

coronavirus pandemic, Wiesner-Hanks's metaphor is certainly fitting, as quarantine orders continue to shift how historians undertake research.

Wiesner-Hanks achieves a clear and punchy survey of early modern historiography, peppering the text with enjoyable anecdotes and stories from the historical past. The author draws out the many parallels between the early modern world and today, and the unique vantage point of early modern history that affords scholars 'the ability (and responsibility) to highlight these connections' (105). Wiesner-Hanks is particularly attuned to global considerations and cutting-edge digital methodologies, which have transformed research in several subfields. As is warranted by the genre of the text, Wiesner-Hanks is careful in her critique, instead allowing the historiography to speak for itself. As with many short-format texts, explanations are necessarily economical, yet the book is impressively complete. Moreover, detailed footnotes and a further reading section provide excellent rabbit holes for the interested reader. This is a timely historiographic contribution that sings the praises of an incredibly rich and invigorating field, and will undoubtedly become the go-to handbook for students and scholars of early modern history.

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David Hitchcock and Julia McClure (eds), *The Routledge History of Poverty, c.1450–1800*

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The claim made in the blurb for this volume is that it offers 'critical new directions in poverty scholarship'. Readers might be forgiven for thinking that there is little new to be said about poverty, certainly in the European context. In the main, however, these essays do provide novelty, in different ways. Indeed, if there is a unifying theme to this somewhat eclectic collection, it is that of novelty. Despite what the title might suggest, this volume makes no claims to being a comprehensive survey. From the perspective of an undergraduate in search of a textbook, this does not supersede Robert Jütte's *Poverty and Deviance in Early Modern Europe*, which is indeed heavily cited by contributors, though many authors do offer wide-ranging surveys of existing research.

Instead, the different contributions take a fresh look at the history of poverty. In their introduction, David Hitchcock and Julia McClure make a strong case for the early modern period as being fundamentally transformative for the experience and conceptualisation of poverty. More importantly, they make a passionate and welcome call for a broader definition of poverty, one that, echoing Amartya Sen

to some extent, encompasses rights, wants and opportunities, and for the use of the past to reassess our present and future. The chapters that follow are a mixture of thematic overviews and detailed case studies, loosely grouped into sections headed 'Structures', 'Impacts', 'Institutions' and 'Connections'. Of these, 'Structures' and 'Institutions' are the most convincing in terms of unifying their respective chapters. That the approach is thematic, rather than chronological, is very much a strength of this volume, though change over time is still very much to the fore in many chapters. The editors are to be commended for the balance achieved among contributors, not just in terms of gender, but also the mix of established and early career scholars.

Some of the themes are familiar, but dealt with in new ways. Joanna Innes offers an impressively wide-ranging, thoughtful and nuanced assessment of the expansion and limits of state regulation. Guido Alfani's chapter on the economic history of poverty picks up on the editors' call for broader definitions of poverty, offering a welcome critique of the current literature on the 'escape from poverty' that relies too heavily on improvements in average living standards and ignores the evidence of increasing inequality and proletarianization highlighted by an older literature. Alfani's attempts to offer different measures of poverty are laudable, but arguably all such efforts are fraught with danger given the problems of evidence. David Hitchcock's chapter on the vagrant poor perhaps exaggerates the hardening of attitudes to the mobile poor, as a result of relying mainly on English and French evidence, but still offers a thought-provoking reappraisal of early modern vagrancy and argues persuasively for seeing idleness as key to the hardening of attitudes. Alannah Tomkins's chapter on workhouses is the most explicit chronological survey and as such, feels very familiar, but she nonetheless draws her material together effectively to demonstrate the shortcomings of different workhouse schemes across Europe. Similarly, Kevin Siena's chapter on poor bodies and disease offers a familiar account of associations between plague and poverty and policing of the sick poor, but goes beyond these to examine medical theories that the poor had a distinctive physiology that made them more susceptible to disease. Joseph Harley's thorough survey of material culture demonstrates a higher level of ownership of goods among the poor over time, albeit with geographical variation.

Other chapters focus on themes that have hitherto received less attention than they should among historians of poverty. Julia McClure analyses the discourses surrounding poverty in constructions of empire, through a comparison of the British and Spanish empires, showing that the roots of the politics of poverty go deeper than the eighteenth century or the birth of the liberal state. In a particularly rich chapter, John Emrys Morgan explores the environmental context of poverty through three dimensions: climate, landscapes and bodies, focusing not just on the more obvious if important work on disasters but also how environment shaped the daily experiences of poverty. Another rich and wide-ranging chapter by Tom Nichols looks at visual images of the poor, emphasising the complexity of visual representations of poverty. Rosa Salzburg's chapter on peddling offers a nuanced and thoughtful consideration of an important strategy in the economy of makeshifts.

The case studies provide new directions in different ways. Some focus on new aspects, such as Abby Lagemann's carefully researched chapter on disabled

veterans, or Amanda Herbert's demonstration that the sick poor received a surprising degree of care at spa towns. Tawny Paul's analysis of debt and downward mobility in eighteenth-century England nuances views of credit in important ways, reminding us of those excluded from credit or liable to accumulate debts, and offering a further corrective to the positive view of living standards in the literature. Two important chapters by Sara Pinto and Hayri Gökşin Özkoray offer accounts of new geographical areas, namely Portugal and the Ottoman Empire and, in so doing, add different models of poor relief to the variation already documented across Europe. Other chapters take a new angle on familiar subjects. Carole Rawcliffe analyses new hospital foundations in the fifteenth century, arguing that these reflected the particular anxieties of the post Black Death period and the need to find alternative sources of income as much as a reaction to the perceived shortcomings of existing institutions. Cornelia Lambert's thought-provoking essay on Robert Owen situates his New Lanark project within ideas of sentiment inherited from Adam Smith, while Danielle Abdon discusses how military and maritime needs shaped the foundation of general hospitals through a comparison of Venice and Lisbon, including interesting comments on the architecture of these hospitals.

There are some flaws and oddities. A more accurate title would have included 'Europe' since historians of Asia and Africa might rightly object to the otherwise Eurocentric focus of the volume. Indeed, despite heroic efforts to range widely in the thematic chapters, most successfully by Innes, Harley and Nichols, the authors tend to gravitate back to English material. European comparisons often reflect English language historiography, so France, Italy and the Low Countries loom large, Spain to a lesser extent, though the chapters on Portugal and the Ottoman Empire redress the balance somewhat. Particularly odd is that the chapters are self-contained to the extent of feeling almost hermetically sealed. Despite obvious connections and overlaps, such as between vagrancy and peddling, or disabled veterans and spas, only Alannah Tomkins's chapter makes any reference to other contributions. A more minor point is the appearance of some rather embarrassing mistakes in Alfani's chapter, whereby Laurence Fontaine becomes Lorraine and Hugo Lis inexplicably becomes James Lys.

Finally, it could be seen as a weakness that the case studies in particular often feel eclectic and lacking clear connections to each other or to the thematic chapters. However, to seek a unifying theme might be to miss the point. The variety on display here is testament to the multifaceted nature of poverty and the changing responses to it. Ultimately, what this volume does brilliantly is to highlight the importance not only of studying poverty and the poor in their own right, but in order to better understand processes of economic and social change in early modern Europe.

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