

these universal empires were very different from the European colonial polities of the eighteenth to twentieth centuries. Even after the latter took to calling themselves empires they still accepted the basic reality and ideological foundation of international relations in Europe, namely multi-polarity and the formal equality between European sovereign states. These European empires were also national, unlike most but not all of the universal empires covered in this book. By that I mean that the rulers of European empires by 1900 were responsible to metropolitan nations, whose identity was largely defined by ethnicity and citizenship. There was a clear distinction between citizens in the metropole and subjects on the periphery.

A key to the success of the universal empires covered in this book was that – as most of the authors emphasize – no such sharp distinction usually existed. Facing the enormous challenge of ruling vast areas and many peoples on the basis of primitive communications, these empires used many subtle weapons to hold their realms together. Force was essential but far from sufficient. The attractive power of a great imperial high culture was crucial to holding the allegiance of elites. So were a range of rituals, symbols, and interpersonal relations. As long as elites could be bound to the emperor, they themselves would preserve the loyalty and exploit the resources of the regions which they controlled on the monarch's behalf. One central aim of the book is to compare how this common imperial goal was refracted through the differing cultures, religions, and dynastic traditions of the empires it studies. Another is to show how all these empires were hybrids, drawing inspiration from the many peoples and cultures over which they ruled. The precise form taken by the empire's hybrid nature differed, of course, but the essential principle was the same.

Given the vast potential scale of the topic, it is inevitable that the book often asks questions without providing answers. It is also inevitable that there are gaps. One important issue beyond this book's range, for example, is the impact of cultural and religious systems on the role of women, reproduction, and inheritance. At this point politics, culture, and religion come together over the crucial issue of succession. One or two essays in the book just touch on this question but it deserves to be pursued in greater depth in another work. Nevertheless, this is not in any way to diminish the great interest and splendid scholarship of Peter Bang and Dariusz Kołodziejczyk's volume.

Colonialism and beyond: race and migration from a postcolonial perspective

Edited by Eva Bischoff and Elisabeth Engel. Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2013. Periplus Studien 17. Pp. 128. Paperback €29.90, ISBN 978-3-643-90261-0.

Reviewed by Parvathi Raman
School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, UK
E-mail: pr1@soas.ac.uk

doi:10.1017/S1740022814000114

Postcolonial theory has become an established part of academia. As a result, there have inevitably been ongoing attempts to evaluate its influence, discuss its shortcomings, and assess whether it continues to have relevance when it no longer unsettles conventional academic wisdom, as it once undoubtedly did. These conversations now constitute a mini-academic industry of their own. Postcolonial theory has come under sustained attack from some quarters, while others have sought to extend its approach to broader academic frameworks and to reconfigure its theoretical underpinnings for the twenty-first century. As historians of various guises have been central to this debate, we can only welcome a volume which promises to turn its gaze to postcolonial theory and issues of race and migration in historical contexts. In *Colonialism and beyond*, the editors Eva Bischoff and Elisabeth Engels seek to frame questions of race and migration in a postcolonial perspective, thereby contributing to the debate on the location of postcolonial studies, and asking the question 'Where can postcolonial studies go from here?'

In foregrounding how we look at questions of race and migration in the twenty-first century, and the new 'politics of racialization' (p. 8), the authors in this volume outline an interesting number of case studies which raise important questions about the new configurations of racialization that have emerged over the last century. The editors highlight a framework of 'thinking *across*' to visualize 'new spatial formations of race and migration which don't fit into older geographies' (p. 11). This is an admirable aspiration. The book contains many strengths, but it is ultimately let down by the unevenness of the contributions.

The opening chapter by Olaf Stieglitz, which looks at the 'national culture' of swimming in Australia, seeks to explore the story of the Australian crawl, a fascinating example of gendered, racialized

'bodies in motion', crafted by the new technologies of the early twentieth century. The prism of sports history, as the history of the emergence of modern bodies, is a fertile field; but here the evidence offered is so slight as to be frustrating. The author does little more than lay out snippets from other research, with a lack of sustained discussion linking those snippets together. Although the editors warn us that the chapters are 'potential starting points' for discussion (p. 12), the opening chapter is too underdeveloped to get the discussion off to a stimulating start, which is a great shame. The author himself states in the text 'all this sounds too obvious' (p. 25), and, unfortunately, so it is.

The second chapter is also concerned with the production of whiteness. While scrutinizing the well-worn field of immigration regimes in nineteenth-century America, Robert Julio Decker does an excellent job of illustrating how whiteness, far from being invisible, has been the subject of much scrutiny and intervention over the years. By examining the workings of the Immigration Restriction League (IRL), he illuminates how whiteness was reconfigured between the 1890s–1920s, and that the activities of the IRL, much like organizations such as MigrationWatch in the current moment, act as nodal points between 'scientific' and public discourses, helping articulate 'racial selves' (p. 39), and giving form to 'active citizens' (p. 45) who take responsibility for the preservation of certain visions of both race and nation.

In an equally successful chapter Judith Schachter looks at the complex history of Hawaiian–US relations, and at ascriptions of Hawaiians as 'native', 'tribe', or 'nation'. Of especial interest is the role of 'blood quantum' (p. 58) and the interplay between state definitions and self-ascriptions of identity, where the US government is accused of playing at 'blood sport' (p. 63) in racializing the debate. Schachter illustrates that, for many Hawaiians, self-identification requires an accommodation with the past, which is both flexible and incorporative. She argues convincingly that these processes are not two separate poles of identity formation but that self-ascription often becomes entangled in the rhetoric and practices of colonialism, and that there is a continuation of 'race-making' practices of governments and their institutions in the contemporary world (p. 67).

In a chapter entitled 'Citizen subject: the ambiguity of citizenship and its colonial laboratories', Serhat Karaayali looks at urban planning regimes in North Africa and the efforts of some modernist architectural projects in the colonies to learn from the lived environments of peoples of the

Global South. The chapter attempts to address the central themes of the volume, but the argument frequently falters as the author meanders through too many different contexts without adequately revealing the entanglements between different spatial and temporal environments. There are some excellent observations during the course of the chapter, especially on the nature of labour movements and the role of race in the making of modernity. But the focus of the piece would have been far more effective if there had been more detail on the various housing projects in North Africa which are mentioned, and a more sustained effort to discuss the dialogues between different urban planning projects, which are alluded to but not developed.

In 'Citizenship and postcolonial Europe', Manuela Bojadzijevo looks at migration to Europe, especially to Germany, and expands on how the hidden histories of earlier migratory movements, central to the construction of European identity, are written out in the context of post-war migration, and its representation as a modern phenomenon which unsettled an imagined pre-existing political and social community. As an exploratory argument that looks to the ramifications of long-term migration to Europe, and the subsequent and ongoing network of migrant organizations which developed within that context, it is an interesting contribution to ongoing debates; it clearly illustrates the importance of a historical perspective in issues of migration, something that could have been emphasized with more rigour throughout the collection. But the author ignores the many contributions that have already been made to this discussion, and one is left frustrated at the failure to develop arguments more systematically, in ways that would more fully illustrate 'entanglements' and efforts to 'think across'.

In the final chapter, on humanitarianism, Lora Wildenthal takes the examples of four humanitarian practitioners to try to illustrate why we should exercise restraint when questioning what could be 'old' or 'new', or what constitutes historical continuities. In using these vignettes to illustrate her argument, she raises questions which could be asked of the entire volume. All the subjects introduced throughout the book call for looking at how historical phenomena are continually reconfigured in different temporal and social spaces, sometimes in unexpected configurations, which help dissolve older hegemonic narratives about the nature of the world and our relationships to one another. In this context, ideas of race and migration are crucial components in the making of the modern world, and their reconfigured intersections in the

twenty-first century are important sites of place-making and subject formation. As the ever more polarized debate on race, migration, and national sovereignty continues apace, historians have a potentially important contribution to make in pointing to the tenuous ground on which some of this debate is constructed. Some of the chapters in this edited volume do justice to this debate. Others, however, are too provisional and underdeveloped to contribute meaningfully to an important topic. The epithet ‘all this sounds too obvious’ applies to too much of this potentially interesting volume.

Handbuch Geschichte der Sklaverei: eine Globalgeschichte von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart

By Michael Zeuske. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013. Pp. lx+725. €129.95/US\$182.00, ISBN 978-3-11-027880-4.

Reviewed by Juliane Schiel
University of Zurich, Switzerland
E-mail: juliane.schiel@hist.uzh.ch

doi:10.1017/S1740022814000126

To cut a long story short: this book needs to be discussed! Not only is it the first serious attempt by a single researcher to write ‘a monographic world and global history of slavery’ (p. 57), but it also adds a new perspective to current debates on how to define and explore the phenomenon of slavery in a global perspective. The goals set by the author are as ambitious as they are provocative and, although the way in which these goals are achieved do not fully live up to the reader’s expectations, the arguments presented in this study need to be taken seriously.

Michael Zeuske, a specialist in Latin American history who has contributed to a micro-historical view on slaves and slave agency in Spanish America, the Atlantic, and the Caribbean for more than twenty years, has written a ‘handbook of the history of slavery’ and he has chosen a rather unusual approach for a historian. The conceptual starting point of his ‘global history from the beginnings to the present’ is the globalized world of today’s ‘human capitalism’ or ‘bio capitalism’, as he calls it (p. 571). Roughly about two hundred years after the abolition of the ‘great slavery’ ‘in the nineteenth-century “West”’ (p. 219), very old forms of slaving are constantly regaining ground today, according to

Zeuske. He argues that these forms of slaving exist and have always existed beyond the institution of slavery and a legally fixed slave status. They had been forced back to a local and hidden level on the ground by the British (and European) anti-slavery campaigns (p. 13) until the effects of the age of globalization allowed those very local forms of slaving to interact with each other on a trans-regional and global level.

The ‘imperial historiographies’ (p. 31) of the former colonial powers had followed this abolitionist’s constriction on ‘slavery as institution’ and still contribute to a problematic fixation on ‘great’ and ‘hegemonic’ slaveries. Zeuske contends that current research on slavery runs two risks. On the one hand, numerous encyclopaedias, manuals, and atlases of a global history of slavery are springing up like mushrooms (especially in Anglo-American academia), which leads to the prolonging and the canonization of this ‘distorted perception’ of slavery (p. 43). On the other hand, the widespread ‘cultural relativism’ among ‘critical intellectuals in the West’, who tend to stress the ‘unique individuality of any culture’ (p. 199) and the ‘exceptionality’ of every form of slavery (p. 60), bars the path to a more integrative conceptualization of the different types and forms of slavery from a world and global historical perspective as it is conceived today (pp. 60–1).

Based on this analysis, Zeuske then pleads for a very large concept of ‘slavery’ and ‘capitalism’. For him, the ‘general function of a slave’s body as capital’ must be at the heart of a new definition of slavery. Slave-hunting and slave trade have always followed the principle of capital accumulation and profit maximization, and the lowest common denominator of all forms of slave-holding is the ‘productive labour pressed out of the slave’s body by force’ (pp. 427–8). By conceptualizing ‘human bodies as a multivalent form of capital’ (p. 571), he seeks to ‘deconstruct traditional images of slavery’ and to draw long lines to the very old history of slavery beyond ‘hegemonic slaveries’ (p. 565) in order to open up the view on ‘global historical realities of today’s slaveries’ (p. 568).

Even though this 600-page world history is full of redundancies and would definitely have benefited from better copy-editing, the book certainly contains important stimuli for scholars of trans-regional and global history. These can be found on three different levels. The first level concerns current research on slavery: Zeuske designs his world history of slavery not as it is usually done – from the continents or historical epochs – but from the oceans. In doing so, the islands