

“shared commitment of the parties to cooperate on international issues” (p. 3), explaining that it was “not an inexorable force but clusters of activity, some interconnected and some not, occurring in multiple spaces, at various speeds and intensities” (p. 12). Later, he defines internationalism as the act of “working together to identify “socialist” solutions to the pressing challenges of the post-war period” (p. 264) or “a web of mutual expectations and obligations that, while by no means formally binding, implied some limits on their freedom of action” (p. 308).

Once internationalism is defined in such a way, Imlay contends, the transnational links of Western European socialist parties in the twentieth century can be seen in a more positive light. Even admitting that the international dimension was not decisive in shaping the policies of national parties, Imlay claims that “the international policies of any one socialist party cannot be fully understood in isolation from the policies of other parties”. To be sure, he acknowledges, “European socialists instrumentalized internationalism for their own ends”, but this only shows that “such attempts would be inconceivable unless socialist internationalism meant something to European socialists” (p. 463). Throughout the book, the reader gets the feeling that Imlay is always looking for the glass half full.

Overall, Imlay’s conclusion is that this practice of internationalism grew in the wake of both world wars but waned thereafter, by the late 1920s and the late 1950s. Despite this “ultimate failure”, Imlay argues that studying the efforts to build transnational relationships is indispensable to properly understanding not only the history of the LSI and the Socialist International but also of Labour, the SPD, and the SFIO themselves. According to the author, these three socialist parties “remained embedded in their nations [but...], the practice of internationalism did prod socialists from one country (and party) to define national interests in interaction with socialists from other countries” (p. 464).

With its thorough and detailed overview of the history of international relationships among European socialists between 1914 and 1960, Imlay’s book will certainly become a standard reference for academics and students of socialism, although it will be perhaps less attractive for activists and the general public due to the density of its prose and abundance of scholarly references. It is also to be expected that his interpretation of internationalism and his sympathetic approach to the social democratic tradition will spark further debate, thus fuelling the rejuvenated vigour of the history of socialism.

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STANZIANI, ALESSANDRO. *Les métamorphoses du travail contraint. Une histoire globale XVIIIe-XIXe siècles*. [Domaine Histoire.] Presses de Sciences Po, Paris 2020. 328 pp. € 24.00.

Alessandro Stanziani’s *Les métamorphoses du travail contraint* is highly innovative in a number of ways. Chief among them is its ambition to construct a Global Labour

History focusing on free and forced labour in hugely varied but nonetheless comparable geographical contexts, concentrating on Russia and specific case studies from the British and French empires, namely, the Mascarene Islands and French Congo. A second original element involves a literary experiment focusing on the biographical trajectory of Joseph Conrad. A third is the problem of geographically and linguistically diverse archives and how the scholarly problems inherent in that scenario might be overcome in order to create an effective global history, as distinct from a Euro-centric history emerging from European-language sources in European archives. The last innovative element is the balance achieved between theoretical reflections on Marxism, liberalism, and capitalism, on one hand, and a socioeconomic historical approach together with archival research on the other, the net effect being to revise some well-established temporal categories for the study of the transformation from slavery to indentured labour in the colonial world and the shift from peasant agricultural labour to paid employed in Europe.

This transformation was not automatic, and pluriactivity and legal pluralism persisted both in the colonial world and in Europe after the legal abolitions of slavery in the colonies and the industrial revolution in Europe, with the concomitant birth of the welfare state. A key thesis of the book is that the emergence of the welfare state in Europe (in France and Great Britain) was the economic consequence of the exploitation of new imperial “colonies”. Empires used a new workforce, often consisting of former slaves and indentured workers, whose working and living conditions were frequently the same as those of slaves, especially in respect to punishment and reduced capacity of movement involving the imposition of immobility. Conditions for former slaves and indentured labourers were even worse than those endured by slaves in the last phase of slavery before abolition. The main objective of the book is to develop our understanding of freedom and unfreedom in work over a long chronological period before and after the Industrial Revolution, the French Revolution, and the legal abolitions of slavery in the British and French empires. For Stanziani there is a long *ancien régime* that really ends with World War I, because, at the end of the nineteenth century, the new welfare state excluded the inhabitants of the colonial world and some categories of European workers such as sailors – a central group in his analysis.

This book is rich in bibliographical references and will itself be an essential reference for further research in this field. Structurally, this dense work is divided into seven main chapters, plus an introduction, conclusion, and afterword. The chapters are not always in dialogue with each other, but each one makes an important contribution to Stanziani’s conception of non-freedom in working conditions and to understanding the real condition of workers beyond their legal rights and in different geographical spaces. The first chapter, “Le miroir russe”, focuses on Russian serfdom, and the author affirms in the conclusion “l’abolition du servage en Russie est à envisager moins comme le passage du féodalisme au capitalisme ou du servage au travail libre que comme l’une des étapes d’un processus long et complexe au cours duquel paysans et propriétaires participent aux activités marchandes tout en étant globalement hostiles aux ‘capitalistes’ urbains” (p. 305).<sup>3</sup> Chapter 2, entitled “Une

<sup>3</sup>“The abolition of serfdom in Russia should be considered more as one of the stages of a long and complex process in which peasants and landowners participate in market activities while being globally hostile to urban ‘capitalists’, than as the transition from feudalism to capitalism or from serfdom to free labour.”

globalisation précoce: les marins” considers the pluriactivity of sailors and their living conditions. Their living conditions were very similar to those of indentured labourers and slaves. Sailors were recruited in a coercive fashion, and they lived in a coactive condition. Often, slaves were employed as sailors (p. 65). Chapter 3, “Qu’est-ce que le ‘travail libre’ aux XVIIIe et XIXe siècles?”, analyses the meaning of free labour in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, focusing on the control and disciplining of the poor in the workhouses of Great Britain and on penal sanctions imposed on workers in France through the instrument of the workers’ book (*livret ouvrier*). The main point is that the free market did not exist, but there was a system that combined productivity and coercion based on the work of children, apprentices, and workers, who were subordinated to terrible contractual conditions, restricted freedom of movement, and unlimited working hours. Chapter 4, “Le mouvement abolitionniste au Royaume-Uni et en France”, compares and contrasts the abolitionist movements in the two countries. In both cases, the reflection on the abolition of slavery in the colonial world relates to the labour issue nationally. Stanziani argues that internally, in Europe, the difference between the two countries is that in Great Britain coercion was manifested through laws affecting the poor and in France through the fight against vagrancy and the *livret ouvrier*. Thus, the legal abolition of slavery in the colonial world was not consequent on improvements in working conditions in Europe.

Chapter 5, “L’abolition en pratique (années 1830–1860): le cas des Mascareignes”, demonstrates clearly how deeply embedded the indentured labour system and local forms of servitude were in the Mascareignes, particularly for domestic workers. Recruitment practices including kidnapping, coercion, and the exploitation of debt, working conditions similar to those under a military regime, and obligations to masters created fugitive workers just as before there had been fugitive slaves. Chapter 6, “Des abolitions en Russie et aux Amériques à la grande transformation”, concentrates on the abolition of serfdom in Russia (1861) and of slavery in the United States (1865) and on the global consequences of these changes in the context of the domination of American cotton and Russian grain on the international markets of capitalism. These abolitions also impacted the second industrial revolution, which required a stable workforce, and assisted the parallel growth of the welfare state in Europe and the replacement of poor laws, such as the Masters and Servants Acts in Britain in 1875. The last chapter, “Le Coeur des ténèbres: violences impériales et État social”, scrutinizes the brutal practices of forced labour in French Congo after the abolition of slavery in light of the contradiction that, until 1914, the occupation of Congo by France was not economically cost-effective but geopolitically strategic.

To conclude, this book is pioneering in how it connects varied aspects of coerced labour in Russia, France, and Britain and in the colonial world. It argues that capitalism is not the product of wage labour but the consequence of the coexistence of practices of unfree work and free work according to the local context. Coercion and violence in the colonial world were extremely useful for the second industrial revolution in Europe, for imperialism, and for the growth of the welfare state in Europe. Welfare, however, was extended to only a few categories of European workers: most of the French and

Britain population – including the sailors and agricultural workers who lived in highly coactive and precarious conditions – were excluded from its provision.

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LIU, ANDREW B. *Tea War. A History of Capitalism in China and India.* [Studies of the Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Colombia University.] Yale University Press, New Haven (CT) [etc.] 2020. xi, 344 pp. Ill. Maps. \$50.00.

Through the story of tea, *Tea War* contributes to the emerging field of comparative regional histories of capitalism. It examines the cases of the industry in China, the birthplace of tea, and the colonial Indian industry, which became the world's largest tea producer, over the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The book demonstrates how global market competition forged mutually constitutive linkages between two divergent production systems and reshaped the social economy of tea production in India and China.

*Tea War's* empirical and theoretical expanse is formidable – its analytical approach, based on the commodities lens, enabling it to skilfully navigate this expanse. The book breaks down the workings of the tea economy into constituent parts – its production, distribution, its knowledge-production in political-economic terms, and the reapplication of that knowledge to the process. In Liu's words, "the global story of tea thus entailed both a history of novel forms of economic life and a history of transformations in economic thought" (p. 4). The study concerns the period of "interregnum between early modern commerce and high modern industry" (p. 13). The author refutes the regional cultural differences as reasons for their commercial divergence. Instead, Liu focuses on the universal emergent features "that they shared in common with the rest of the industrial world" (p. 5). The eventual fates of the two industries, i.e. economic divergence, is then best understood as the product of "a unified story of global interaction, one mediated by capitalist competition" (p. 4), rather than culturally specific properties operating in isolation.

The book is divided into two parts comprising seven chapters in addition to the introduction and conclusion. The first two chapters trace the historical evolution of tea production in China, from servicing a narrow market as a luxury article to the immense scale demanded by the subsequent expansion of demand in the West. This evolution entailed rising control by merchants of the production process, involving intensifying labour inputs and consistently expanding the division of labour.

Chapters 3 and 4 trace the efforts of the British colonial state to emulate Chinese tea production in the eastern Indian state of Assam, fuelled by the London-centred investment boom in the colonies. The initial failure of these efforts led the colonial state to reassess the reigning free-market principles and to adopt an interventionist approach in its stead. This state interventionism included labour indenture policies