

# CSSH NOTES

Thomas Patterson. *Marx's Ghost: Conversations with Archaeologists*. Oxford/New York: Berg, 2003. 204 pp.

The book *Marx's Ghosts: Conversations with Archaeologists* by Thomas Patterson is divided into five chapters with a preface and an introduction. It opens with an autobiographical preface that spells out the author's encounter with Marxism, from his young years in California to academia on the East coast, at Harvard and Temple, and finally, back to the West coast at University of California–Riverside. The book's aim is clearly stated in the introduction: to explore the many dimensions of Marxism in archaeological practice and discourse on two principal topics—the rise of civilization and the origins of states.

The first chapter outlines Marx's legacy, on issues revolving around methods [dialectic], theory of history and society [historical materialism], and ecology [modes of production]. In Chapter 2, the author sees the beginning of a constructive dialogue launched by Gordon Vere Childe. The latter transferred some key Marxist concepts like mode of production, forces of production, and contradictions, into his view of historical development. He identified two "great transformations" of human history; the first being the "Neolithic revolution," and the second the "urban revolution." The former resulted from a process through which land and livestock shifted gradually from 'objects' to 'means of production.' The latter, the foundation of civilization, is partly based on class stratification, oppression, and exploitation. In the Western anglophone world, Childe was unique. In fact, as is argued in Chapter 3, widespread fear of the "Reds," the Cold War, and academic traditions kept Marxism outside the gate of most, if not all, North American universities.

Thomas Patterson delineates a sort of stratigraphy building up from 'disregard,' 'disengagement,' 'engagement,' and finally, 'dialogue.' Each layer has its cast of characters. The book is particularly harsh on the so-called 'new-archaeologists'; the 'staccato' of questions is sustained and intense. Clearly the author has no patience with Binford's, Flannery's, and Renfrew's research programmes, which he brands as representative of the 'disengagement.' The period of 'engagement' subsequently develops with research by Carneiro, Cowgill, Johnson, Price, Sanders, and Wright on the archaeology of exchange, population dynamics, and warfare. The dialectics of domination, conquest, and exploitation is acknowledged and taken into consideration even if the Marxist lexicon is not used. The 'dialogue' finally takes off with the research of Adams,

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Trigger, and Wolff. Class distinction, private ownership of land, warfare, conquest, etcetera, become key elements in the study of the emergence of civilization. Chapter 4 discusses the development of an explicit Marxist approach to archaeology between 1975 and 1990. In the United States, Crumley, Gilman, and Kohl played leading roles in this turn of events, organizing key symposia and writing seminal articles. From then on, Marxist concepts and lexicon became part of the archaeological dialect. In this chapter, the author's distaste for a certain way of doing archaeology leads to extreme statements. For example, he asserts that, "as the processual archaeologists increasingly became technicians and state functionaries concerned with methodological issues, instrumental rationality, and value-neutrality, they sought standardized concepts and procedures that could be applied uniformly in diverse circumstances" (p. 91). This is not only excessive partisan-quibbling, but also flies at the face of evidence. It ridicules those with a different approach and attributes to them an unpleasant robot-dummy-like attitude.

After 1990, as outlined in Chapter 5, different authors develop distinct strands of Marxist archaeology. The "historical materialist" approach is now a constitutive component of archaeological scholarship. This is also the case with the absorption of social theory, hermeneutics, deconstruction, and neo-structuralism, essentially in the United States and the United Kingdom. The archaeological landscape thus appears as a textured field of competing claims for 'completeness,' 'ethics,' and political relevance. Because of the myriad philosophical difficulties of a focused causal approach to human history, it no longer seems to matter if some approaches are anachronistic, misguided, or irrelevant.

Thomas Patterson's book is interesting, and, if properly contextualized, will be important for undergraduate and graduate training alike. Whether sincere or coerced, Marxism has been in the mainstream of scholarship in The Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Eastern Asia, South America, and Africa, and it has always been an influential body of ideas in Western Europe. This book is an exciting discussion on the adoption of Marx's ideas in the field of archaeological investigation in the United States, a country with an uneasy relationship to revolutionary social activism that has significantly impeded the expansion of Marx's ideas.

———Augustin F. C. Holl. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Pamela Ballinger. *History in Exile: Memory and Identity at the Borders of the Balkans*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.

Using anthropological, historical, and political science approaches, Pamela Ballinger demonstrates how memory shapes Istrian understandings of Italian identity. World War II and the events of 1945, specifically the creation of the

Free Territory of Trieste and the division of the upper Adriatic territory into Allied and Yugoslav administered zones, form the backdrop for the study that concentrates on the crystallization of collective memory for Istrian *esuli* (exiles who settled in Trieste) and *rimasti* (those who remained in Yugoslavia). Grounded in the literature re-evaluating the impact of the Cold War, her work skillfully weaves a narrative that uncovers competing visions as well as common tropes in Istrian visions of 'Italianness' constructed in the climate of state formation and dissolution since World War I. Ballinger's major contribution is her analysis of the "multi-directionality" of identity formation (p. 45) that has implications far beyond the Istrian case.

Instances of violence, or at least memories of violence, serve as nodes of analysis of Istrian action and reaction to perceptions of Italy and Italian national identity. Ballinger is perhaps at her best in her nuanced treatment of questions of victimhood related to debates over deaths in the *foibes* or limestone pits in the Carsic interior. She demonstrates how the historiography of victimhood serves both as a unifying factor promoting common understandings of the World War II period and a divisive factor fueling accusations of ethnic persecution and political duplicity (145–67).

Ballinger's approach is consciously comparative. She makes particular use of available studies to compare the Istrian situation in Trieste to that of the Cubans in Miami (40, 56, 172, 264). She argues that Istrian exiles in Trieste constructed, for the most part, a group identity based on visions of Italian purity. In contrast, those who remained in Istria understood their Italianness in terms of hybridity. Perhaps here her conclusions could be teased out. Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century migration to Trieste created a transient community of Istrians. Istrian exiles after World War II were not necessarily strangers settling in a foreign land. In addition, the labeling of those in Trieste as exiles, rather than refugees as many observers and the international community claim, reflects a particular understanding of events influenced no doubt by Ballinger's reliance on exile organizations in Trieste and elsewhere. Ballinger skillfully avoids problematic statistics used by various factions to justify or de-legitimize Istrian claims. However, avoidance raises questions that might well be addressed in future work. For example, it would be interesting to know if the visions propounded by exile groups can be generalized to the broader population of Istrians in Trieste who have eschewed all ties to Istrian politics.

In the broader perspective, Ballinger's account demonstrates how shifting state priorities resonate with the interests of small groups and how states manipulate visions of the past to serve current agendas. The study also offers a reminder that historiography as much as history can influence identity, and that memory can be a potent force driving national identification.

———Maura Hametz, Old Dominion

Jenny White. *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey: A Study in Vernacular Politics*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002.

After more than seventy years of secularist rule in Turkey, victory of the Islam-based Welfare Party in the mid-1990s came as a surprise to many political observers. Electoral support for religious party politics increased despite heavy pressures from the secular army and state officials. Based on over twenty years of ethnographic research in a low-income neighborhood in Istanbul, Jenny White's *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey* explores the basis of this support and the meaning it carries in the daily lives of people.

White argues that Islam-based parties in Turkey are successful because they are able to engage in vernacular politics, which she defines as "a value-centered political process rooted in local culture, interpersonal relations, and community networks" (p. 27). She claims that because party members see Islam as a local cultural idiom, rather than a coherent ideology, they are able to connect local values and social organization to larger national interests. Thus, rather than being political parties that represent Islam, they serve as Muslim parties interested in politics. Moreover, the effort party activists spend to personalize and popularize politics through face-to-face connections and networks of mutual obligation helps them establish bridges among otherwise divided social classes and ethnic groups. By becoming intimate with people's lives, White argues, Islamist parties transform politics into an integral aspect of everyday life. It is due to this organizational strength that religion-based politics survive the repeated banning of Islamist political parties.

An equally important contribution of White's study is its answer to the question why Islamist parties are more successful than secularist parties in Turkey. Even though the Republican Peoples Party activists she observed in the same neighborhood also engage in grassroots organization and face-to-face activism, they are not as successful in mobilizing people. White argues that this is because secularists aim to transform and go beyond local values and communal ties, rather than utilizing them, in order to popularize their ideological message. As secularist activists try to modernize the values and life-styles of the residents in the neighborhood through top-down social engineering projects and with an elitist attitude they create feelings of alienation among residents.

This lucid ethnography of political mobilization is especially important at a time when scholars are declaring the contemporary neoliberal moment as post-political, or politics as dead. The consensus among critical political theorists suggests that at the turn of the millennium politics became a field for the construction of privatized moral communities rather than for battling conflicting interests. Although White does not ask why this transformation took place at this particular moment in time, she suggestively tells us how the new form of politics shapes and is shaped by everyday engagement. Her study shows that even though community and morality based politics may be changing the na-

ture of politics, it also functions as a resource for drawing the masses into this new political field where they feel intimately comfortable.

———Esra Özyürek, University of California, San Diego

Ming-cheng M. Lo. *Doctors Within Borders: Profession, Ethnicity, and Modernity in Colonial Taiwan*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002.

In *Doctors Within Borders*, Ming-cheng Lo discusses the experience of Taiwanese doctors under Japanese colonial rule. By examining the viewpoints of colonial subjects, this work expands our understanding of colonialism in East Asia. The position of Taiwanese doctors continuously fluctuated between the colonial state, Taiwan society, and the culture of their medical profession. These doctors were ‘in-betweens’ in various ways. They received colonial education, and benefited from the Japanese rule, but at the same time they were a part of the Taiwan ethnic community. Though they enjoyed liberalism and autonomy within their professional culture, they remained subordinate to their Japanese mentors and colleagues. While they were the most modernized or ‘Japanized’ elements in Taiwan, they nonetheless engaged in social movements and contributed to the formation of Taiwan’s civil society.

This in-between position of Taiwanese doctors reflects the ambiguity of Japanese colonialism. Japanese colonized their Asian neighbors, who were culturally and racially similar to themselves. To counter Western powers, Japanese identified themselves as “anti-colonial colonizers.” They adopted the theory of “scientific colonialism,” and nurtured doctors as a native elite who would develop it. Thus Taiwanese doctors positioned themselves on the borderline between the colonizers and the colonized.

Lo traces transformations of Taiwanese doctors’ identities through three time periods: 1920–1931, 1931–1936 and 1937–1945. Under Japanese rule, the medical profession was a part of the colonial system, but, as the medical community in Taiwan developed, Taiwanese doctors began to possess their own professional autonomy, and in the 1920s they engaged in modernization and liberalization movements. They called themselves “national physicians” who could cure and help the Taiwanese nation, and they criticized colonial policies.

However, in the 1930s and the 1940s, as the colonial state expanded its regulating power it encroached on the professional autonomy of Taiwan’s medical community. After 1931, the colonial state became increasingly intolerant of social and cultural movements. Cultural as well as political activities were destroyed and suffocated, and many doctor-activists withdrew from civil society. Moreover, Taiwanese doctors “became increasingly incorporated into the expanding imperial medical systems” (p. 94).

During the Sino-Japanese War period (1937–1945), the Japanese colonizers

further enforced their 'Japanization' policy and promoted assimilation of the Taiwanese. Taiwanese were educated to be Japanese, and Taiwanese doctors became a significant part of the imperial medical system. Ironically, the war provided Taiwanese doctors with opportunities for upward mobility within the medical community. While ethnic boundaries between Taiwanese and Japanese became obscure, Taiwanese doctors did not identify themselves as Japanese. Instead, they identified themselves with modern medical science, which was supposed to have no ethnic or national boundaries. By doing so, these doctors rejected the category of ethnicity itself, and subtly took exception to the 'Japanization' policy.

Lo's work is a significant contribution to the literature on Taiwanese history. Moreover, this work demonstrates that colonialism was not a one-way process. While colonizers imposed their logic on colonial subjects, colonial subjects could interpret and alter the colonizers' logic in their own terms. This work also highlights the political and colonial power of medical science. Lo's work suggests that precisely because medical science was meant to save human lives and had universal appeal, it had the political and cultural power to legitimize colonial rule. At the same time, the colonized used the universal value of modern medical science to alter, subvert, and even challenge the colonial rule.

———Chieko Nakajima, DePaul University