In this study of these individuals' motivations, Noe presents insight not only into these late comers, but also into those who came early and remained throughout the war. He concludes that those who entered early and those who came late differed little in their devotion to the war and in their perceptions of other factors, too.

Chapter titles indicate the areas that Noe utilized to study the Confederate soldier: "Duty, Honor, Country"; "Slavery"; "Women"; "Hatred"; "Pay"; "Religion"; "Comrades"; "Weariness"; and "Battle." His conclusions are convincing, and Lost Cause advocates will not be happy with many of them. They do not support the hagiography that too frequently passes as historical fact among neo-Confederates. For example, Confederate soldiers did fight to defend slavery, and they were infuriated at the mere sight of black Union soldiers. (There is no reality, Noe points out, as other historians have also shown, to the assertion that the Confederates welcomed blacks as soldiers into their ranks.)

Noe provides his insights in a fair-minded manner. In reality, the major contribution of this monograph, like that of any good historical analysis, is to point out that the past is not simple. Human beings are complicated, and they do not always act the way we would want them to. Such was the case with the soldiers who made up the Confederate army. They were hardly the band of virtuous heroes that Lost Cause historiography enshrines. They were like soldiers in every war: reluctant and motivated, heroes and skulkers, kind hearted and brutal. This seems like an obvious point, but it has to be repeated regularly to overcome the mythology that so many Americans believe is historical fact about the American Civil War.

The Civil War continues to intrigue the American public and attract historians to its study. The publication of books like this one demonstrates the vitality of such study and the potential for public learning. The Civil War is too important to the American psyche to be left to mythological inaccuracies. We need more books like this one to document facts.

–John F. Marszalek

NEUROSIS AND NATURE

Joachim Radkau: *Max Weber: A Biography*. Trans. Patrick Camiller. (Cambridge and Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2009. Pp. xix, 683. $35.00.)

doi:10.1017/S0034670510001038

Joachim Radkau's *Max Weber* is the first substantially new biography of the German scholar to appear since the publication of Marianne Weber's *Lebensbild* (1926). The novelty of Radkau's book derives in part from its source base, which includes a variety of archival materials previously

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unknown or inaccessible to scholars. Some of Weber's personal correspondence has been published by the editors of the *Max Weber-Gesamtausgabe* over the past two decades, but Radkau has also unearthed a trove of treasures through his own sleuthing. Chief among them is the correspondence between Weber's wife, Marianne, and his mother Helene—presumably duplicates of letters still awaiting publication by the *Gesamtausgabe*. In addition, Radkau has yielded gems from the personal papers of Marianne and Max Weber, his brother Alfred Weber, his colleague Karl Jaspers, and his lovers, Mina Tobler and Else Jaffé.

The second novel aspect of Radkau's biography is its thematic focus. Radkau, a professor of history at the University of Bielefeld, has previously published a cultural history of anxiety and a global history of the environment. These two themes—neurosis and nature—provide the axes along which Radkau analyzes Weber's personality and intellectual production. As is well known, Weber suffered a massive nervous breakdown in his midthirties and remained in a fragile psychological condition for the rest of his life. The mysterious nature and consequences of Weber's illness have been favorite topics of his biographers. Radkau offers a new etiology of Weber's depression, rooting it primarily (but not exclusively) in his sexual dysfunctions, and investigates the reciprocal relationship between these neuroses and his intellectual production. In addition, Radkau argues that Weber's "love-hate" relationship with "nature" provides the master narrative of his life. Accordingly, Weber's biography becomes a "three-act play" (2): as a young adult, Weber violates his own nature—in particular, his libido—by denying it; then he suffers from the "revenge" of nature in the form of depression; finally, he comes to terms with nature both in life and scholarship, briefly attaining "salvation and illumination." Along the way, nature figures as the leitmotif that runs through Weber's intellectual biography, tying together his studies of agricultural societies, his struggle with naturalism in the social sciences, and his philosophical ruminations about modern man's displacement from the organic cycle of life.

Let us first consider the axis of neurosis. Radkau reveals that Weber suffered from sexual dysfunctions that caused him great emotional anguish. During his waking hours, Weber was chronically impotent; at night, he was visited by "demons," nocturnal emissions accompanied by graphic sexual nightmares. Weber was unable to square his sexual dysfunctions with the self-image of the macho Wilhelmine *Bürger* that he tried to cultivate. In a self-diagnosis written for his doctor, Weber located the source of his problems in a traumatic experience: as a child, he had become sexually aroused while being spanked by a servant girl. Radkau speculates that it was not a servant girl but rather Weber's own mother who inflicted the spanking and precipitated Weber's sexual hang-ups, not to mention his lifelong emotional dependency on mother figures. Only toward the end of his life, when he consummated an affair with his former student Else Jaffé, was Weber able to achieve some measure of erotic gratification. In Else, Weber found the

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dominatrix who allowed him to experience the pleasures of submission. Radkau does not entirely reduce Weber's breakdown to the thwarting of his masochistic libido. He points to other factors in Weber's early adult life that set him up for a fall: a propensity for alcohol abuse; a depressive temperament that encouraged him to seek solace in overwork; and the fading of his early academic and political promise, which made his flight into work no longer an efficacious remedy for his emotional problems.

These insights into Weber's depression matter not only because they reveal the secret proclivities of a canonical figure, but also because they help to explain Weber's intellectual development. By abandoning metaphysical notions, abjuring messiahs, and renouncing holism in favor of specialized research, Weber demonstrated that "science for him was not a pussy cat but a strict mistress, who often tormented her lovers, although this did not mean that the torments were without their own kind of pleasure" (115). There is indeed a masochistic cast to Weber's intellectual persona, and Radkau makes a convincing case that its origins lie in his libido. Partly on account of his tone in *The Protestant Ethic* and "Science as a Vocation," and partly on account of the biographical tradition that has been handed down, Weber has frequently been portrayed as a "worldly ascetic." In reality, Radkau points out, Weber struggled his whole life to contain—and later accept—a very different side of his personality. As a young man, he caroused with fraternity boys and drank heavily. Following the onset of his depression, he was greatly relieved to abandon the Protestant work ethic that had driven him to exhaustion. While he often counseled Apollonian sobriety in intellectual matters, Weber drew his real inspiration from the irrational, Dionysian depths of his own personality. Despite his allegiances to neo-Kantianism, Weber longed "to surrender, if only once, to the teeming abundance of reality, without immediately grasping everything in words" (107). Radkau succeeds in illuminating a key facet of Weber's personality that has mostly gone unnoticed since the 1930s.

Radkau's treatment of "nature" as a theme in Weber's life is ultimately less satisfying. Like Wilhelm Hennis, Radkau is on the trail of Max Weber's "central question," and he suggests that man's relation to the natural world constitutes the major preoccupation of Weber's life. Radkau is to be commended for drawing our attention to this important substrate of Weber's oeuvre. However, his attempts to connect the different "nature" cognates in Weber's thought often seem to rely on some measure of conceptual sleight of hand. In his efforts to underscore the importance of nature in Weber's thought, Radkau does not really deepen our understanding of what key Weberian interventions—such as ideal types, value freedom and interpretive sociology—really meant, or what different intellectual or political contexts determined their utility.

Max Weber: A Biography is studded with sparkling observations on topics ranging from German academia to zoology, and the references to primary and secondary literature are truly encyclopedic. Those expecting an accessible

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introduction to Weber's life and intellectual biography may, however, be disappointed. Radkau frequently mentions figures in Weber's circle—some crucial, like Stefan George, others peripheral, like Otto Benecke—without adequately explaining who they were or exactly why they mattered. At the same time, he tends to stray from the narrative or thematic path, leading the reader into debates that are stimulating but also distracting. To write about Weber is to follow in his intellectual footsteps, as Radkau rightly points out in the introduction. Nonetheless, the reader is sometimes left with the impression that Radkau has gone a bit too far in channeling Weber's own digressive style.

–Joshua Derman

THE NEW GRAND NARRATIVE

Joana Breidenbach and Pál Nyíri: *Seeing Culture Everywhere, from Genocide to Consumer Habits* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010. Pp. xi, 416. $24.95.)

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In the post–Cold War, "end of ideology" world, "culture" has emerged as an all-purpose explanation for a wide variety of contentious issues. Culture is invoked in debates over the "politics of recognition," multiculturalism, and indigenous rights; in the conduct of international relations, armed conflict, and development aid programs; in the crafting of immigration and citizenship policies; and in the creation of "diversity" training courses. In these matters and many more, "culture" signifies very basic group and ethnic differences. The explanatory priority placed on culture, understood in this way, is not limited to any particular political faction or ideological orientation. The international relations (IR) theorist accounting for the breakup of a country like Yugoslavia, the French politician worried about the wearing of Muslim headscarves in schools, the indigenous leader demanding the repatriation of cultural property, or the corporate executive anxious to foster "intercultural communication" across a globalized workforce may all be speaking a similar language of fundamental and enduring difference. Like never before, we imagine the world in terms of different cultures.

At first glance, the ubiquitous talk of culture would seem to be good news. "Celebrating difference" is an improvement over ethnocentrism, recognizing "subaltern identities" a step forward from their suppression, and "cultural competence" and understanding better than cultural ignorance and indifference. Yet all is not well, as Joana Breidenbach, an anthropologist, and Pál Nyíri, a historian "from an anthropological perspective," are at great pains to demonstrate in their *Seeing Culture Everywhere*. The concept of culture that has risen to prominence, they argue, that has come to have such an

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