatic papers written by actors in very different positions provides an interesting insight into the interconnections between political actions and distinguishes the study from many works that draw only upon diplomatic and military documents.

Parry weaves a mostly coherent story from the records of many different individuals, institutions, and companies within a complex context. He highlights not only political negotiations but also the crucial role of economic relations (for example, pp. 309–17), religious perceptions (for example, pp. 239–48), and the impact of archaeological findings on narratives in London as well as on individual careers (for example, pp. 290–7). Rarely has the entanglement of microhistory and political history been illustrated in such detail. Yet the author's modest claim to present only the history of how Britain saw the Middle East (pp. 12–13) turns out to be an understatement, for he integrates many facets of the local context into his narrative, even if only the British are represented in the primary sources.

Throughout the book, the author presents a mostly chronological story, shifting the geographical focus in each chapter. The first chapter is centred on Egypt during and after Napoleon's invasion. It highlights the internal disputes among British actors, as well as their primary objective of defending India against a possible French assault (pp. 22–45).

The second chapter frequently shifts perspective between various British military and diplomatic personnel and representatives of the Levant and East India trading companies. The chapter continues the story of Egypt in the years following the first British intervention, describing the changing coalitions and explaining the British stance in the Egyptian civil war of 1801–12 (pp. 46–57). Later, the focus shifts towards the Red Sea and the pursuit of alternative routes to India, intertwined with the assertion of trading interests (pp. 57–66).

The third chapter delves into the Eyalet of Baghdad. It meticulously describes the power struggles in this Ottoman province and British and Indian efforts to counterbalance French and Russian influence in the region. The stories of two consuls also show how various local groups like the Arabs or Wahhabis were viewed differently by British men on the ground, who valued them not only as pawns in the British power play, but also in a moral context (pp. 80–110).

Chapter four remains in the same region but advances to the 1830s. Britain's main antagonist in the region changes from France to Russia, and Mehmet Ali's impact on British thinking about the Ottoman Empire is explored. Consul Taylor's story exemplifies how British officials tried to keep different powers at bay and improve regional economic development (pp. 111–43).

In chapter five, Parry returns to Egypt and the British relationship with Mehmet Ali. This chapter explores the relationship between Britain and Egypt through economic connections, the protection of Christians, modernization attempts, and the export of ancient cultural assets from Egypt. The chapter also illustrates Jeremy Bentham's philosophical view on Egypt and Ottoman rule, and his impact on British thinking about the region (pp. 144–61). In the later subchapters, the focus shifts to Syria and how the brutal suppression of the rebellion against Mehmet Ali shattered the British image of him as a benevolent despot (pp. 161–73).

Chapter six discusses British involvement in the Oriental Crisis (1839–40) and the reactions to the Tanzimat reforms, which placed high expectations of modernization on the Sultan. It also explains the reasons for the joint intervention against Mehmet Ali (pp. 174–205).

Chapter seven narrates the story of the Anglican mission in Syria and Kurdistan, showing how its efforts were restricted by contestations from Catholics and Ottoman officials, given that Protestantism lacked the status of a millet. Parry describes many attempts to establish lasting contacts with the different sects in the region, as well as the failure to maintain such connections (pp. 206–48).

The theme of protection is picked up again in chapter eight, which is set in Lebanon and particularly addresses the British reaction to the persecution of Nestorians by Kurds. It also investigates the power struggle between Consul Rose (later the assistant ambassador) and

Ambassador Canning, intertwining these stories with the establishment of Henry Layard as an important new actor who worked with different local groups for his archaeological excavations (pp. 249–77).

Chapter nine continues this narrative in Constantinople with Canning as the main protagonist. It explores his efforts to counterbalance Russian influence and establish judicial fairness in Ottoman courts while British consular jurisdiction was expanding (pp. 278–90). In the last subsection, Layard becomes the central figure. Despite becoming a British national hero through his achievements in archaeology, he lost the favour of Canning, who felt his sponsorship was underappreciated by Layard and the wider public (pp. 290–7).

The British influence on trade routes taken by Indian steamships, and British and Russian mediations in the conflict between the Ottoman and Persian Empires, are the subject of chapter ten. Here, Parry illustrates the penetration through trade, but also highlights how British trade relied on local networks and how both the Ottoman Empire and Egypt were able to restrain British efforts (pp. 298–333).

Chapter eleven returns to Egypt and demonstrates that cooperation with France became possible once joint economic interests in the region became strong enough. Despite differing political goals, France and Britain supported the new Khedive Abbas I in similar ways in Constantinople, initiating large infrastructural projects such as the construction of a railway from Cairo to Suez (pp. 334–55).

In chapter twelve, the intellectual pilgrimage of the book concludes in Jerusalem on the eve of the Crimean War. The ongoing disputes over the holy places in Jerusalem, Russian protection of Orthodox Christians, and the refugees of the revolutions of 1848 who escaped to the Ottoman Empire are examined as major factors behind the war. The author further explores the outcome of the war, the 1856 Treaty of Paris. According to Parry's analysis, the formal inclusion of the Ottoman Empire in the Concert of Europe did not significantly change international law, but was intended to undermine Russia's symbolic demands. Rather than enhancing respect for Ottoman sovereignty, Westerners interfered more frequently in the empire, which led to increased antagonism with the Muslim population (pp. 356–72).

In the conclusion (pp. 373–404), Parry ties together the many threads he has presented and provides an overview of the impact of

the events described on further developments in the region through to the period of decolonization. In this broader context, nearly all British actors were primarily reacting to 'great European wars' and the actual or perceived 'imperial ambition' of other major powers (p. 403). There was no master plan, but every action triggered long causal chains with a life of their own. Within the time frame of the study, these chains were mostly beneficial for the British. Looking beyond the First World War, however, suggests the opposite. Thus Parry argues that for as long as the British were merely power brokers in the regions, they were able to establish good connections with local groups and outmanoeuvre imperial rivals. Problems arose when they began governing the regions themselves (pp. 399–402).

Overall, Parry's work demonstrates an excellent combination of modern history of mentalities and classical political history, offering significant insights into Ottoman history. The book is primarily based on British sources and acknowledges nearly all significant English-language secondary literature concerning the Ottoman Empire, the British Levant trade, and Franco-British diplomacy and foreign politics. The depth and breadth of Parry's knowledge are impressive. He almost always succeeds in connecting the changing local contexts with the intellectual, political, and economic aspirations of his protagonists within the broader currents of international power politics. He examines the impact of cultural endeavours in archaeology and the powerful imaginings and reimaginings of the biblical and ancient world, which fostered dreams of improvement for the Near East. He also shows how these aspirations often clashed with those in the imperial centres.

Nonetheless, the analytical reasons for the selection of some regions and the exclusion of others remain unclear. Parry's narrative framing of a pilgrimage may partly justify the areas of research. However, some stories, like the excursions to Abyssinia, do not fit within this framework. As Parry acknowledges, given the vast amount of historical sources, a historian, while selecting interesting stories, must also 'try to produce something coherent' (p. 405).

More importantly, however, the study is based exclusively on English-language literature and sources. To use the example of German alone, this limitation means Parry did not consider similar

or complementary studies such as the one by Johannes Berchtold on the British consular justice system.⁴ My own study of protection in the Ottoman Empire could also have enriched Parry's conclusion with regard to Layard's additional diplomatic efforts.⁵ In terms of sources, Parry thus excludes diplomatic actors from other major powers, like Austria, who were significant brokers in the Ottoman Empire. As Parry himself admits, no Ottoman or Egyptian sources are included; we can assume this has skewed his perspective considerably.

Parry's book is an extensive and detailed study of a vast area and time period, providing in-depth insights into the lives and actions of numerous British, Indian, and Ottoman individuals. Their remarkable stories might have been forgotten if Parry had not chronicled them. However, while reading the book, I often wondered about the motivations behind the actions of these individuals and questioned the overarching thesis of the book. Parry seldom analyses his protagonists' actions, and his conclusion primarily serves as a summary and also a survey of the next hundred years. If Parry's main point is to show that Orientalism is more complex than Edward Said suggested and to reaffirm the principal-agent problem, these insights are not particularly new in this field of study.

In this sense, Jonathan Parry has written a brilliant book that engagingly tells and arranges the stories of nearly forgotten areas and individuals, often employing intriguing metaphors. However, a slightly larger focus on analysis and more daring theses could have elevated this already great contribution to a truly magnificent level.

⁴ Johannes Berchtold, *Recht und Gerechtigkeit in der Konsulargerichtsbarkeit: Britische Exterritorialität im Osmanischen Reich 1825–1914* (Munich, 2009).

⁵ Wolfgang Egener, *Protektion und Souveränität: Die Entwicklung imperialer Herrschaftsformen und Legitimationsfiguren im 19. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 2018).

BOOK REVIEWS

WOLFGANG EGNER is a history and philosophy teacher at a school for highly gifted children in Schwäbisch Gmünd. He was previously a research assistant at the 'Cultural Foundations of Social Integration' Centre of Excellence at the University of Konstanz. His recent publications include his PhD thesis *Protektion und Souveränität: Die Entwicklung imperialer Herrschaftsformen und Legitimationsfiguren im 19. Jahrhundert* (2018) and 'Governing "two races": The External Construction of a Turkish Identity by an Early British Administration (1878–1844) of Cyprus', *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 36 (2019), 47–68.

ANDREA GRÄFIN VON HOHENTHAL, *Griff nach der Psyche? Psychologie im Ersten Weltkrieg in Großbritannien und Deutschland*, Krieg in der Geschichte, 120 (Paderborn: Brill Schöningh, 2023), x + 609 pp. ISBN 978 3 506 79086 6. €129.00

In her comparative study, Andrea Gräfin von Hohenthal examines the genesis and development of psychology as a science and medical-therapeutic practice during the First World War. Through her examination of the British and German psychological associations and specialist societies of the period, the author traces the individual and group actors who played a central role in shaping the discipline of psychology. In addition, she takes into account the perspective of those who called upon psychological expertise, such as the army and the military administration.

First, von Hohenthal examines psychology's 'formative phase' in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At that time, it was neither a discrete discipline or field of study, nor was it possible to take any course of study – which is why the author defines psychologists as members of the British Psychological Society and the Gesellschaft für experimentelle Psychologie (Society for Experimental Psychology) in Germany, specialist societies that were founded early on (1901 and 1906 respectively). By the mid nineteenth century, psychological knowledge was already being produced and methods were being tested within certain fields. For example, the Medico-Psychological Association (founded in 1865), the successor to the Association of Medical Officers, was open not only to doctors in psychiatric institutions but also to researchers in psychology, such as Charles Myers, who played an important role in the care of injured soldiers during the First World War. Von Hohenthal maintains that, although psychology in the late nineteenth century was an international project, there were as yet no shared conceptual tools nor any common understanding of the principles of psychology. Any international cooperation seemed to be driven purely by the appetite for a new science. Experimental psychology, which had been established in Germany and was increasingly gaining international recognition around 1900, played a particularly

Translated by Marielle Sutherland (GHIL).

important role in the exchange of ideas. The German psychologist Wilhelm Wundt in Leipzig had become the linchpin of this variant of psychology. He attracted students from the Anglo-American world and made sure the programme of scientific experimental psychology was also promoted in Great Britain and the USA.

This development coincided at the end of the nineteenth century with a push for new expertise within various disciplines—for example, medicine, pedagogy, and law. Based on this ‘scientification of the social’ (Lutz Raphael, cited on p. 37)—undertaken not least by state actors—von Hohenthal interprets the formation of an experimentally oriented psychology as the result of academic discourse and the expectations of policymakers and the public, that is, as a specific epistemological approach. She focuses on the following questions: what role did psychological experts play? What kind of expertise did they bring to the military administration? And which spheres of work were open to psychologists?

Von Hohenthal puts the First World War period, which was a catalyst for scientific psychology, at the centre of her analysis. As well as essays in specialist journals and the records of psychological societies such as the archive of the British Psychological Society, her sources include British and German medical reports and British reports by parliamentary and other committees, such as the ‘Report of the War Office Committee of Enquiry into “Shell-Shock”’. Furthermore, she examines patients’ files and psychologists’ personal archives, as well as the letters, diaries, and memoirs of patients, drawing on these egodocuments to incorporate their perspective too. Before the war, psychologists did not have any kind of practical function. Only with the outbreak of war did specific fields of activity emerge in either country: in psychiatry and the treatment of soldiers, in the war industry, and in assessments within recruitment processes, particularly for pilots. Charles Myers, for example, became a psychological adviser to the British Armed Forces, and this put him in a position to show that psychologists were indispensable. It was the British Army’s openness, or its low level of organization, that offered these windows of opportunity, particularly as the Army Medical Corps played a very limited role before the war. In the German Empire, by contrast, there was a high level of organization in the medical service, giving

psychologists, even in the field of military psychiatry, very limited scope for influence and much less room for manoeuvre. However, their involvement in the treatment of injured soldiers behind the front line enabled German psychologists, too, to play an active role.

In both countries, these new experts were integrated into modern warfare. Psychologists were able to apply their specific knowledge, which was based on the testing and measuring of cognitive and emotional capability. They evidently did not question whether or not they should be contributing to the war effort. In both Great Britain and the German Empire, they assimilated unhesitatingly into the military hierarchy, adopted its concepts of authority, and subordinated the welfare of individual patients to national goals.

The Battles of Verdun and the Somme, which from 1916 caused huge losses of soldiers and materiel, led to the conscription of more and more workers from industry, who were replaced by untrained and female staff. This reorganization of the war economy, and the efficiency problems people feared it would cause, convinced politicians and military administrators to test and implement new methods of assessing workers. Psychologists provided the knowledge and the corresponding methods for selecting suitable candidates, and these techniques remained in demand in both the military and the private sector in the Weimar Republic after the war, whereas the British Army returned to more traditional recruitment processes. Nonetheless, in Great Britain there was still a high level of interest from the private sector.

During the war, psychologists' concepts and views of the causes of 'shell shock' and the appropriate therapies for it also changed. At first, mental disorders were seen as having been caused by the war itself. It was felt that many soldiers and officers were overwhelmed by the enormous levels of death and destruction, the constant physical and psychological stress, and the fact they were not given long enough to recover. In the course of the war, however, and partly because of the increase in pension applications, this belief changed and the illness was attributed more and more to the individual soldier's constitution and disposition. This meant it was no longer the war that was seen as causing mental exhaustion and breakdown, but the weaknesses of the individual. In Germany, this shift in focus

to the individual led to the use of more aggressive treatments such as electroshock therapy in order to make patients fit for work and war again. German psychologists were primarily concerned here, von Hohenenthal claims, with getting men back into the war economy. Returning them to military duty was less important, whereas British psychologists were tasked with getting their patients 'fit for the front' (p. 496). The therapeutic approaches employed to this end by psychologists in Great Britain remained rather 'benevolent' (p. 491); they seemed to distance themselves from aggressive therapies. Whether British officers and rank-and-file soldiers were treated equally in this regard remains unclear.

For Great Britain, the picture of war psychology that emerges is to a large extent based on the reports and accounts of officers who were also writers, such as Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon, who were briefly treated by the psychologist William Rivers at Craiglockhart War Hospital near Edinburgh. Rivers' methods, however, and even the diagnosis of 'shell shock', were highly controversial at the War Office in London, where the view was taken that such patients were merely deserters or malingerers who should not be rewarded – in the case of Craiglockhart – with 'luxuries, golf and tennis' (p. 313).¹ Nonetheless, in Great Britain psychologists like Rivers were able to try out new methods such as talking therapy within military psychiatry.

As well as having practical implications for psychology, the First World War spawned groundbreaking conceptual research in the field. Once the USA joined the war, British thinking was increasingly shaped by American knowledge and ideas. The previously dominant influence of German experimental psychology waned, British psychologists turned their sights west, and Anglo-American psychology began to prevail.

For many psychological experts in Great Britain, the end of the war also meant the end of their work. Posts within universities or the

¹ On Craiglockhart see e.g. Thomas Webb, "'Dottyville': Craiglockhart War Hospital and Shell-Shock Treatment in the First World War', *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, 99/7 (2006), 342–46; or Peter J. Leese, 'A Social and Cultural History of Shellshock, with Particular Reference to the Experience of British Soldiers during and after the Great War' (PhD thesis, Open University, 1989).

military were neither continued nor developed. Only three hospitals carried on using and testing psychological and therapeutic knowledge and methods. In industry, psychologists were reliant on the initiatives of individuals who recognized the value of the new aptitude tests and selection processes and wanted to use them in companies.

In Germany, unlike Britain, psychology continued at the institutional level too. Psychological expertise played an important role in the now considerably reduced armed forces. The universities, too, established further professorships and departments in psychology. This post-war period also saw the founding of a psychotherapy society, which distanced itself from the aggressive therapies that had been used experimentally during the war.

Von Hohenthal also traces less obvious continuities that go beyond the period under study through to the Second World War. Ability assessments and aptitude tests applicable on a mass scale formed a subset of psychological knowledge that was continuously employed in Germany in the Weimar Republic and under National Socialism. In Great Britain, by contrast, psychological expertise only made a comeback when the Second World War broke out and it was once again needed in industrial psychology and military aptitude tests. Likewise, psychologists were called upon to share what they had learned about the symptoms of exhaustion and breakdown in military psychiatry during the First World War so that they could help prepare young doctors for the tasks that lay ahead in the coming conflict.

Andrea von Hohenthal successfully demonstrates how the First World War acted as a catalyst in the field of psychology. Psychologists from both countries came together proactively to play an important role in the war effort. Through their broad range of methods – including statistics and questionnaires – they proved their worth in modern warfare as particularly valuable ‘modern experts’ (p. 495), for example in selection processes for pilots. There was therefore a demand for them in military psychiatry, the war industry, and the armed forces. In both countries, the military needed them to explore, assess, and manipulate the human psyche.

The author also identifies the subtle differences between psychologists and their therapeutic approaches in Great Britain and Germany during and after the war, without losing sight of international

connections. Furthermore, she illustrates the catalysing role of the First World War in terms of the importance attached to psychologists in both countries, which waned, but did not disappear altogether. The psychologists' expertise could be reactivated at any time.

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MIRA L. SIEGELBERG, *Statelessness: A Modern History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020), 328 pp. ISBN 978 0 674 97631 3. £30.95

Mira L. Siegelberg's study of statelessness as a newly emerging political and legal category of international politics in the twentieth century comes at a moment when refugees are again in the focus of public debates. As the author herself writes in the introduction, unpredictable levels of forced mass migration and the foreseeable, yet still denied consequences of climate change – namely, the vanishing of island states due to rising sea levels – have brought statelessness back to the international agenda. The study aims to analyse why statelessness remained a rather 'hidden' category of international law, politics, and also history, though it was, as Siegelberg seeks to show, a major category around which the architecture of the present international order evolved. To do so, she takes up fresh insights from the historiography of empire, decolonization, and international organizations, which argues that the global triumph of the nation state as the dominant and seemingly non-negotiable form of political organization was not foreseeable until the 1960s. In this way, Siegelberg turns against established readings of contemporary international history that present statelessness as the downside of nationalism and sovereignty. Instead of asking why the international agreements of the post-war years to protect refugees, stateless persons, and human rights in general did not achieve their intended aim, she investigates how these conventions contributed to the creation of the international order after the Second World War.

Siegelberg's approach opens up a set of interesting and productive questions that put the gradual emergence of the relationship between individuals, states, and international law centre stage. She does so by focusing on international organizations and legal scholars. Accordingly, the book is an intellectual history of statelessness dealing with legal theory and scholarly debates, with particular emphasis on Hannah Arendt and Hans Kelsen. The overall argument is that statelessness entered national and international politics only after the First World War, and soon became a contested battleground in efforts to rebalance the relationship between national sovereignty, global governance, and international law. Siegelberg presents the post-1945 era

as the most important period in which these conflicts took legal and political shape. It is therefore surprising that five out of six chapters deal with the decades until 1945, while only the last chapter delves into what she presents as the core development.

Chapters one to three trace how statelessness entered international law and politics. The first chapter analyses a major court decision in 1921 in the UK that established statelessness as a novel legal category. The High Court of Justice ruled in favour of a formerly interned German 'enemy alien' who had sued the UK for failing to acknowledge that he had been stateless before war broke out. As Siegelberg argues, although this case is not representative for several reasons, it was nevertheless decisive, as it introduced a third legal category next to alien and citizen. Moreover, it rejected the previous imperial practice of deciding independently about people's citizenship in favour of the principle that only the country in question can rule whether someone is a national or not. This meant that foreign law was acknowledged as a relevant foundational principle which had to be respected by other states.

As the following chapters show, however, this landmark decision remained vague in important respects. Though it established the sovereign state as the basic unit of international politics, it neglected the variegated practices of imperial governance and remained silent about the relationship between domestic rule and international law. This became the main concern of the League of Nations. Taking the Nansen International Office for Refugees and the break-up of the Habsburg empire as case studies, Siegelberg shows how the need to solve political problems led to differentiation between categories: statelessness, humanitarian intervention on behalf of refugees, and the emergence of new collectives as subjects of international law, such as minorities, mandatories, refugees, and stateless persons. It is interesting to read here how League officials thought of international law as a proper jurisdiction that could take care of stateless persons beyond national law, but at the same time they remained hesitant to infringe upon national sovereignty and thus endanger attempts to establish new principles of international governance.

Chapters four and five deal with the deteriorating international situation from the 1930s onwards, with denationalized Jewish people

as the largest group in need of some kind of national or international protection. In these chapters it is instructive to read how contemporaries struggled to differentiate between refugees and stateless persons. Whereas today this distinction seems to be natural, Siegelberg argues that nationality as a legal and political concept was far from being unequivocally established at the time. Consequently, determining statelessness and the role of international law in regulating nationality became key issues in dealing with forced migration. Siegelberg focuses on The Hague Codification Conference, held in 1930 under the patronage of the League of Nations, which strengthened national sovereignty as the sole instance able to determine nationality and citizenship. Moreover, she demonstrates how legal experts from the US and Great Britain attempted to legally justify Nazi denationalization acts by referring to precedents in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They thus not only confirmed the priority of state practices over international law, but also set out to establish the distinctions between refugees and stateless persons and between national and international competences: refugees had a nationality and thus fell under national jurisdiction, while stateless persons were assigned to international regulation.

Chapter five ties this discussion to human rights. Here, Siegelberg argues that the shift in legal theory to the primacy of national sovereignty was reflected in the limited political effectiveness of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Ironically, European émigré scholars and exile politicians were the main proponents of centring the state in legal theory. They thus supported a legal approach to which they had themselves fallen victim. In practice, the contested meaning of statelessness became relevant when the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration and the International Refugee Organization began to support displaced persons, posing the question of what kind of authority would be tasked with adjudicating conflicts over nationality. Here again, the international protection of stateless persons depended on the question of whether state sovereignty was subject to limits.

The last chapter delves into what Siegelberg presents as the main focus of the book: the nationalization of legal subjecthood, that is, the granting of national and international rights to individuals on the basis

of their having a nationality recognized by a sovereign state. Moreover, she points to the transformation of nationality from a formal, legal political membership to a robust social bond. The author argues that a case before the International Court of Justice in 1955 was crucial in establishing the social quality of nationality as decisive for granting or denying citizenship. She explains the significance of the judgement by turning to decolonization and the fierce debates about the right to self-determination that took place in the same year within the United Nations. For Siegelberg, the ruling was of major importance, as it accepted the creation of stateless persons as collateral damage alongside the higher aim of substantiating national sovereignty as a core principle of international law.

All in all, my opinions of the book are mixed. On the one hand, Siegelberg presents intriguing arguments, and her overall approach of linking statelessness to the development of the relationship between national and international law and the settling of the legal status of individuals, states, and international authorities makes a lot of sense and is illuminating in many respects. On the other hand, the book is a taxing read. This begins with the accessibility of the material used: there is no bibliography or list of archival sources, and the latter are cited in the footnotes in a way that does not facilitate further research. Moreover, the introductory description of the subchapters does not correspond with the actual structure of the book, as for example in chapter five. This opaqueness also extends to the content: contested terms such as 'international society' or 'non-state political order' are used without defining what they mean. More importantly, the main thesis is repeated continuously, while important supporting arguments are not provided. For example, the link to decolonization, presented as a main explanatory feature, remains vague and not sufficiently elaborated. The rise of social bonds as the main criteria for nationality in the post-war period is repeated time and again, but Siegelberg does not attempt to explain why the social became so tremendously important and what stood behind this shift. The same holds true for the turn to national sovereignty in chapter five; this is described, but no arguments are provided beyond the writings of legal scholars, which are unsatisfactorily left to the reader to puzzle out. The book makes a major contribution to the history of international

law and politics in the twentieth century. Yet the argument is exaggerated and it would have been desirable to better contextualize the writings of the legal scholars at the centre of the book and critically assess their impact.

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ANDREW CHANDLER, *British Christians and the Third Reich: Church, State, and the Judgement of Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 422 pp. ISBN 978 1 107 12904 7. £90.00

In this book, Andrew Chandler brings together more than three decades of his own research into the study of how British Christians viewed and interacted with Nazi Germany, returning, indeed, to the subject of his 1991 PhD thesis. This is hardly an unresearched topic; however, most studies have considered individual aspects of what British Christians thought about the 'Church Struggle' (*Kirchenkampf*) in German Protestantism, the British government's appeasement policies, the Nazi persecution of Jews, the Allied war effort and the moral issues raised by Allied victory, or the churches' post-war social policy. Chandler attempts to bring these topics together into a more organic whole. The 'and' in the main title covers a multitude of contexts, whether at the official level—the churches' leadership receives significant attention—or on the part of individual lay thinkers and activists. He focuses on the Church of England and on the substantial, increasingly institutionalized ecumenical movement of the 1930s and 1940s. Mainstream Christian opinion in Britain was clearly, consistently, and adamantly opposed to Nazism; nonetheless, there were sympathies towards aspects of National Socialism to be found in some prominent corners of British Christianity. Overall, Chandler emphasizes the Christian interest in and active support for resistance to Nazism, while exploring the many ambiguities, frustrations, and failures that prevented Christians from acting upon these commitments.

Chandler has organized his thoroughly empirical study chronologically. After a couple of introductory chapters that set the overall scene, provide some background to the interwar period, and introduce key figures in the story to follow, the remainder of the book is broken into sections that consider two- to five-year time spans starting in 1933 and ending in 1949. Without advancing any sweeping or especially bold theses, he uses this approach to methodically reveal the incremental back-and-forth of British-German relations in a tumultuous era. The motive force in this story lies within Germany: British churches are depicted as reactive, being constantly forced to

seek coherent responses to political, social, and military events occurring beyond Britain's shores. Much more space is given to the pre-war period 1933–9 than to the war years that followed. The denominational diversity of British Christianity's intellectual world is made clear: each church had not only its own theological traditions and political affiliations but also varied networks and arenas for intellectual debate (such as journals, meetings, councils, conferences, and so on), and each denomination had different degrees and kinds of relationships with Germany in the decades before the 1930s.

The Church of England is at the heart of this story, particularly at the level of its archbishops (Cosmo Lang and William Temple are the key figures) and bishops. Anglicanism had a particular prominence as the 'national' church, and, not least because of its seats in the House of Lords, it had a distinctive political visibility. As Chandler observes, 'for the most part Free Church opinion did look to the Anglicans to take a lead' (p. 5), the culmination of an increasing friendliness in Protestant relations by the interwar years. Roman Catholics played a much smaller role on the national stage at the start of this period, but in the crises that followed, the church – under the leadership of the Cardinal of Westminster, Arthur Hinsley – increased in both stature and relevance. Some individuals stand out. The bishop of Chichester, George Bell, was one of the most active and knowledgeable Anglican figures with regard to German affairs, and he made several notable interventions in public debates. The bishops of Gloucester (Arthur Headlam) and Durham (Herbert Hensley Henson) – who often clashed publicly over German issues – also receive recurrent attention.

Those Christians who took up the fight against National Socialism had a distinct set of perspectives (p. 33):

They shared a belief that the Christian church mattered in the world, that it had a responsibility to it and the prospect of influence within it. They found themselves at home in an essentially political milieu because they were sure that they were a defining dimension of it.

These views were common in Christian ecumenism – 'one of the great progressive movements of post-war liberal internationalism' (p. 22). Its nascent bodies and networks connected German and British

Christians and coordinated many Christian responses to Nazism. Such contexts are key to Chandler's stress on the transnational dimensions of national historiography. He seeks to present British figures – from bishops and archbishops to ecumenical activists – as *participants* in the internal conflicts of the German churches: 'National Socialism', he emphasizes, 'was not simply a German catastrophe but more truly a part of a wider European crisis' (p. 392). In this emphasis on the participatory role of British Christians in German affairs, Chandler at least implicitly draws a contrast with Tom Lawson's depiction of British Christians as 'bystanders' to the Holocaust.¹

British churches shared overlapping concerns across the 1930s: the threats posed to the international order, to those resisting the Nazis within Germany, and to Jews. But what could they actually *do*? Above all, they sought to mobilize public opinion through meetings and statements, resolutions by church governing bodies, and commentary in books and periodicals. Church networks were politically well connected, and when opportunities arose – such as during travel to Germany for church gatherings – face-to-face meetings between British churchmen and high-ranking Nazi officials were arranged (though rarely made public). British Christians also organized aid for refugees and, in a more limited sense, for prisoners in Germany through visits to concentration camps.

The Church Struggle involved a set of complicated conflicts – some theological, some political – between those German Protestants willing to submit the faith to Nazi control and those who refused to do so. At first, its contours were ambiguous, and British responses correspondingly mixed. In 1934, the efforts of the 'Confessing Church' to take a more strongly articulated independent position provided a focus for British church action, and the mobilization of international opinion initially bolstered a counter-offensive against the pro-regime *Deutsche Christen* (pp. 134–5). Chandler foregrounds a shifting framework of possibility for British action: the stabilization of Nazi rule made the regime less concerned about foreign opinion, reducing opportunities to exploit internal divisions. Nazi success also

¹ Tom Lawson, *The Church of England and the Holocaust: Christianity, Memory and Nazism* (Woodbridge, 2006), 167.

emboldened their sympathizers (or those at least critical of the Nazis' opponents) in other countries (pp. 139–40).

Apart from the intra-Protestant Church Struggle, the increasingly desperate plight of German Jews was the most prominent recurring issue in British Christian discussions in this period. Chandler identifies residual antisemitism within British Christianity – disproportionately, but by no means exclusively, among Roman Catholics – but insists the Christian 'consensus lay elsewhere' (p. 67). Even so, he recounts statements by leading churchmen, such as the bishop of Gloucester, expressing understanding for the regime's reasoning even if they condemned the persecution that followed from it. Chandler stresses the depths of British Christians' concerns about Nazi antisemitism: public demonstrations against the mistreatment of Jews began in April 1933, and the issue preoccupied the Christian press and church organizations. The official statements by the churches, however, were often curiously mild, a point that some previous historiography has strongly emphasized.²

This institutional timidity derived, Chandler shows, not from disinterest but rather from uncertainty about which kinds of intervention would *help* the Jews rather than further endanger them. The resulting strategy of 'sympathetic criticism' meant that official critiques of the Nazis were mixed with praise of the 'new Germany' or even of the regime itself. The concurrent reliance upon their contacts in the Confessing Church was, in turn, stymied by the latter's own ambivalent stance: while adamant about church independence, many in the Confessing Church sympathized with various tenets of National Socialism. Christians were thus hindered in developing an effective *strategy* and had few levers to influence Germany's emerging totalitarian system.

The years of the Second World War are given relatively compact treatment, with a focus on Christian views on the morality of the British war effort, debates concerning 'war aims', and visions of an improved post-war society. Christian pacifist opinion receded, though it remained a small, insistent current. It was more mainstream

² E.g. Adrian Hastings, *A History of English Christianity: 1920–1990* (London, 1991), 327, 342–5.

to support the war effort while avoiding the jingoistic nationalism common in the Great War. This consensus suffered under the reports of German atrocities in Poland, the rout of British and French forces, and, of course, as a result of the Blitz; nonetheless, Bishop Bell and others sought to combat 'Vansittartism'—the harshly anti-German views of government adviser Sir Robert Vansittart (later Baron Vansittart)—throughout the war. From 1942 onwards, in the press and in church statements, British Christians condemned reports of the mass killing of Jews. Against some claims that British Christians had failed to sufficiently recognize the unique dangers and suffering of Jews—by folding their struggles into a threat to faith generally or to Christianity specifically³—Chandler argues convincingly not only that such an 'alliance of faiths' had been the goal of both British Christians and Jews, but also that in this way much was accomplished in long-term interfaith relations that might not have been anticipated at the time (p. 310).

Discussions about the shape of the post-war society to come led to a flood of new publishing formats. For example, Bell's *Christianity and World Order* (1940) was in fact the first of the popular 'Penguin Specials', Archbishop Temple's *Christianity and Social Order* (1942) was one of the bestsellers of the war, and, starting in late 1939, the *Christian News-Letter* rapidly attracted some 10,000 subscribers. 'Christian ideas', Chandler shows, 'occupied a firm place in the foreground of this broad discourse' (p. 296). Discussions of post-war social reconstruction can be seen as the most successful of the causes around which Christians organized in this period. Social policy and the moral issues involved in the rebuilding of post-war Britain were home territory for the churches, and the broader shift towards 'planning' gave Christians new means to influence society. The churches also threw themselves into meeting the vast needs of post-war humanitarian assistance.

Chandler summarizes the German Church Struggle as 'a vast, diffuse controversy which sprawled untidily, configured and reconfigured, often by the month' (p. 80). This is an apt description of the events related in this book as a whole, and it speaks to Chandler's

³ Ibid. 345; Lawson, *The Church of England and the Holocaust*, 6, 167.

skills that they are so clearly depicted. British Christians, broadly speaking, flowed with wider cultural currents in Britain: disturbed and concerned about Nazi oppression and violence, rapturous about Munich, inspired (and then deeply disillusioned) by appeasement, patriotically supportive of the war effort (with occasional misgivings about area bombing), and, finally, consumed by visions of a British society after the war that would be better than the one that had entered it. Nonetheless, within such broader commonalities they set their own emphases. Unsurprisingly viewing the age as in the throes of a 'spiritual' crisis, their focus on religious freedom and the role of the sacred in modern societies gave them a distinct standpoint from which to judge politics. As Chandler notes, Christians were already familiar with the language of 'totalitarianism', seeing threats to the rights of Christians as a faith community as part of a wider set of endangered freedoms. (As Markus Huttner has shown, Christians were, indeed, pioneers in such narratives.)⁴

However, the strategy of 'sympathetic criticism' proved a losing and, in retrospect, morally questionable game. Even in November 1935, after the passage of the Nuremberg Laws and in the process of passing a resolution in the Church Assembly condemning the treatment of German Jews, Bell felt the need to reference the 'creative' aspects of Nazism and stress that some of his German friends were committed National Socialists (p. 157). Chandler convincingly refutes the suggestion that British Christians ignored National Socialism or the plight of the Jews. At the same time he shows the many missteps made by church leaders. Ultimately, the churches (like much of the democratic world in the 1930s) seem out of their depth in confronting a force that was immune to – indeed, contemptuous of – appeals to Christian morality. The tools available were simply inadequate to the job.

Nonetheless, this period was a historically important one for Christian social thought, which achieved a creativity, visibility, and relevance that it had at no other point in the twentieth century. The intensity of the British involvement in the Church Struggle, the

⁴ Markus Huttner, *Totalitarismus und säkulare Religionen: Zur Frühgeschichte totalitarismuskritischer Begriffs- und Theoriebildung in Großbritannien* (Bonn, 1999).

leadership of British Christians in the early years of the ecumenical movement, and, not least, Britain's place as one of the victors in the Second World War ensured that *British* Christians were especially prominent in international Christian dialogues and debates. (The strong relationship between British Christians and the rest of the Anglophone world—including the United States—also contributed to their status, though this is an issue that Chandler addresses only glancingly.) 'National Socialism', Chandler writes, 'drew British Christians into the forefront of a vigorous national discussion about political justice, persecution and war and saw them shaping its terms and trajectories' (p. 390). Christian thought expanded its purview, finding much to say about justice, the social order, and freedom; perhaps more surprising, it discovered that there were many, whether committed Christians or not, who were willing to listen.

This is a masterful and important study that will be essential reading for anyone interested in understanding mid twentieth-century British Christianity.

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ROTEM GEVA, *Delhi Reborn: Partition and Nation Building in India's Capital*, South Asia in Motion (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2022), 368 pp. ISBN 978 1 503 63119 9 (hardback), \$90.00; ISBN 978 1 503 63211 0 (paperback), \$30.00

Delhi Reborn is an exceptional work of urban and local history that examines the city within larger frameworks whilst never losing sight of its purpose: to understand how the particular cultural and political histories of Delhi were transformed by the end of empire, the birth of the new nations of India and Pakistan, and the cataclysm of Partition. For the period before these events, Geva's work offers valuable insights into how imaginaries of a new city, and a new nation, were articulated in the interwar period. In particular, the first chapter captures the excitement of these possibilities for understanding and imagining Muslim selfhood. The ideas of Pakistan circulating in the 1930s, communicated in texts and maps, included the city as a place, and more significantly, as an expression of Muslim community that was simultaneously distinct and connected to the broader mores of national politics. The fixing, and restriction, of such ideas in territory came only later. This argument is, of course, a familiar one in general terms: Pakistan meant many things to many people before 1947. Geva, however, succeeds in grounding those ideas in a particular urban, intellectual, and cultural realm, connecting them to lives that belonged entirely within the domain of the city and, indeed, were constitutive of the city in a number of profound ways.

The second chapter maps the violence in Delhi in 1946—the 'abrupt and violent rending of the city's social fabric' (p. 95)—against broader waves of unrest and uncertainty across northern India, and situates the more immediate, local escalation and anticipation of violence in Delhi within a larger history. Geva argues that the violence took on new forms, paving the way for the extraordinary maelstrom of inter- and intra-community violence that accompanied the Partition in 1947. Local organizations armed and trained volunteers, creating new combatants and enabling violence in particular localities. The expansive, inclusive ideas of Pakistan that Geva describes in the first chapter were shrunk back and asserted as defensive calls to arms in the face of immediate threats to personal and collective

safety. *Delhi Reborn* describes the mechanics of the state and the political will that led to anxiety and the restrictions placed on the safety, property, and legitimacy of Muslims in the city. In particular, it traces the role of Sardar Patel, Congress home minister in the interim government which held the power abdicated by the British after mid 1946. Changes in policing and in the coordination of responses to localized violence were critical in creating the conditions for a very new format for communal violence. New Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's voice is heard as a righteous, if ineffectual, witness to the alienation of the city's Muslims.

The third chapter explores particular social and organizational histories that contributed, deliberately and otherwise, to making Muslim inhabitation of the city increasingly insecure and uncertain. Geva demonstrates the constellation of interests of those who constituted the state—politicians, bureaucrats, activists, volunteers, social workers, and the police. She offers a compelling, and unsettling, account of the tensions between Delhi as a symbolic and political centre of the new nation and as a set of inhabited localities from within which responses to the violence, fear, and opportunity were formulated. A terrifying flux was created by attempts to realize Partition, in all its absurdity, by mass migration and ill-formed legislation.

Geva's discussion of literary and journalistic print and textual cultures in the fourth chapter provides a fascinating picture of the dynamic, precarious, and fractious landscapes of identity and belonging that emerged in the years after Partition. The expansive, ambitious imaginaries of the interwar period are replaced by anxious and aggressive narrations of self and other in the new city. The chapter includes a compelling satire—penned by Gopal Mittal in the newspaper *Milap*—of a *Dilliwallah's* (a long-standing resident of the city) resentment towards people transported from Lahore to Delhi. The evocative piece maps and ridicules the resentment felt by long-term Delhi residents towards the ambitious refugees arriving from Punjab.

The book provides insight into the complexities of thought and action that informed Muslim identities in the city during Partition, including among people who had 'familial and friendly' relations with

those who had made the decision to migrate. Formerly mixed neighbourhoods became exclusionary and treacherous for Muslims, who were becoming the 'other community' within the new nation. *Delhi Reborn* moves between different scales of history, from the broadest canvases of national vision to the microhistories of the *mohalla* (community, neighbourhood). Geva also underlines the importance of class, as the situation for the poorest inhabitants was worsened by prosperous families departing the city on relatively advantageous terms, leaving the poor vulnerable to the lawmakers and enforcers, who were biased towards Hindu refugees.

Notwithstanding the physical violence and ghettoization of Delhi's Muslims, the fifth and final chapter provides perhaps the grimmest reading. It describes the ruptures, augmentation, and continuities in the institutions of policing and intelligence in Delhi between the periods of late colonialism, dominionship, and full independence. In 1951, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in Delhi attempted to intercept around 1,700 letters moving between India and Pakistan. Geva describes this action, along with the CID's targeted surveillance and harassment of those classified as potential or actual threats to the new, democratic political order. The lens of the state shifted to include new enemies: socialists, communists, and labour organizers.

The book ends with an epilogue, rather than a conclusion. This briefly summarizes the popular agitations against the Citizenship Amendment Act and the farmers' protests between 2019 and 2021, presenting the continuing tension between the 'authoritarian instincts and democratic aspirations' (p. 263) that are so vividly presented in the proceeding chapters.

Geva avoids shorthand simplifications, offering instead a meticulously researched history that helps us to understand the rhizomic complicity of local politics in a city that was a theatre for national politics and, perhaps, a reluctant capital. This can lead to some dense prose and occasional tangents from what had appeared to be the principal lines of argument. Nevertheless, this book richly rewards the reader with its insight, scope, and eye for detail. *Delhi Reborn* succeeds in making plain just how much was lost to the city, and in turn to both nations, in the division of India and Pakistan. The book is more,

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however, than a chronicle of loss. It is a work that articulates a passion for the city of Delhi; in its pages lie not only the history of violence, but also glimpses of a city that endures despite the inadequacies of the political and bureaucratic machinery it has long sustained.

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RONNY GRUNDIG, *Vermögen vererben: Politiken und Praktiken in der Bundesrepublik und Großbritannien 1945–1990*, Geschichte der Gegenwart, 28 (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2022) 340 pp. ISBN 978 3 835 35169 1. €32.00

Social inequality has once again become a contentious societal issue in the wake of Thomas Piketty's work, if not before.¹ Unlike in the past, however, the contemporary debate has centred on the end of the income and wealth spectrum that has previously attracted less attention—in other words, on the rich. This new focus soon raises questions around inheritance, which makes a significant contribution to maintaining structures of social inequality across generations.

Inheritance as a process extends far beyond the individual and is a worthwhile subject for social history. However, contemporary historians have paid it far less attention than scholars of other eras. Only in the last few years has German historiography taken a greater interest in this form of wealth transfer, and Jürgen Dinkel in particular has done much to advance the research field.²

Now Ronny Grundig has developed it further in his PhD thesis, written at the Leibniz Centre for Contemporary History in Potsdam. His study focuses on the period from 1945 until 1990—an end point chosen because of the subsequent changes to discourses and structures of inequality brought about by German reunification. Grundig compares the Federal Republic of Germany to the UK, justifying his selection of countries by their different legal systems. His analysis centres on three points: first, the regulation of inheritance by the state; second, changes to inheritance practices on both sides—that is, among testators as well as heirs; and third, how the process of inheritance shaped the social and economic fabric of the Federal Republic.

The part dealing with political history is the most straightforward. Chapters one and two outline the legal context over the period, with more space given to the early post-war years. This unequal weighting

Translated by Jozef van der Voort (GHIL).

¹ Thomas Piketty, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, MA, 2014).

² Jürgen Dinkel, 'Erben und Vererben in der Moderne: Erkundungen eines Forschungsfeldes', *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, 56 (2016), 81–108.

makes sense, given that the aftermath of the Second World War opened a window for change in both nations. In the UK, change consisted primarily of substantial tax rises in accordance with the legislative goal of redistributing wealth in the post-war settlement. In West Germany, the Allies – and especially Great Britain – made significant interventions in tax law. Previously, inheritance tax rates had varied based on how closely related the heir was to the testator. This system was replaced with a single standardized rate, which placed a substantial burden on smaller estates. The resulting legislative similarity between both countries was short-lived, however, as the Bundestag repealed the reform in its very first session. This shows how significant an issue inheritance tax was, given the large number of important legislative projects competing for attention at this time – a situation that prompted some contemporaries to call the Bundestag a ‘working parliament’ (*Arbeitsparlament*). For the UK, Grundig extends his discussion into the 1970s, thereby considerably stretching the definition of ‘post-war’. Yet this is necessary to cover key aspects of the British inheritance debate – notably, efforts to safeguard widows.

Chapter two then traces the regulation of inheritance up to 1990. Here, Grundig places more emphasis on the similarities between his case studies than the differences. The high rate of inheritance tax in the UK did not bring about the redistribution hoped for by legislators. There were many other wealth transfer routes to choose from, and although attempts were made prior to Margaret Thatcher’s election to close loopholes, they achieved little. Labour politicians introduced a capital transfer tax in order to skim off private wealth and divert it to the treasury, but their efforts were thwarted by the change in government. After 1979, estates benefited from the concept of the property-owning democracy, which produced a fall in the rate of inheritance tax, among other effects. This development is certainly in keeping with the standard view of the Thatcher era; however, there is still a need to explain why the lively debate over increasing inheritance tax had so little influence on legislation. The same goes for the Federal Republic, where voices were also raised in support of a higher rate of inheritance tax as a counter to growing wealth inequality. Yet the German inheritance tax reform of 1973 was moderate in scope, despite the extensive demands made by the left wing of the Social

Democratic Party (SPD). While there was no radical policy of redistribution under the SPD, there was no clear neoliberal turn either.

In the third and fourth chapters the focus shifts onto inheritance practices. Grundig's source base switches from parliamentary debates, politicians' personal archives, and committee minutes to tax and probate records and corporate archives. The UK case fades into the background in this section – presumably for practical reasons, which are all too understandable given the time pressures faced by most doctoral students. Comparative social history is generally far more challenging than studying political decision-making, as working with case files is very labour-intensive. Nonetheless, it would have been desirable for the author to reflect more openly on his analytical context. That said, Grundig's social historical inquiries have resulted in some of the most interesting findings in his book. Only a quarter to a third of testators opted to actively transfer their wealth instead of bequeathing it according to inheritance laws. The extent of a person's wealth generally determined whether they would write a will, but in some cases less wealthy people also chose to do so – for example, to leave money to their carers.

The most important empirical findings relate to the dominance of families, the formation of a labour market around inheritance, and the complexity of transferring wealth. People generally chose to actively transmit their property to family members, in particular their spouses. In many cases, inheritance involved a number of actors besides the testators and heirs, such as notaries, executors, and heir finders. The inheritance tax records show that intergenerational wealth transfers took place beyond the confines of inheritance law, especially when it came to large fortunes. Gifts and other methods of transmitting property must also be taken into account in order to understand the full picture.

All in all, Grundig has produced a source-centred study that synthesizes information from case files, parliamentary records, sociological and legal studies, and personal archives into a readable whole. Some clever planning was evidently required to accommodate the broad array of topics – taking in large and small estates, testators, heirs, and two countries – within the confines of a single book. And it is ultimately for the best that the transnational comparison fades into

the background as Grundig immerses himself in the social history of inheritance. However, in certain places more in-depth discussion would have been welcome—for instance, on why inheritance tax remained so modest in West Germany, especially when compared to the higher rates in the UK and the USA. Also, coming back to the third of the three major questions raised at the beginning of his study—that of the significance of inheritance for the social and economic fabric of the Federal Republic—Grundig could have discussed more what his findings regarding inheritance practices mean for the history of the family or old age. An answer to some of these questions should be forthcoming from the array of existing and soon-to-be-published research on inheritance in the twentieth century.³

³ See e.g. Jürgen Dinkel, *Alles bleibt in der Familie: Erbe und Eigentum in Deutschland, Russland und den USA seit dem 19. Jahrhundert* (Cologne, 2023).

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SARAH COLVIN, *Shadowland: The Story of Germany Told by Its Prisoners* (London: Reaktion Books, 2022), 280 pp. ISBN 978 1 789 14627 1. £25.00

Anyone who believes that everything essential about the history of the Federal Republic of Germany has already been written should read this book by British literary scholar Sarah Colvin. Colvin is the Schröder Professor of German and a Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge. So she is not a historian. And it is particularly important to emphasize this because her carefully researched study makes an extremely important contribution to the history of the Federal Republic of Germany that no one has written before, and perhaps no one has wanted to read. *Shadowland* is an uncomfortable book. It examines West German society from the perspective of those whose very existence is not mentioned, even in passing, in the standard histories of the Federal Republic: the people in prison. A section on the GDR shows the extent to which the penal system in East Germany had parallels in the West. Colvin does not write about well known prisoners such as Red Army Faction founder Ulrike Meinhof, whose writings she has analysed in another book on how terrorism takes root.¹ Instead, she takes up the ‘stories of the “little people” in prison’ (p. 10) and shows the extent to which these stories express the history of an entire country. Very different people have their say: women and men, Black people and people of colour, rarely also disabled and elderly people.

Colvin states that her book ‘is the story of Germany told, as far as possible, in the words of people in prison’ (p. 10), and this certainly makes it a ‘different’ history of the Federal Republic. Colvin deserves credit for writing it. However, it was inspired by Ralf Dahrendorf, who emphasized in the mid 1960s in his book *Society and Democracy* that ‘adequate witnesses’ for the liberal, democratic constitution of West German society were not politicians or lawyers, but ‘foreign workers, mentally ill, [and] prison inmates’. This is because outsiders are particularly good at documenting ‘what is happening in a society’.² In order to show what was happening in West German society, Sarah

¹ Sarah Colvin, *Ulrike Meinhof and West German Terrorism: Language, Violence, and Identity* (Rochester, NY, 2009).

² Ralf Dahrendorf, *Society and Democracy in Germany* (London, 1968), 351. First published in German in 1965.

Colvin has organized her book into four chronologically arranged parts, one of which deals with living conditions in the GDR penal system. The sources used are mainly letters and memoirs written by prisoners, with the GDR section—inevitably—drawing on memoirs published after 1989. The immediacy of the letters on which the other parts are based is therefore found only to a limited extent here.

One common thread in *Shadowland* is the experience of violence. In part one, 'Unity, Rights and Freedom: West Germany, 1949–68', readers meet Germans—mostly children—who had lost both parents in the war and were wandering around alone, stealing in order to survive. Many of them ended up in institutions, where they were beaten and often abused. Their life stories, as becomes clear in *Shadowland*, reflect the story of a society that was not really interested in the fate of the 'rubble children'. Many of those who experienced such a 'mid-century childhood' (p. 45) were never able to lead law-abiding lives. Their 'careers' on the streets and in closed institutions also determined their future development. *Shadowland* reports on these often very personal experiences and draws on sources such as the collection of letters assembled by the Swedish publicist Birgitta Wolf (1913–2009), who lived in Germany from 1933. As Carin Göring's niece, Wolf had good contact with prominent representatives of the Nazi state. At the same time, she began campaigning on behalf of prisoners and concentration camp inmates in the 1930s and continued this commitment after the end of the war. By the early 1960s she had already received 6,000 letters from prisoners. By the time of her death she had amassed 60,000 letters, some of which are now in the archives of the Hamburg Institute for Social Research and have been published.³ All the letters that Sarah Colvin quotes in this section point to a fundamental problem: 'Continuity, rather than change, is the leitmotif in stories from the post-war prison' (p. 30). Apparently, the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners signed by the UN in 1955, which strictly prohibited any form of violence behind bars, did nothing to prevent physical abuse of all kinds from determining the everyday lives of prisoners.

In the social liberal reform years from 1968, when the Federal Republic of Germany wanted to 'dare more democracy' (in Willy

³ Birgitta Wolf (ed.), *Die vierte Kaste: Junge Menschen im Gefängnis. Literarische Dokumente* (Hamburg, 1963).

Brandt's famous formulation), prisons also became the subject of reform. Sarah Colvin describes these developments in part two ('A Model and Looking Good? West Germany, 1968–89') without any sugar-coating, because her material—letters from another generation of prisoners—gives no reason to do so. In 1976 the Prison Act was passed, a law that was intended to grant rights to prisoners and which stood at the end of a long reform process that aimed to achieve the goal of rehabilitation through educational and socio-psychological means. In those years, the Federal Republic was certainly looking to Northern Europe and the Scandinavian model, which allowed prisoners more freedom and led to recognizably lower recidivism rates. However, this model was not implemented in the Federal Republic. Prisoners certainly realized this and were often stunned by how much was said about rehabilitation and how little of the supposed spirit of reform reached the prison walls. In this section, we learn about issues such as sexual distress, sexual violence, and homosexual seduction, which women encountered more than men and of which they were generally ignorant and fearful. There is also an impressive description of what it meant to be a transgender prisoner in a men's prison (and not to survive). It is as sobering as it is remarkable that self-harm and suicide were apparently the only possible form of self-empowerment for many of the prisoners. The fact that a supposedly liberal law granting prisoners educational and socio-psychological treatment as well as extended personal rights was passed at this time sheds a different light on the often-cited success story of the Federal Republic. Progress and stagnation could apparently stand side by side, and this contradiction is therefore just as much a part of the history of the West Germans as their supposedly straightforward path to a 'better world'.

The third part, 'Risen from the Ruins: East Germany, 1949–89', makes it clear from the outset that no account written by a prisoner of the GDR was published in East Germany during the forty years the state existed. One exception is the *Hohenecker Protokolle*, based on interviews with former inmates of the infamous women's political prison.⁴ Ulrich Schacht, who conducted the interviews, epitomizes the brutality of the GDR penal system more than almost anyone else. He was born

⁴ Ulrich Schacht (ed.), *Hohenecker Protokolle: Aussagen zur Geschichte der politischen Verfolgung von Frauen in der DDR* (Zurich, 1984).

in Hoheneck and was taken away from his mother, Carola Schacht, when he was just a few weeks old – a completely normal fate for mothers and their newborns in East German jails. Readers also learn about the experiences of Black GDR citizens in prison, as well as the arbitrariness, violence, and hopelessness that characterized life behind bars. The situation improved somewhat with the Helsinki Accords of 1975 and the GDR's new Penal Code of 5 May 1977, which consigned to history at least the worst instruments of torture, such as standing cells and water cells. This development was hardly reflected in the prisoners' stories, however. Even after the reforms, imprisonment meant that most people had to give up their personal rights completely. 'Foucault could not have known it', Colvin writes, 'but even before he famously revisited Jeremy Bentham's panoptical vision of the prison in *Discipline and Punish* (1975), East German prisoners were experiencing prison as a reflection of the panoptical or all-seeing state' (p. 147).

'Wind of Change: Germany after 1989' is the title of the fourth and final section, which left this reader in disbelief. Colvin jumps forward to the present and reports that even in 2020, there are still communal cells in German prisons that do not have a separate toilet area and therefore do not guarantee a minimum degree of privacy. What Sarah Colvin has emphasized in the stories of prisoners since the post-war period still applies today: 'over and over again, the story of people in prison is the story of not being believed' (p. 55). Regardless of how they are treated and what they have to suffer, they are hardly considered credible. Peter-Paul Zahl called the fate of people in prison 'nobodification' in 1977, a term that is obviously still relevant today (p. 173). Not being heard and seen is reminiscent of what Johan Galtung dubbed 'structural violence' in the late 1960s. Structural violence, according to his conceptualization, is the avoidable impairment of basic human needs or, to put it more generally, of life, which reduces the actual degree of satisfaction of needs below what is possible.⁵ It is 'built into the system and manifests itself in unequal power relations'.⁶ As much as the prisoners' letters express these unequal power

⁵ Johan Galtung, 'Violence, Peace, and Peace Research', *Journal of Peace Research*, 6/3 (1969), 167-91.

⁶ Johan Galtung, *Strukturelle Gewalt: Beiträge zur Friedens- und Konfliktforschung* (Frankfurt am Main, 1975), 9.

relations in the past, Colvin's book also makes it clear that it would be wrong to believe that a transformation has taken place in the institutions of the Western world since the 1970s. On the contrary, prisons are still violent places today. Prisoners kill and are killed behind bars. The drug trade also flourishes behind prison walls. And people who have been in prison for a long time are not rehabilitated, but fear that they will no longer be able to live in freedom. Giving these people a voice and showing the extent to which writing can be a form of self-assertion is one of the great merits of Sarah Colvin's book. Another is that it inspires Germans to reflect on their country. The experiences of prisoners leave no doubt that the development of West German society, although it has largely succeeded politically and legally in (re)building a democratic community after the 'shock of inhumanity',⁷ cannot adequately be described with the still frequently invoked narrative of 'liberalization'.⁸ 'Most of us prefer to believe we live in a (more or less) rational modern democracy. But stories from prison say: this is not the country you thought it was' (p. 22).

⁷ Konrad H. Jarausch, *After Hitler: Recivilizing Germans, 1945–1995*, trans. Brandon Hunziker (Oxford, 2006), 5.

⁸ Ulrich Herbert, 'Liberalisierung als Lernprozess: Die Bundesrepublik in der deutschen Geschichte – eine Skizze', in Ulrich Herbert (ed.), *Wandlungsprozesse in Westdeutschland: Belastung, Integration, Liberalisierung 1945–1980* (Göttingen, 2002), 7–49.

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REET TAMME, *Wissenschaft und 'race relations': Repräsentationen von Multiethnizität in Großbritannien 1950–1980* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022), vii + 411 pp. ISBN 978 3 110 79057 3. £82.00

The book begins with a focus on Sheila Patterson's study *Dark Strangers*, published in 1963.¹ Although the title of this study is based on Georg Simmel's concept of the 'stranger',² this choice of words is hardly conceivable in the social sciences today as a reference to minorities and migrants. This is precisely why it is impressive to see how far these disciplines have come since then, and Reet Tamme's PhD thesis, which she wrote at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, guides readers along this path from the 1950s to the 1980s.

In her introduction, Tamme describes British race relations research as a 'new system of knowledge production and a new representation system for ethnicity' (p. 2). This is linked to the broader question of whether and how the social sciences help structure social reality, following Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann.³ At the same time, Tamme states that the social sciences themselves are subject to social change. This has an additional transnational dimension in the case of British race relations research: according to Tamme's thesis, US research provided the decisive theoretical foundations over several decades.

The source base of Tamme's work largely comprises social science publications, in particular from the Chicago School and from the Institute for Race Relations (IRR), which was founded in London in 1958. It also includes reports, organizational charts, and correspondence from the IRR's committees and from the Ford Foundation as a significant third-party funder. These are taken from the institute's and foundation's own archives in London and New York and from the Black Cultural Archives in London, the London Metropolitan Archives, and the National Archives in Kew. Methodologically, Tamme uses a

¹ Sheila Patterson, *Dark Strangers: A Sociological Study of the Absorption of a Recent West Indian Migrant Group in Brixton, South London* (London, 1963).

² Georg Simmel, 'The Stranger', in Georg Simmel, *On Individuality and Social Forms: Selected Writings*, ed. Donald N. Levine (Chicago, 1971), 143–9. This essay was first published in German in 1908.

³ Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, NY, 1966).

model of discourse analysis that includes texts and institutionalized practices. In addition, she draws on Lutz Raphael's notion of the 'scientification of the social',⁴ since British race relations research has had a strong social reform impulse from the very beginning.

The first chapter is dedicated to the establishment of race relations research in the USA and Great Britain from 1920 to 1960. Tamme provides a detailed overview of the works of the Chicago School and the refutation of the 'scientific' concept of race by Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict, and others. Although these outlines are largely known, they are skilfully summarized here. Gunnar Myrdal, who understood race as socially constructed and race problems as socially caused, plays a central role in Tamme's portrayal. What was notable, however, was that from the 1940s onwards a greater conceptual distinction was drawn between race (for African Americans) and ethnicity (for European immigrants) in the US social science literature. These semantics have also been relevant to the situation in Great Britain since the introduction of the Nationality Act of 1948, which recognized Commonwealth citizens as British citizens. The interest in the living conditions of this new category of citizens was the starting point for British race relations research.

Tamme convincingly places this emerging field in the global context of late colonialism, as well as in the historical context of science. Academic sociology was still not very well developed in Great Britain, and American theoretical impulses were therefore readily adopted. Applied social reform predominated until the 1960s, while early studies of prejudice and discrimination were already highlighting social insecurities and the question of British identity. More powerful, however, for race relations research was the emergence of several paradoxes: on the one hand, the particular needs of immigrants were overlooked because they were officially considered 'ordinary citizens' (p. 112); and on the other, social reform goals often led to the negative singling out of immigrants by discursively creating new stereotypes and prejudices that were applied to the 'Black' population, and by constructing distinctions between 'British' and 'foreign'. It was also

⁴ Lutz Raphael, 'Die Verwissenschaftlichung des Sozialen als methodische und konzeptionelle Herausforderung für eine Sozialgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 22/2 (1996), 165-93.

increasingly recognized as a problem at the time that 'White' social scientists were studying 'Black' communities, even if they saw themselves as their advocates.

The second chapter deals with the institutionalization of race relations research in Great Britain at the beginning of the 1960s. The widely publicized riots in Notting Hill in 1958 stimulated activities that aimed to improve race relations. These included the founding of academic institutes and departments of urban sociology, and especially the IRR in London. The IRR's Board of Studies included not only scientists but also businesspeople who invested in the British colonies, and the institute's director, Philip Mason, was also a former colonial official. The IRR had its headquarters in the affluent neighbourhood of St James and published its monographs with Oxford University Press. Tamme pointedly judges that in the IRR, an elite from the worlds of science, business, and politics controlled the production of knowledge about race relations.

Transatlantic ties remained strong: the Ford Foundation was an important third-party donor, and the IRR also entered into collaborations with the University of Denver and the University of California, Berkeley. Above all, however, its major project of undertaking a 'survey of race relations' was explicitly intended to build on an American model and to become a 'Myrdal for Britain' (p. 173), with reference to Myrdal's influential study *An American Dilemma*.⁵ In 1969, the survey was published under the title *Colour and Citizenship*.⁶

However, the 1960s also brought a shift towards a more specifically British approach to race research. Immigration from South Asia came into focus, and multi-ethnicity gradually established itself as a new interpretive pattern for British society, while the idea of assimilation lost importance. At the same time, immigrant groups were increasingly seen as stable units whose well-being should be promoted. Such essentialization was one of the paradoxes of race relations research. Nevertheless, it had a political impact, in major laws such as the 1962 Commonwealth Immigration Act and especially the Race Relations

⁵ Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York, 1944).

⁶ E. J. B. Rose et al., *Colour and Citizenship: A Report on British Race Relations* (Oxford, 1969).

Act of 1965, which brought a series of anti-discrimination regulations into force earlier than elsewhere in Europe.

Children and young people also came into focus in the 1960s. It is estimated that around 170,000 children were classified with terms such as 'immigrant children' or 'second-generation'. This made education in a multi-ethnic environment a new topic for research. While the teaching of English as a second language was established smoothly in schools, there were other controversies: alongside criticism of textbooks that still conveyed colonial worldviews, there was a demand for more Black teachers. Furthermore, in some schools, quota regulations allowing 'non-White' children to make up no more than one third of each class were tried out, as was the bussing system known from America. Finally, special classes were set up, primarily for Afro-Caribbean children.

Chapter three, which addresses the pluralization of the research field from the beginning of the 1970s, offers very pointed descriptions of various crises. Enoch Powell's infamous 'rivers of blood' speech from 1968 stood against the growing influence of the 'Black Power' movement, while in science, so-called radical sociology forced the 'emergence of new theoretical approaches as a counter-representation' (p. 265). In the IRR, these challenges became particularly acute. A new generation of scientists came onto the scene who saw themselves as radical academics. They stood for an epistemic commitment that was openly political, in contrast to the previously claimed 'neutrality' of the IRR. Criticism quickly arose in response to the IRR's flagship study *Colour and Citizenship*, and Black communities who featured in it as research subjects were called on to resist: 'When researchers from the IRR come knocking on their doors for information they will be well advised to tell them to fuck off' (p. 273). Radical scientists now often spoke of a 'race relations industry' and 'scientific colonialism' (p. 273), while Marxist approaches and a reckoning with capitalist structures were very popular.

This new era at the IRR was also reflected in its symbolism and practices. The institute's headquarters were moved from St James to the King's Cross area—closer to Black communities—and the scholarly magazine *Race* was renamed *Race and Class: A Journal for Black and Third World Liberation*. A comprehensive change in personnel also

took place in the committees: political and economic elites gave way to activist representatives of Black communities and Marxist scholars. This reorganization had consequences. The Ford Foundation ended its funding of the IRR and instead focused on individual projects and scientists in Great Britain. In Tamme's judgment, this marked the end of a period of intensive knowledge transfer between the US and Britain. British cultural studies, which were largely influenced by Stuart Hall, embarked on an independent approach in which culture was understood as everyday practice and great attention was paid to media theory. Racism was not to be analysed as a universal phenomenon, but rather in a specific historical context.

In her last chapter, Tamme takes a systematic look at knowledge production and its modes, discussing several models from the sociology of knowledge. She concludes that race relations research evades a traditional disciplinary history because it did not develop any specifically dedicated courses or chairs during the period under investigation. In addition, it imported its methods predominantly from the USA and was characterized by disciplinary heterogeneity and the increasing participation of non-academic representatives, as well as a high level of practical relevance.

Reet Tamme's book shows the change in representations of multi-ethnicity very convincingly, but the parts dedicated to race relations research as a new system of knowledge production have somewhat less momentum. The fact that science should not be understood as a teleological process has already become established in the history of knowledge. Although she shows that interdisciplinarity took root earlier than previously assumed, Tamme does not establish a parallel with Anne Kwaschik's book on the emergence of area studies, which showed precisely this.⁷ In general, Tamme deals well with theories and models of the sociology of knowledge, but engages less often with the historical research literature.

One of the methods of the history of knowledge is to shed light on the biographical characteristics of the actors involved. Tamme does this only for a few actors, and in a brief manner. This reluctance is

⁷ Anne Kwaschik, *Der Griff nach dem Weltwissen: Zur Genealogie von Area Studies im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 2018).

particularly regrettable in the case of two social scientists, Ruth Glass and Marie Jahoda. Born in Berlin and Vienna, they had to emigrate in the 1930s because of their Jewish origins and their political commitments. Against this background, it would have been interesting to find out whether and to what extent both of them also brought Continental European experiences with 'race' and racism into British race relations research. This question is also of interest because the translation of terms and concepts is a recurring issue in Tamme's work. In her German text, Tamme uses the term 'ethnicity' where American social scientists were still speaking of 'race', and she uses 'multi-ethnic' when British social scientists were evoking the vision of a 'multi-racial Britain'. After all, Tamme points out that in Great Britain too, the term 'ethnicity' increasingly replaced 'race' and became partly interchangeable with it—in contrast to developments in the USA which are shaping current racism research.

Debates like these show the great advantage of studies of the history of knowledge, such as that by Reet Tamme. They offer the insight that many of the challenges, tensions, and perspectives encountered today in the scientific discussion about migration and racism have been around for decades and have—sometimes forgotten—forerunners and pioneers. They show which paths were taken back then, and which are no longer being pursued today. With her detailed presentation of institutionalized practices, Tamme also offers fascinating insights into the British research landscape on late colonialism, decolonization, and the Commonwealth. These findings seem all the more powerful because Tamme refrains from political commentary and pointed argument. This pronounced objectivity is also stylistically beneficial, since well-chosen source quotations and praxeological micro-insights provide fine narrative counterpoints to the otherwise sober tone of the book. This thoroughly crafted and very readable study is indispensable to any future research work on migration, race, and ethnicity, as well as the history of knowledge and the contemporary history of Great Britain.

BOOK REVIEWS

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CONFERENCE REPORTS

Thirteenth Medieval History Seminar. Organized by the German Historical Institute London and the German Historical Institute Washington, DC, and held at the GHIL, 5–7 October 2023. Conveners: Stephan Bruhn (GHIL), Fiona Griffiths (Stanford University), Michael Grünbart (University of Münster), Jamie Kreiner (University of Georgia), Simon MacLean (University of St Andrews), Len Scales (Durham University), and Dorothea Weltecke (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin).

Every two years, the German Historical Institutes in London and Washington DC jointly organize a three-day seminar for PhD candidates and recent PhD recipients working on ‘medieval history’ in the broadest possible sense of the word. Already the thirteenth iteration of this successful format, the Medieval History Seminar in October 2023 brought together eighteen early-career medievalists from the UK, Ireland, the US, Canada, and Germany to discuss their work with each other and a group of well established scholars.

As usual, the seminar’s papers addressed a deliberately broad spectrum of topics and methodological approaches, ranging geographically from Fennoscandia to the Aegean and the Iberian Peninsula, and chronologically from the tenth to the sixteenth centuries. Recurring topics included interreligious encounters and relationships; learned cultures; the role of saints’ cults, visions, and exempla in political, religious, and social discourse; (re)configurations of monarchical, papal, and imperial rule; and elite formation processes and topographies of local power. There was much overlap between the papers: thematically there was a focus on the manifestations and functions of violence in medieval societies, geographically on the *Reich*, and chronologically on the later Middle Ages. The Mediterranean world did not feature as prominently as in past seminars, and there was a conspicuous absence of papers on the earlier Middle Ages, particularly the centuries after the end of Roman rule in the West.

To facilitate in-depth discussions, the seminar followed the well established pattern that participants did not give their papers during the panels, but pre-circulated them within the group for everyone to read in advance, with two (in one case three) participants asked to prepare comments. These comments then served as opening statements for the panels in that they briefly summarized the papers, highlighting similarities as well as differences, and addressed open questions. Following a brief response by the panellists, the chairs immediately opened the floor for discussion. Although labour-intensive and rather unusual, all participants agreed that this format of ‘non-held’ papers led to extremely stimulating discussions and beneficial feedback.

The papers in the first panel dealt with the formation of Christian value communities in the German-speaking lands in the high and later Middle Ages. Isabel Kimpel (LMU Munich) examined the structure, content, transmission, and reception of the Cistercian monk Caesarius of Heisterbach’s *Omellie morales de infantia Salvatoris*. Although Caesarius is quite famous for his homiletic and paraenetic oeuvre in general—especially the *Dialogus miraculorum*—scholarship has paid scant attention to the *Omellie* so far. However, it can provide us with new insights into Caesarius’ methods and the audiences he was targeting, as well as the recontextualization of his works in late medieval monasticism and reform contexts, as Kimpel convincingly showed. Savoy Curry (Northwestern University) also drew on one of Caesarius’ exempla but used it as a stepping stone for a different angle on Christian value discourses: the self-reassurance of late medieval urban communities in the context of interfaith sexual relationships. Via an in-depth analysis of municipal court records, Savoy revealed how urban authorities adopted clerical views on illicit sex and pollution in their treatment of Christian women who had sexual relationships with Jewish men. The growing criminalization of and anxiety over these relationships resulted, as Curry argued, from their inversion of gender norms, as they threatened established hierarchies and thus the foundations of Christian communal life itself.

The following panel drew attention to the multifaceted relationship between textual artefacts and the practices from which they evolved in the earlier Middle Ages. Daria Safronova (University of Tübingen) examined supplications which were directed to the ruler

during assemblies in tenth-century León. On the one hand, using mainly charters as gateways to the petitioners' speeches and gestures, she highlighted the constitutive role these performative acts played in dispute settlement and the formulation of royal ideology. Although the petitions show no trace of direct sacralization, they promoted the king's position as leader by ascribing Christian virtues to him. On the other hand, Safronova discussed the crucial problem of how closely the written evidence mirrors what happened at the meetings themselves, thus addressing the limits of historical knowledge. The same problem was tackled in the paper by Peter Fraundorfer (Trinity College Dublin), albeit from a different angle. Focusing on the practice of writing itself, he provided an in-depth stylistic and codicological analysis of the so-called 'Reichenau Group', a set of manuscripts from the ninth century written in an Irish hand, which were once part of Reichenau Abbey's library. In doing so, Fraundorfer underlined the immense value of a thorough and well defined palaeographical method for the field of historical study, since his analysis significantly strengthened the rather tentative older assumption that these codices stemmed from the same scriptorium.

The changing roles of dynasties and married couples within medieval religious culture were at the heart of the third panel. Antonia Anstatt (University of Oxford) examined the idea of chaste marriage in the cults of holy couples. Focusing on two case studies – the imperial couple Henry II and Cunigunde and the marriage between the Occitan nobles Elzear and Dauphine – she showed how these cults were used to promote new ideas of marital life in which the consensual decision to abstain from sex led to new forms of intimacy and, in particular, mutual assistance in the partners' quest for a saintly life. The shift in the significance of families and dynasties was also at the centre of the paper by Cynthia Stöckle (LMU Munich), which explored the role of medieval nobles as founders and benefactors of monastic communities. Focusing on the Cistercian abbey of Stams in Tyrol, Stöckle demonstrated that the classification of the abbey in older scholarship as a *Hauskloster* (family monastery) of the Meinhardinian and Witeltsbach dynasties was deeply misleading. Not only did the general chapter of the Cistercian order have a say in the founding process, which secured a certain degree of independence for Stams from its

noble founders, but the monks also made connections with other families in the vicinity to further their position within the local political and religious landscape.

The fourth panel developed new perspectives on elites in the Ottonian *Reich*. Alena Reeb (Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg) provided a thorough re-evaluation of the relationship between Saxon elites, both male and female, secular and ecclesiastical, and ‘their’ king at the beginning of the eleventh century. Taking the Billung Dukes Bernhard I and Bernhard II as well as the Abbesses Sophia of Gandersheim and Adelheid of Quedlinburg as case studies, she illustrated how difficult it is to draw any clear-cut conclusions based on the patchy and often biased evidence we have. While the dukes’ relationship with their royal overlord was much less troublesome and contentious than commonly thought, the two Ottonian sisters had a far greater impact on local political decision-making than scholarship has recognized so far. Ottonian elite women also featured prominently in the paper by Graham Johnson (University of Toronto) on female learned culture in the tenth and early eleventh centuries. In contrast to older scholarship, which has mainly focused on the supposedly exceptional character of Hrotsvit of Gandersheim, Johnson unearthed a plethora of sources either written by female authors, directed at female audiences, or dealing with female education that collectively show how women played a key role in early medieval writing and learned culture.

The reconfiguration and legitimization of royal and imperial rule at turning points in the *Reich’s* history lay at the core of the fifth panel. Shifting the focus from local elites to the empire’s head, Felix Timmer (University of Münster) highlighted the hitherto neglected role of the Diet of Liège in 1131 as a watershed in Lothair III’s reign. Via a meticulous analysis of Lothair’s diplomas before and after the assembly, Timmer outlined a significant shift within his self-fashioning which was itself part of a larger and longer transformation process: at the beginning of the twelfth century, Roman-German rulers and their entourages experimented with new concepts of imperial rule – not all of them successful – which in the long run would lead to new configurations of political order. The paper by Richard Schlag (University of Oxford) on the repercussions of the Cologne Diocesan Feud in 1474–5 pointed in a similar direction. While the military invention by the

Burgundian Duke Charles the Bold in what was an internal affair of the empire has long been regarded as a token of Frederick III's weakness, Schlag showed how the Habsburg ruler and his advisers used the exceptional situation to significantly strengthen imperial rule within and beyond the archbishopric–electorate of Cologne. Not only did the emperor present himself as guardian of the German-speaking lands and steward of the Church, but he also put this self-fashioning into practice to exert more direct influence in Cologne's territory.

Elites took centre stage in panel six again, but this time the focus shifted to their interactions and relationships with groups they did not consider to be their equals. Tristan Sharp (University of Chicago) proposed a new perspective on feuding practices in the late medieval German lands by analysing the violent extraction of resources recorded in 'damage registers' (*Schadensverzeichnisse*). Directed against the rural population, this form of violence not only transcended the boundaries between feud and lordship, in that it was often used by nobles to extend their power over dependent groups; but it also provided a viable source of income, so that it was employed by all strata of noble society and thus became a feature structurally inherent to seignorial rule. Erik Wolf (University of Greifswald) examined the changing and multifaceted relations between Christian elites and the mainly non-Christian Sámi during the conversion of the latter. Deliberately questioning the adequacy of ethnological categories, Wolf persuasively argued that the conversion of Fennoscandia was not hindered by the population's unwillingness to accept the new faith; nor was the relationship between converter and not-yet-converted necessarily marked by alterity or antagonism. Secular and ecclesiastical elites did indeed other the Sámi when it served their needs, but this only rarely stemmed from the missionary context. What is more, the Sámi had agency of their own when it came to adopting the Christian faith.

The seventh panel addressed the experience, repercussions, and overcoming of violence in late medieval urban communities, with both papers highlighting the strategic dimensions inherent in this supposedly irrational and extreme behaviour. Maria Pieschacon-Raffael (LMU Munich) examined how the hunger crisis in cities under siege during the Hundred Years War was dealt with. Taking Calais and

Rouen as case studies, which were both besieged twice, Pieschacon-Raffael convincingly argued that urban authorities learned from the atrocities inflicted upon them, in that they successfully managed to prevent food shortages during their second military encounters. This success reveals on the one hand the adaptive skill and pragmatism of urban communities facing recurrent situations of extreme violence; but on the other, the apparently high priority given to these measures betrays how deeply the previous hunger crises were inscribed on the collective memory. The paper by Stanislaw Banach (University of Cambridge) dealt less with the systematic containment of violence and its manifold impacts than with its strategic employment by late medieval urban elites. As Banach's examples from towns in Silesia, Poland, and Prussia indicated, civil unrest was not caused by the faceless masses; nor was it necessarily a token of chaos breaking loose. More often than not, violence was a powerful means deliberately employed by a town's elites to further their own (political) interests. This applies particularly to situations in which the instigators were pursuing a change of government or dealing with outward interference in internal affairs, which was considered a threat to urban autonomy.

Multisensorial experiences formed the focus of the eighth panel. Beatrice Blümer (University of Kassel) analysed the complex relationship between text and image – or map – in Cristoforo Buondelmonti's *Liber insularum*. Delving deep into the *Liber's* multifaceted transmission history, she pointed out how successive copyists significantly changed the textual and visual representation of archaeological sites that Buondelmonti had included in his work. These changes, Blümer argued, mirrored the context in which the respective manuscript was produced. But they also reflect broader changes in knowledge culture and production, as well as the specific needs of those commissioning the copies. Late medieval reflections on the sense of sight and its usefulness in telling true from false formed the core of the paper by Genevieve Caulfield (UCL). Using examples from the canonization process of Dorothea of Montau and Johannes Nider's *Formicarius*, she convincingly distinguished between different conceptions of seeing, both physical and metaphorical. These different ways of seeing, Caulfield argued, were promoted in edification literature as a means of identifying saints and demons and were thus considered to be essential

techniques in underlining Christian truth claims and strengthening resolve in faith.

The seminar's final panel dealt with changes in papal elections, both on a practical and a theoretical level. Anna Eßer (RWTH Aachen University) focused on a group of texts generally known as 'schism treatises' (*Schismatraktate*), which she distinguished from the genre of 'controversy literature' (*Streit- or Kontroversschriften*). Whereas the latter stemmed from the Investiture Controversy and often took sides, the former derived specifically from papal schisms and were more pragmatic in nature. In their quest to explain the causes and minimize the impact of ecclesiastical factionalism, they often foregrounded the idea of *canonica electio* (canonical election), as Eßer underlined with regard to Abbot John's *De vera pace*. Schisms had to be prevented before they even came into being. Canon law and the question of whose claims were justified thus mattered less than the implementation of norms and behavioural codes which ensured unanimity and peace. These ideas already featured prominently in the early Middle Ages, as Stefan Schöch (University of Erfurt) explained in his paper on the 'papal election procedure' (*Papstwahlordnung*) of 769. Focusing on the older principle of an election conducted equally 'by clergy and lay people' (*durch Klerus und Volk*) and its varying implementations in practice, Schöch not only showed how clerical actors significantly professionalized the delicate procedure long before the creation of conclave and cardinals, but his analysis, like Eßer's, also highlighted the productive potential of disruptive moments. Without the succession crisis following the death of Paul I in 767, there would probably have been no need to clarify the election procedure.

As a sort of 'farewell' to the seminar, the outgoing convener Dorothea Weltecke gave a public lecture on the first evening, intriguingly titled 'On How and Why Religions Became Exclusive Social Formations – A Historian's View'. Based on her forthcoming book, Weltecke explored the historicity of both religion and exclusivity, which are closely entangled. The formation between the seventh and the fifteenth centuries of what have been called 'religions' since the Enlightenment had, she argued, less to do with absolute truth claims and more with the proliferation of mutually exclusive group affiliations that were fundamentally shaped by social inequality and political domination.

While the followers of the three Abrahamic religions were well aware that they shared common organizational and doctrinal features and historical links, which could lead to tolerance and exchange, they also established boundaries by polemicizing against each other. Precisely because every teaching had its place, it needed to be limited to a specific group, be it one's own or a constitutive other. It was only when these rather loose claims of religious differences aligned with power that truth and thus exclusivity could be established. Religion should therefore be regarded as a category of legal and social inequality and not a necessary corollary of belief.

The seminar concluded with a lively conversation on the overarching questions and topics that had been discussed. The participants debated, for instance, whether the seminar's strong focus on the history of violence and the later Middle Ages was indicative of wider trends in the field or just a very fruitful coincidence. Another aspect that featured prominently over all three days and was duly credited in the concluding discussion was the high degree of source criticism that does seem to be a peculiarity of premodern history. All the papers had shown how profoundly medievalists scrutinize their sources, often gaining new insights from well known evidence, without falling back on the hypercriticism which characterized the field after the rise of the linguistic turn. Furthermore, all participants agreed on how valuable a format like the Medieval History Seminar is in enabling academic exchange and international networking at an early stage in medievalists' careers. It is therefore worth continuing to offer this opportunity.

STEPHAN BRUHN (GHIL)

Social Data on Inequality in Historical Perspective. Workshop held at the Werner Reimers Foundation, Bad Homburg, 6–7 November 2023. Funded by the Werner Reimers Foundation. Conveners: Albrecht Graf von Kalnein (Werner Reimers Foundation), Lutz Raphael (Trier University), and Christina von Hodenberg (GHIL).

This year, the working group ‘Social Data and Contemporary History’ focused its workshop on inequality research and the possibilities and challenges associated with the use of social data in this research field. Lutz Raphael opened the workshop by presenting its thematic foci. The first item on the agenda was to broaden the geographical perspective by comparing notes on British and German approaches to social data. Next, he posed the question of how much knowledge needs to be available, and to what extent we need a history of knowledge about the origins, the production, and the collectors of contemporary inequality data to then be able to work with the data itself. He then drew attention to how qualitative and quantitative data can be integrated into historical research and connected with one another, and finally, invited the historians and social scientists to present their projects and explain their work using data, the aim of the workshop being to scrutinize and develop existing practices and methods.

The first panel began with a German–British comparison. Felix Römer (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin) asked how actors and their respective views of society influenced the production of social statistics and knowledge about economic inequality in Great Britain and the Federal Republic of Germany from 1945. According to Römer, the state itself has been a central actor in the production and management of this knowledge. Social science research on inequality has relied on data produced by the state. Not only has the state collected a lot of data, it has also decided what to publish, and in addition, it is only state actors who have been able to judge the quality of the data. Römer argued that this approach to data has followed a political agenda and has also been employed in state campaigns. Ignorance about methods of data collection has led to the circulation and reproduction of inaccurate figures over long periods of time. It is therefore important

Translated by Marielle Sutherland (GHIL).

for historians to conduct archival research into this statistical meta-knowledge and take it into consideration when using figures.

In his paper, Marc Buggeln (Europa-Universität Flensburg) linked social inequality with tax policies across a range of Western countries in a long historiographical perspective and described the challenges of examining these connections. During his research, he came across data sets that returned different results on the relative proportions of direct and indirect taxes. In addition, differences between data collection processes and a lack of knowledge about the surveys meant it was difficult to compare governmental tax policies. Comparative data has only been available since the OECD database was established in 1965. It is therefore important, he argued, to ask how people handled data before this—how they collected and then analysed it. In particular, the study of taxes and social inequality requires knowledge of contemporary statistics based on quantitative data. Once the data and the associated history of knowledge have been acquired, it is then possible to make an international comparison.

Presenting her planned research project—a collective biography that will primarily focus on women—Jenny Pleinen (FernUniversität in Hagen), too, argued that the state is an important actor, in that individual knowledge about social inequality can be influenced by state control. Her idea is to connect individual biographies in clusters and use serial sources to work out how state decisions have affected individuals and in what ways people have adapted their lives to societal structures and changing conditions. She plans to include a broad range of categories such as gender, wealth, and nationality. Divorce law, for example, or joint taxation of married couples are interesting for certain age groups or from the perspective of women. Pleinen saw challenges in terms of the acquisition and compilation of data that could be useful for the project.

In the second panel, the British historian Jon Lawrence (University of Exeter) talked about his work with interviews conducted in post-war England, which he is re-analysing and historicizing from a source-critical perspective for a study on the meaning of ‘community’ during this period. Using interview transcripts as examples, he demonstrated the various challenges, such as gaps and omissions in transcripts, and acknowledged that, if available, it is very useful to have

early researchers' written recollections or original audio recordings in addition. This makes it possible to reconstruct the data collection process more accurately, detect ways in which the researchers influenced the interview, and ask new questions of the social data. One of the advantages of these interviews over oral history interviews, he argued, is that they have no retrospective 'filter' but are contemporary snapshots of history. When using pre-compiled data, it is still, however, important to take into account the interview setting in each case and not simply repeat the interpretations and findings of these studies. Researchers need to ask their own questions in order to generate their own insights.

In the third panel of the workshop, the sociologist Christoph Weischer (University of Münster) explained to the audience of historians how social inequalities can be captured by a social structure analysis, and how microdata has been generated within the social sciences over time. The collection of cross-sectional data that began in the 1950s was followed by longitudinal studies and trend data from the 1980s onwards and process-generated data in the 1990s. During this period there was also increased interest in qualitative microdata as a route to understanding social inequalities. Weischer explained that the 'praxeological protheory' of social differentiation he was presenting involves amalgamating qualitative and quantitative data on the micro-, meso-, and macro-levels, and combining appropriate empirical methods. This provides the basis for a multi-dimensional understanding of social inequalities that incorporates economic and legal inequalities alongside fundamental preconditions such as health. This theory, he argued, is not about taking a historical snapshot but about tracing observable historical change.

In the final panel, participants presented current research on social inequality in contemporary history. Helena Schwinghammer's (Leibniz Institute for Contemporary History) geographical focus was on the Vogtland region, spanning the border between Bavaria and Saxony, and its particular position in divided Germany. She explained that she was examining the history of the lives and labour of female textile workers in the region, and also looking beyond the end of the GDR at the impact the historical transition and the transformation in the 1990s had on the Vogtland's textile workers and subsequent generations in

Saxony and Bavaria. In order to access the experiences of these workers, Schwinghammer scoured the German Socio-Economic Panel's repeat survey for suitable cases, then set up oral history interviews in which she asked about the structural impacts of deindustrialization on social inequalities in the Vogtland, and its comparative effects on women across the region. The interviews revealed many cases of mothers in gainful employment at that time who then found themselves unemployed or forced to retrain. Women were less likely to work in industry, having been increasingly pushed into typically female professions such as social services or retail. The conditions worsened for those women, and only improved as their daughters entered the labour market.

Deindustrialization in Germany was also the theme of the contribution by Jonas Fey (German Institute for Adult Education—Leibniz Centre for Lifelong Learning)—this time its impact on adult education, and particularly on the *Volkshochschulen* (adult education centres), the best known providers of this service, since the 1970s. Fey pointed out that there has been linear growth in the requirements placed on employees, and obtaining qualifications is increasingly seen as a core duty in the working world. Adult education, he argued, has, among other things, increased labour market mobility and raised incomes, thereby reducing inequality. At the same time, however, not all people will take up adult education. In the workshop, Fey ran two mathematical models—difference-in-differences and two-way fixed—in order to determine the impact of deindustrialization on further education products. He used a data set published by the European Commission (from the ARDECO database) and statistics provided by adult education centres, emphasizing that the data from the various centres showed considerable variation, but that the large number of data sets enabled regional differentiation and quasi-experimental approaches and could also be of interest to historians.

Jürgen Dinkel's (LMU Munich) paper was about a classic inequality issue: inheritance and bequests. He focused on the case study of Baltimore in Maryland, USA, at the turn of the twentieth century. Setting out the history of knowledge on the production of social data at a local level, he scrutinized statistics, regularly published nationwide, on inheritance inequality in the USA. Dinkel's research revealed blind

spots in regional data, and he identified the following reasons for this: most inheritances had been recorded, but women and people of colour rarely registered their estates and are therefore underrepresented in contemporary statistics. Dinkel also observed that although the data has been repeatedly used by researchers, many studies do not take into account that in 1900 inheritances were only recorded in affluent areas of the city. Aware of these gaps, Dinkel assumed a considerably higher level of inheritance inequality. He argued that in practice, courts found it difficult to record all the information. This led to numerous errors, the consequences of which were often much more significant in bigger data sets. Dinkel's paper once again illustrated the importance of the history of knowledge in the use of historically collected data.

The final workshop paper showed how much qualitative data and interviews can potentially contribute to research into ideas of inequality. Till Hilmar (University of Vienna) conducted interviews with carers and engineers from the former GDR and Czechoslovakia, selecting people who were in their early twenties in 1989. In his analysis of the interviews, Hilmar identified patterns in the way people talked about inequality and their own experiences of it. He was able to compare how they evaluated these in the context of the societal transformation process over the decades. The interviewees picked out the years 1989 and 1990 as the beginning of long-term inequalities. They talked about their own economic agency in this period, and how they dealt with the ruptures that ensued from the *Wende*. Through the interviews, Hilmar showed that statements about unemployment and other experiences of inequality tended to be framed through individualized rather than structural interpretative paradigms, especially by the engineers. The individual respondents, however, thought it was important for their experiences to be comparable with those of others, and for the transformations to be analysed in similar ways.

Finally, Kerstin Brückweh (Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space) and Pascal Siegers (GESIS—Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences) summarized the two days of the workshop and their impressions of the talks and discussions, emphasizing that there are still many differences between historians and sociologists when it comes to talking about methods and data. Researchers of contemporary history must consider how qualitative social research can be

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implemented and whether it would be useful to develop a methodological canon and a catalogue of best practices for the subject so as to be able to explore with sociologists contexts in which both sides could work effectively with one another. They noted that it had become clear how important it is to know about data generation and how it is produced, and it was also striking that, thus far, historians have generally worked either with qualitative or with quantitative data sets. In future, it is worth asking how these two kinds of data can be combined effectively and employed in the study of contemporary history.

PIA KLEINE (Leibniz Institute for Research on Society and Space)

NOTICEBOARD

Scholarships Awarded by the German Historical Institute London

Each year the GHIL awards a number of research grants to German postgraduate and postdoctoral scholars to enable them to undertake research in the UK. Scholarships are generally awarded for a period of up to six months, depending on the requirements of the research project. Scholarships are advertised at [<https://www.hsozkult.de>] and on the GHIL website. Applications should include a curriculum vitae, educational background, list of publications (if any), and an outline of the project, together with a reference from a supervisor confirming the relevance of the proposed archival research. Applications should be sent to stipendium@ghil.ac.uk. Please note that as a result of the UK leaving the EU, new rules apply to research visits. **Please refer to the scholarship guidelines for further information.** If you have any questions, please contact stipendium@ghil.ac.uk. German scholars present their projects and initial research findings at the GHIL Colloquium during their stay in the UK.

In the first round of allocations for 2024 the following scholarships were awarded:

Almuth Ebke (University of Mannheim): Das Andere der Moderne: Historisch-kritische Bibelforschung, Geschichtsdenken und das Konzept der Moderne, ca. 1830–1920

Lucas Haasis (University of Oldenburg): Das Bremer Schiff Concordia: Eine globale Mikrogeschichte

Charlotte Hoes (University of Göttingen): Gefesselte Wildnis: Zur Zirkulation von Tieren im 20. Jahrhundert

Martin Meiske (Deutsches Museum, Munich): Kulturen und Kosten der Wartung: Der Aufstieg von Kreosot und sein prekäres Erbe

Talha Murat (FU Berlin): Between Empires: Ottoman Egyptian Sufi Thought at the Turn of the Century (1882–1908)

Deborah Schlauch (University of Marburg): Exporting Images: Französische Malerei in England zwischen Grand Siècle und Enlightenment

Prize of the German Historical Institute London

The Prize of the German Historical Institute London is awarded annually for an outstanding PhD thesis on

- German history (submitted to a British or Irish university),
- British history or British colonial history (submitted to a German university), or
- British–German relations or British–German comparative history (submitted to a British, Irish, or German university).

The prize is 1,000 euros and will be presented on the occasion of the GHIL's Annual Lecture on 25 October 2024.

To be eligible, applicants must have successfully completed doctoral exams and vivas between 1 August 2023 and 31 July 2024.

Application Details

To apply, send one copy of the thesis with:

- a one-page abstract,
- examiners' reports on the thesis,
- a brief CV,
- a declaration that the work will not be published before the judges have reached a final decision, and
- a supervisor's reference

to reach the Director of the German Historical Institute London, 17 Bloomsbury Square, London WC1A 2NJ, by 31 July 2024. Applications and theses should be sent by email as a PDF attachment to: prize@ghil.ac.uk.

If the prize-winning thesis is on British history, British colonial history, British–German relations, or British–German comparative history, it may also be considered for inclusion in one of the GHIL's publication series.

Summer School 2024

The British Empire and the History of Capitalism. Twenty-first Summer School in British History and the History of the British Empire, LMU Munich, 3–6 September 2024.

Capitalism, broadly understood as an economic and social order characterized by profit-seeking and market exchange, has become constitutive of modern societies. The expansion of trade between Europe and Asia since early modern times has facilitated a boom in capitalist enterprise not only in North-Western Europe, but also in large parts of the world that became linked to the global economy. The coercive, exploitative practices of colonialism and the expansionist forces of imperialism undergirded this global growth of capitalism. The history of capitalism and capitalist expansion on the back of European imperialism has long drawn the interest of historians. For example, the colonial capitalism of the cash crop plantations in the Americas and the parallel growth of the transatlantic slave trade have been much debated for their impact both on the rise of industrial capitalism in the nineteenth century and on the current shape of the world. The emergence of world markets under the auspices of industrialization and imperialism went hand in hand with a transformation of economic structures and global labour relations. The British Empire stood at the centre of these fundamental shifts in the world economic order. Global capitalism on the back of empire catapulted Britain into becoming a global economic power, arguably at the cost of its colonies, such as South Asia.

This summer school will engage with the history of capitalism in the British Empire, especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Our tutors, Maxine Berg (University of Warwick), Karolina Hutkova (LSE), and Tirthankar Roy (LSE), will discuss key questions regarding the development of capitalism in the British transatlantic economy as well as in the relations between Britain and South Asia, stressing the circulation of resources (capital, knowledge, people, and/or materials) and the economic, social, and political conditions behind and resulting from those developments. Finally, the course will explore how the history of capitalism in Britain's imperial past

has shaped, and continues to shape, modern Britain and its former colonies. The summer school is part of the ongoing collaboration between the German Historical Institute London and LMU Munich. The course convenors are Alexander Engel (LMU Munich) and Indra Sengupta (GHIL).

The course is aimed at advanced BA or MA students of history or other related subjects at all German universities.

Forthcoming Workshops and Conferences

Afterlives of Empire: How Imperial Legacies Shaped European Integration. Conference organized by the German Historical Institute London in conjunction with the London School of Economics and Political Science and the Gerda Henkel Foundation, to be held at the GHIL, 12–14 June 2024. Conveners: Alexander Nützenadel and Heike Wieters (Humboldt Universität zu Berlin).

Recent historical research has turned our attention to the importance of imperial and colonial legacies for the process of European Integration. Most studies, however, have focused on the founding phase of the EEC, while the long-term legacies of empires have rarely been considered. Moreover, historians have overlooked the fact that the EU's expansion over the years brought new member states with different imperial traditions into the EU, including the United Kingdom (1973), Spain and Portugal (1986), and the Eastern European countries after the fall of the Soviet Empire. Hence, the history of the EEC/EU is closely intertwined with the dissolution of empires, not only in the beginning, but also in later phases and more recent times.

This conference aims to explore the afterlives of empires from an interdisciplinary and comparative perspective. It will bring together scholars from history, the social sciences, economics, and regional studies to start a dialogue about the historical impact of past empires on the process of European Integration.

The concept of 'legacies' is used in a broad sense. First, we will look at the persistence of economic structures, social elites, migration networks, forms of knowledge, and bureaucratic practices which often

survived the formal termination of empires and continued to exert a strong influence on post-imperial orders. Second, we will explore conflicts that resulted from EU membership, which was often seen as an alternative to past imperial orders and belongings. Third, we will analyse how the EEC/EU developed strategies to compensate new member states for the loss of their imperial structures, for example by granting former colonies favourable trade conditions or establishing credit schemes benefiting underdeveloped regions at the European periphery. Fourth, we are interested in how collective memories of empire were reactivated and used in political debates, often decades after their formal dissolution; not least, narratives of empire have underpinned rising Euroscepticism during the past decades. Fifth, we will reconstruct debates about how the EEC/EU itself developed structures that resemble those of older empires.

Cultures of Compromise and Liberal Democracy after World War II. Conference organized by the German Historical Institute London in conjunction with the London School of Economics and Political Science and the Gerda Henkel Foundation, to be held at the GHIL, 4–6 July 2024. Convener: Constantin Goschler (Ruhr University Bochum).

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the idea that democracy and Europe belonged together took hold. Yet for some time now, this liberal utopia has been challenged – if not replaced – by a dystopian vision of the future of liberal democracy. Increasing political polarization in many Western societies, particularly in Europe, has fuelled fears that liberal democracy is dysfunctional and that authoritarian alternatives are becoming more attractive. A recurring argument in this debate is that growing social and political polarization is undermining the capacity for compromise, thereby threatening a key condition for the functioning of liberal democracies in Europe and elsewhere.

Proceeding from these observations, the conference will discuss cultures of compromise and their significance for liberal democracies after 1945. The normative premise that liberal democracy is tied to functioning compromises will be examined through a historicizing

perspective. Using an international comparative framework, the conference will discuss the causes and reasons for the varying functions and the relevance of compromise as a model of political and social conflict resolution. The aim is to analyse compromise in the tension between the political and the private. To this end, we will ask how compromise has been institutionalized, how it has been reflected in discourses, and what practices it has been associated with. At the same time, we will demonstrate how liberal democratic institutions are embedded in social and private norms and practices.

Ageing, Experience and Difference: The Social History of Old Age in Europe since 1900. Conference to be held at the German Historical Institute London, 12–14 September 2024. Conveners: Christina von Hodenberg (GHIL) and Helen McCarthy (University of Cambridge).

To date, the social history of ageing and old people has received comparatively little attention from historians. Recent works have begun to explore the topic from multiple perspectives, building on oral history, archival materials, media sources, and quantitative and qualitative data produced by twentieth-century social science. From this scholarship it emerges that ageing was a dynamic process across the period and the aged themselves were a highly differentiated group. Gender, class, racial background, and marital status, among other intersectional categories, produced marked differences in the social experience of old people. This conference aims to bring together scholars working on ageing and old age in twentieth-century Europe, including Europe's colonial and global entanglements. While engaging closely with the more established historiography on pension reform, welfare, and ideas of ageing, we seek to centre the changing experience of ageing and the life worlds of old people in different European contexts.

Papers will cover Germany, the UK, Ireland, Soviet and post-Soviet countries, France, and colonial India. Five panels will address topics such as age and work/retirement; the agency of older people in the mass media; health and the older body; old women and feminism; and the 'family life' of older people.

Public Lectures

Local Modernity: Agency, Entanglement, and the Making of the Modern Middle East. The fifth Thyssen Lecture, to be given by Professor Gudrun Krämer (Freie Universität Berlin) on 21 October 2024 at the GHIL and on 22 October 2024 at the University of Nottingham.

Please consult our website [<https://www.ghil.ac.uk/events/lectures>] for the regular GHIL Lecture Series, which takes place in three series of five lectures per year.

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