

century, but Dejung offers a scant explanation for this failure. In addition, this cultural aspect of the company's overseas expansion would have benefited from further analysis. The Volkart Brothers mastered trading and finance relations in Europe, India, North and Central America during the first centennial existence of the company. How could this economic and knowledge get lost in few generations? How could a family-business lose the capacity of transferring knowledge and information so vital for the trading business?

The book is based on Dejung's dissertation at the University of Zurich and relies on a rich collection of sources. The company's archive is the most important and revealing of these and is supplemented by interviews and research at 23 additional archives in seven countries. The book contributes to economic and business history, cultural and social history, as well as political and colonial history. It is a work that fills several gaps. First, the historiography of colonial capitalism after the 1850s is still obscure, and the book highlights the important role of a non-colonial state actor—Switzerland—in the colonial context. Second, it offers a compelling argument about the importance of familial aspects in the development of capitalism and commerce.

“The Threads of Global Markets” provides a fresh view of the rise of modern capitalism as well as the complex and intertwined elements which generate the contemporary global political economy. It would be useful to have an English translation of the book to introduce the little-known Swiss example to a broader anglophone audience. A translation would also reflect the Volkart company's own multinational and multilingual spirit: as early as 1925, a quarter of the company's correspondence was produced in the English language (129), and in many parts of the world, the company was perceived as an English company (163).

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Gavin Murray-Miller. *The Cult of the Modern: Trans-Mediterranean France and the Construction of French Modernity*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2017. 317 pp. ISBN: 9780803290648. \$60.00.

Between 1852 and 1870, France was ruled by one man—Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte—first as the sole president of the Second Republic from 1848-1852, and then as Napoleon III, Emperor of the Second French Empire from 1852-1870. He remains the longest serving French head of state since the French Revolution and was the youngest until the election of Emmanuel Macron on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2017. His tenure was marked by his ability for “conjuring the modern through economic campaigns, building project, and industrial exhibitions” (251), but the mark he has left on modern France is indelible, and Murray-Miller argues his influence extends “far beyond those theaters” (251). Building on significant research on French modernism, nineteenth-century French politics, and the development of French North Africa, Murray-Miller's first book is a well-researched exploration of the roots of the modern French Republic and its Trans-Mediterranean relationship with Algeria.

In *The Cult of the Modern*, Murray-Miller directly challenges our conventional understanding of the modern French Republic as a descendant of the Enlightenment and the Revolution, instead arguing that it is inextricably linked to French colonial history, particularly that of Algeria. At the core of his wide-ranging examination of nineteenth-century French politics and culture, Murray-Miller asserts that the confluence of French imperial rule

in North Africa and the push for modernity in metropolitan France together created the social and ideological norms that formed the basis for the modern French Republic, noting “Nation and Empire, France and North Africa became central to the articulation of a new social imaginary that modernity anticipated” (251).

After an introduction in which he puts France at the centre of “the creation and possession of modern time as it is known to the West” (4), Murray-Miller, in seven significant and well-researched chapters, takes his audience from the dying embers of the July Monarchy and its conquest of the Algerian territories through to the last days of the Second Empire and the rise of a common front against Napoleon III’s colonial policies. In his use of separate chapters to examine distinct aspects of French colonial rule in Algeria, Murray-Miller succeeds in building a multi-layered exploration of the contradictory forces at work, both in France and in North Africa, during the construction of French modernity in Louis Napoleon’s reign. The portrait of France that Murray-Miller sketches for us in his opening illustrates a country grappling with its past and yet striving for a future that was still undetermined. A detailed discussion of the failing policies of the monarchy introduces the emancipation of the slaves in 1848 and raises questions about the position of colonists in Algeria vis-à-vis metropolitan France.

With the Algerian Wars subsequently subsiding somewhat under the rule of Napoleon III, the “pacific conquest” of North African territories continued and the drive to modernize became an integral part of national policy both in rural and urban areas. This was reflected most obviously in the transformation of Paris under Baron Haussmann, but extended throughout the country and the colonies, with the construction of the Talabot railroad in Algeria. Under Napoleon, the Second Empire “stood for progress, industry, science, and prosperity” (73). The drive to modernization, however, resulted in the disappearance of much of Algeria’s cultural heritage, particularly in urban areas: “destruction of Moorish and Arab architecture accompanied by segregation ... became a common feature of colonial society” (78). This was accompanied by the allocation of mosques to Christian missions, the removal of Muslim cultural artefacts to the Louvre, the conversion of cultural centres into military barracks, and the arrival of cabarets and prostitution. Murray Miller’s examination of “two competing logics of Frenchness and nation” (84) that emerged at this time gets to the heart of the divisions that were opening in French society. Regardless of universal male suffrage (introduced in 1848 under the July Monarchy), did *liberté*, *égalité*, and *fraternité* really apply to all? Murray-Miller asserts that Louis Napoleon ushered in a return to “the old ‘cosmopolitanism’ of the First Empire” (95), and “colonial officials engaged in the work of reconstituting a society torn asunder by war and lingering enmities” (115), whilst simultaneously damaging its culture irrevocably.

This theme of the divisive nature is a constant presence in *The Cult of the Modern*, as Murray-Miller goes on to examine the educational policies of the French government in Algeria, the influence of internal French political struggles on the colonial experience, the growth of the young republican movement within metropolitan France, and the influence of the press on these political developments. As France grapples with her modern identity, Murray-Millar unpacks the ramifications of these cultural shifts for the colonial regime, underscoring the dichotomy between the emergence of Arab nationalism and the movement for native administration, and the definition of “French,” noting the “issues of French liberty and the Algerian question were portrayed as two sides of a national resistance movement against arbitrary rule and power” (238). This “common struggle,” as Murray-Miller puts it, represented “a shared vision of republican modernity ... [providing] the ideological content for imagining a French imperial nation-state as the embodiment of republican equality and fraternity” (245).

Although dense at times, this is a wide-ranging work that combines both an in-depth analysis of the search for modernity in post-Revolutionary France and a sound command of the challenges faced by a colonial Algeria, all supported by a significant bibliography. Following the collapse of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Empire, Murray-Miller notes “Algeria persistently stood as a glaring reminder of the contradictions and paradoxes that French modernity embodied in practice” (253); in many ways, his assertion that France’s modernity is both “contradiction and paradox” still rings true. An engaging text, *The Cult of the Modern* deserves a wide readership among those interested in colonial history, providing as it does a new perspective on the contributions of French colonies to our understanding not of just French modernity, but our Western construct of modern society.

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Emily Erikson. *Between Monopoly and Free Trade: The English East India Company, 1600-1757*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014. 272 pp. ISBN: 9780691173795. \$27.95.

Emily Erikson’s *Between Monopoly and Free Trade: The English East India Company, 1600-1757* is a valuable contribution to the history of the English East India Company. The book neither provides a complete history of the Company nor does it focus on all aspects of its activities. Erikson focuses primarily on organizational structure and pays distinguished attention to the relationship between Company trade (“organization”) and private trade (“local information”). The time frame marked in the title is slightly misleading, as the book also touches on some details from the decades after 1757. However, the period of 1660 to 1740, the actual decades of the official acceptance of private trade, are clearly in focus.

The book, based on a solid theoretical foundation of organization theory, network theory and analytical sociology, highlights and examines two key elements to the success of the Company. First, the Company’s generally decentralized organizational structure, especially the acceptance of employees’ private trade; and, second, the institutional settings in Asia, especially the ability of the Company to trade in regions where institutional configurations suited English trade.

Erikson convincingly argues that the incorporation of legitimated private trade and the decentralized organizational structure, as a result, distinguished the Company as unique, and contributed to its success to a significant degree. Private trade had a positive and systematic impact on Company operations. While earlier researchers tended to portray private trade as harmful to Company trade, Erikson includes a new dimension in her analysis: information. Her results clearly demonstrate the role distinguished information played in the Company and are also valuable for researchers focusing on the impact of this dimension in other contexts. Based on that, she states that private trade, overall, was a practice that resulted in the success of the Company. Private trader employees visited new ports, thus significantly expanded the commercial world of the Company. Moreover, this practice enabled the Company to steadily enlarge its stock of local information, and the resulting social networks enhanced the information flow also within the Company itself.

An important claim in the argument is about the relationship between organizational structure and private trade, “monopoly” and “free trade.” Erikson emphasises that these two segments were not independent of each other, but existed in a special symbiotic relationship.