CrossMark

On one hand, del Valle Alcalá's approach brings new insight to British texts and writers that have often been the focus of working-class cultural critique (Alan Sillitoe and Pat Barker, for instance, have been prominent inspirations in my work and others'); on the other hand, it is not always clear the refusal of work, an Autonomist axiom, necessarily constellates what makes the fiction under discussion "working-class" as such. In other words, part of the challenge in writing about working-class fiction is not only the extent to which the texts explain the concept brought to them but how they might write the concept itself. We might say that characters discussed in the book—such as Arthur Seaton (Sillitoe's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*), Alice Bell (Barker's *Union Street*), and Oona (Monica Ali's *In the Kitchen*)—embody working-class outlooks and perhaps offer resistance to the regimes of work that are the substance of their everyday lives. But does the writing have to be conscious of this standpoint in order to provide an understanding or intervention? We do not expect Welsh's Renton in *Trainspotting* to bear the burden of philosophical nuance, yet between Welsh's imagination and Renton's, the edge of class itself is pressed in its imaginary. A little refusal of theory here, even that of Giorgio Agamben and Deleuze, might provincialize it (in Dipesh Chakrabarty's sense) in favor of the provinces or provenance of "working-class" as description. (To recall my opening on the place of class critique, it is interesting that Welsh and James Kelman are read to critique Thatcherism in a chapter titled "Beyond Civil Society"). So what are the benefits of bringing a theoretically distinct appreciation of work to the idea of British working-class writing today?

Del Valle Alcalá's approach usefully problematizes working-class fiction as a site of cultural resistance by attending to the ways in which fiction reveals work dissembling, multiplying, and fracturing capital's desire to mediate every level of the worker as subject. Indeed, according to del Valle Alcalá, the norms of subjectivity are displaced so that we might witness, even in what can be read as social or socialist realism, a form of non-subject. While this canceling of subjectivity is not necessarily a comforting prospect, especially with regard to questions of agency and the agential, it nevertheless draws attention to the relevance of alternative criteria in thinking class when workers no longer have parties or states that even pay lip service to the role of class in the everyday. Worklessness, or the refusal of work, is a scary outlook for those who must still seek sustenance through the wage and the wage relation. Yet this is also the challenge of working-class fiction, because it not only comes to terms with the meanings of class in socialization but also intimates what might be risked in its transformation. The cynic will say this is easy in fiction and even easier in theory. I would say work like del Valle Alcalá's keeps alive all kinds of class possibility in a world (or a Britain) too long inclined to extinguish it.

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MARK DOYLE. *Communal Violence in the British Empire: Disturbing the Pax*. London: Bloomsbury, 2016. Pp. 283. $122.00 (cloth).
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One of the most valuable areas of new research on empire in the last decade has been the close investigation of imperial violence. Recent scholarship ranging from John and Jean Comaroff's examination of the violence of "lawfare" to Elizabeth Kolsky's analysis of the quotidian violence of the British in India, Priya Satia's study of institutional violence in the Middle East, and other scholars' work on the suppression of Mau Mau resistance has opened up compelling areas of historical research. Mark Doyle's *Communal Violence in the British Empire: Disturbing the Pax* joins this body of scholarship by exploring what he terms internal or communal

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violence in the British Empire in the long nineteenth century. Rioting and conflict between and within subject communities occurred all over the British Empire and ultimately, Doyle contends, the colonial state's claims to control and manage these disturbances became one of the legitimating myths of its rule. Doyle asserts that colonial power to a significant degree generated communalism, but that colonial officers seemed oblivious to their role in the creation of communal violence. Instead, Doyle argues, their cultural assumptions and prejudices led them to see the root causes as the moral failings and fanaticism of subject populations. These presumptions about rioters' innate character were racially inflected, and the trope of the "fanatic" reflected deeply embedded racial assumptions. Doyle uncovers a wide variety of textual references to fanaticism to demonstrate a Victorian preoccupation with the threat of what Alfred Lyall in 1874 called "intemperate and fanatic men" (87). These assumptions led colonial officers to minimize and ignore the real grievances, economic or otherwise, that engendered violent protest. Lastly, Doyle argues that internal violence led ultimately to the disintegration of British dominance in the twentieth century. Increasing levels of violent suppression by the state contributed to the further erosion of the claims of the state for legitimacy, especially as the nineteenth century drew to a close. Doyle develops these central arguments throughout a series of case studies, each involving different corners of the empire: India, Ceylon, Ireland, and British Guiana. The four case studies are interspersed with four chapters on larger, interpretative themes: the causes of riots, the civilizing mission, policing, and the consequences of communal riots for the disintegration of British dominance.

Doyle excludes from his frame the white settler colonies of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and southern Africa on the grounds that these regions were qualitatively different. Historians of these regions may question this rationale for exclusion, and recent scholarship by Duncan Bell and others has reminded us of the centrality of white settler colonies for understanding the constitution of governmentality in the empire. Limiting the frame of the survey, however, enables Doyle to develop a closer and more careful analysis than broader coverage would permit, and the focused case studies are a strength of the book. Selecting examples from four different locations valuably brings together, in a single frame, some central themes that cross regional boundaries. Doyle rightly reminds his readers that communal violence was most often engendered by a complex web of factors, sometimes religious but more often entailing contestations over public space and political and economic tensions, and he takes care to draw out many of these complexities. He offers a compelling narrative of the six days of rioting between Catholic and Protestant rioters in Belfast in August of 1872, contending that the riots led to public debate about the deficiencies of the British state in Ireland as well as controversy among state officials about what was deemed the appropriate measure of violence. As Doyle notes, Earl Spencer, lord lieutenant of Ireland, pondered, "'I confess that much as I dislike the idea of killing men in a crowd, I think it often would save great loss of property & life if at the outset after due warning an effective volley were fired'" (75). Doyle picks up this discussion of lethal response to rioting in a later chapter on policing in which he concludes that the uniform policy that dictated minimal force was differentially applied across the empire, with colonial officials in India concluding that firing blank cartridges instead of buckshot or balls would simply incite further violence.

Readers may look for a more sustained analysis of the multiple ways in which colonial rule engendered communal violence, the impact of colonial rule in inscribing communal distinctions, or the ways in which violence was imbricated in the very structures of law and governance that were used to respond to rioting. *Communal Violence in the British Empire: Disturbing the Pax* has much to offer the reader, and contributes to a richer understanding of rioting in the British Empire in the nineteenth century.

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