

Editorial Foreword

CITIZENS The emergence and spread of the concept of citizenship as the body of persons making up the membership of a state and enjoying uniform political status, and the incompletenesses of its actualizations, forms an especially productive terrain for scholarship just now, as may be seen in the first two essays.

Immanuel Wallerstein first announced his program of worldwide comparative study in this journal, just a few years back, in an article that was very widely read and cited (“The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis,” 1974: 387–415). *CSSH* welcomes him again to its pages. In this piece he examines the logic by which the citizenship idea, having pushed aside the ages-old idea of the naturalness of social hierarchy, is no sooner born than it is qualified by a binary distinction of active and passive citizenry (creating a “core” and “periphery” within the state, one is tempted to say), operating to exclude women, laborers, and blacks. As each group of the excluded struggles to achieve full citizenship, it does so in ways that reinforce the exclusion of other groups. The liberal state was devised, Wallerstein finds, not to uphold the claims of universal citizenship, but to curtail them.

Lisa Wedeen returns to these pages after a shorter interval (“Acting ‘As If’: Symbolic Politics and Social Control in Syria,” 1998: 503–23). In Yemen, the emerging citizenship idea combines with an emerging, still weak state—acting like a state in an effort to become a true state. The combination produces a turbulent participatory democracy, which thrives *because* the state is weak. People see like citizens when, for example, a serial killer exposes the weakness of the state’s protection, and through the newspapers and TV reports, sermons in the mosque, street and *qat*-chew conversations, Yemenis build up in imagination the sense of a national community.

FORMS OF KINSHIP The next two pieces, each in its different way, show again the indispensability of classic kinship analysis, a proposition to which this journal is strongly committed.

Liviu Chelcea makes a stunningly effective application of Meyer Fortes’ notion of the developmental cycle of domestic groups to the nationalization of housing in the former communist regime of Romania. Families whose houses were filled with parents, children, and children’s children kept their housing, but those whose children had moved out and had taken in tenants were adjudged landlord exploiters and lost their housing to the tenants. The outcomes of the law were determined largely by the point in the development cycle the family

happened to be in when housing was nationalized. The politics of restoring housing to prior owners under post-communism is immensely complex, triggering the reactivation or indeed the creation of former kinship ties.

Peter Parkes brings us a sequel to his article on fosterage and milk kinship in Central Asia and Eastern Europe (“Alternative Social Structures and Foster Relations in the Hindu Kush: Milk Kinship Allegiance in Former Mountain Kingdoms of Northern Pakistan,” 2001: 4–36). This one is directed toward early and medieval Europe, where the existence of fosterage as an alliance-making mechanism has scarcely been noted. Fosterage was a means of creating and maintaining bonds of clienthood between status grades among the politically powerful, seen in such institutions as medieval vassalage and godparenthood, right up to modern times.

COLONIAL KNOWLEDGE The production of knowledge under colonialism is a well-established field of inquiry, with its own protocols of research and explanation, which by now are familiar and in danger of losing their power to deliver new insights. The next two articles are among a growing number of studies which hold that the way forward lies in paying closer attention to the colonized or precolonial intellectual.

Phillip Wagoner makes a case that techniques for the study of inscriptions in India (crucial for histories of ancient and medieval times) owe much to the specific kinds of linguistic skills of brahmin state servants of the Muslim rulers of Arcot state in South India at the beginning of the nineteenth century. These are the authentication and detection of forgery in diplomatic documents, deeds, and other papers of state by comparative study of handwriting, scripts, style, and the like across writings in Persian, Sanskrit, Hindustani, Telugu, and Tamil. These Niyogi or secular brahmins migrated from the court of the Nawab to become assistants of Colin Mackenzie, where they were put to work in the first systematic survey of inscriptions in India. The work of this team provided a model for methods in use to this day by the Archaeological Survey of India. Like Norbert Peabody’s recent *CSSH* article (“Cents, Sense, Census: Human Inventories in Late Precolonial and Early Colonial India,” 2001: 819–50), Wagoner finds that knowledge-collection in British India has its origins in indigenous intellectuals and their practices.

Charles Darwin’s South African collaborators in the collection of information for his book, *The Expression of Emotion in Man and Animals* (1872), is the subject of the paper by **Robert Shanafelt**. One of them was a Christianized Xhosa, the other two British, long resident in Africa. Darwin’s work was a pioneering effort of studying emotion across species and in the demonstration of human emotional unity. But the humanism upon which it was premised was too tepid to counter effectively the social Darwinism that was, at that very moment and in despite of Darwin himself, gaining strength in Britain and among British colonizers.

HISTORIES OF FAILURE Two very different kinds of failure are the subjects of the last two essays of the issue.

David Jenkins tells how struggles over the categories of Atlantic salmon in Maine (*wild/farmed; native/aboriginal; species salmon; endangered/threatened/extinct* populations of salmon) led to policy failure. The article makes a pair with another *CSSH* article, on the lobster fishery, also in Maine—which, by way of exception, is an environmental success story: James M. Acheson and Jack Knight, “Distribution Fights, Coordination Games, and Lobster Management,” 2000: 209–38.

Rudolf Mrázek, in a review essay of a book on stupidity by Avital Ronell, shows how stupidity may be embraced with advantage by historians or, indeed, all our readers. Ronell’s view, to translate her poetry into very banal, anti-stupid prose, is that stupidity is what intellectuals strive to keep at bay, namely the unassimilable, the chaotic, and the ungovernable in experience. It is life itself, or death, which reason fails to govern or exclude.

COMING SOON IN *CSSH* Works in the hopper include **Tarak Barakawi** on ethnicity in the British Imperial Forces in Japan; **Alberto Spektrowski** on eugenics in socialist Sweden, Germany, and Russia; **Berardino Palumbo** on warring saints in a Sicilian town; **Belinda Bozzoli** on illicit ideas and rebellion in South Africa; **Francisco Vaz da Silva** on the Madonna, the dove, the cuckoo, the stork, and the metaphysics of conception in Portuguese folklore; and many more.

DESIDERATA *CSSH* gets a great many submissions, but sometimes we feel a desire for articles on topics little represented in the incoming stream of manuscripts. *CSSH* was the brainchild of Sylvia Thrupp, a great medievalist, and one of the things she did to invigorate medieval studies was to instigate a larger conversation among historians, anthropologists, and sociologists in which medievalist could participate. We want to keep the deeper past included in the *CSSH* conversation she created. We continue to get good articles on medieval topics, and the early modern and the just pre-colonial periods are topics of rising interest. But the ancient world has tended to slip out of the conversation. (The article in the last issue by **Stephen Houston, John Baines, and Jerrold Cooper**, “Last Writing: Script Obsolescence in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Mesoamerica,” is a welcome exception.) We would like to change that, and would be pleased to receive submissions on any part of the world in ancient and medieval times that wish to join in the *CSSH* conversation.