

improvements in diet and housing over the century. Strikes were infrequent before 1894, but industrial conflicts were more common after that date.

As so often, historical truth is in the detail, and Scholliers presents a wealth of it. The ability to follow living strategies at individual and household level makes this a welcome contribution to the literature on household strategies. Developments in Ghent are properly compared with the literature on those in the UK, France, the Netherlands or Germany.

If anything is left to be desired, it stems from these riches. In the end, we are left without a full explanation of the coping strategies employed by Voortman workers. We know for which wages they worked, how many family members had to work to make the meagre wages add up to a family income, and what kinds of food and housing that would buy. But why did they accept the low wages Voortman was prepared to offer? In some cases they left after a short while for better paid jobs, but Scholliers also presents the biographies of the Bauters, Cedeyn, Ryckaert and Spailers families, some of which had several family members working at Voortman for decades. Perhaps typically, some of the heads of these families were overseers. Even with many family members being forced to work, they will have not been so near starvation as to have no choices between migrating, finding other work or staying at Voortmans. At times when other Ghent factories and those in northern France offered better wages, why did Voortman workers not shift to one of these? But even if Scholliers does not supply us with an answer to this question, his book supplies us with the material to phrase it – and many others – and to discuss some of the possible answers to them.

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GRAY, ROBERT. *The factory question and industrial England, 1830–1860*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 1996. xiv, 253 pp. Ill. £35.00; \$59.95.

Robert Gray's *The factory question and industrial England, 1830–1860* contributes to a growing body of literature that examines as cultural phenomena issues that once had been within the purview of economics and the study of political economy. In doing so he opens new windows through which to view and assess the impact of industrialization on nineteenth-century England. By reading Gray's book, we see in a fresh light the familiar events and debates surrounding the factory question and the passage of the first factory acts. We are also in a better position to assess explanations of how the acts came to be enacted, who benefitted from them and why, which are set forth in the prodigious historiography about the movement for factory reform and the effects of the legislation.¹

¹ E.g. B.L. Hutchins and A. Harrison, *A History of Factory Legislation* (London, 1911, 2nd ed.); J.T. Ward, *The Factory Movement, 1830–1855* (London, 1962); Howard Marvel, "Factory Regulation: A Reinterpretation of Early English Experience", *The Journal of Law and Economics*, 20 (1979), pp. 379–402; P.W.J. Bartrip, "State Intervention in Mid-Nineteenth Century Britain: Fact or Fiction?", *Journal of British Studies*, 23 (1983), pp. 63–83; Douglas E. Booth, "Karl Marx on the State Regulation of the Labor Process: The English Factory Acts", *Review of Social Economy*, 36 (1978), pp. 137–158; Barbara Harrison and Helen Mockett, "Women in the Factory: The State and

Gray's argument begins with the assumption that industrialization must be considered as a cultural transformation and he proceeds to develop it in an illuminating way by deploying the analytical tools of linguistic history, cultural analysis and social history. He produces a work that is richly detailed and persistently nuanced – one that celebrates the complexity of the past and refuses the lure of simplifying narratives.

If there is a single narrative line that moves from the beginning of Gray's book to its end, it is about the role that the debates over factory regulation and legislation played in the creation of a set of cultural images of modern industry. At the beginning of the story, Gray suggests that in the second quarter of the nineteenth century there was a period of cultural uncertainty about industrial transformation and factory industry when discursive hierarchies were unsettled and were continually being challenged. After mid-century owing to the complexly shaped debates over factory reform, accompanied by radical political rhetoric, defenses of political economy and religious injunctions, particular languages of contention and disputation became dominant, even if they were continually being deployed in ways that evoked contested meanings. Over this time period "the factory" as a category of workplace was culturally reconstructed, emerging as the site and symbol of improvement under enlightened management. Along the way, in Part I, Gray explores how the distinctive characteristics of various factory towns influenced the outcomes of debates about factory legislation, the varying rhetorics of working-class radicals, humanitarian elites, professionals, state officials and employers, and the cultural resonances of these rhetorics in documentary journalism and industrial fiction. In Part II he takes up the consequences of factory regulation – its enforcement, the creation of a standard working day, the debates over factory act extension and, finally, the cultural constructions of consensus and stability after mid-century.

Gray's book has appeared at a time when modes of analysis in historical scholarship are being hotly debated on the pages of scholarly journals as well as in monographs.² On the one side are those who espouse a linguistic approach to

Factory Legislation in Nineteenth-Century Britain", in Lynn Jamieson and Helen Corr (eds), *State, Private Life and Political Change* (New York, 1990), pp. 137–162; Marianna Valverde, "'Giving the Female a Domestic Turn': The Social, Legal and Moral Regulation of Women's Work in British Cotton Mills, 1820–1850", *Journal of Social History*, 21 (1988), pp. 619–634; Jane Lewis and Sonya O. Rose, "'Let England Blush!': State Protection of Women Workers in England, 1830–1914", in Ulla Wikander, Alice Kessler-Harris and Jane Lewis (eds), *Protecting Women: Labor Legislation in Europe, the United States and Australia, 1880–1920* (Urbana, IL [etc.], 1995), pp. 29–62; Sonya O. Rose, *Limited Livelihoods: Gender and Class in Nineteenth-Century England* (Berkeley [etc.], 1992), ch. 3.

² See for example the debates in *Past and Present*: Lawrence Stone, "History and Post-Modernism", *Past and Present*, 131 (1991), pp. 217–218 and responses by Patrick Joyce and Catriona Kelly in *Past and Present*, 131 (1991), pp. 204–213, and responses by Lawrence Stone and Gabrielle M. Spiegel in *Past and Present*, 135 (1992), pp. 189–194; David Mayfield and Susan Thorne, "Social History and Its Discontents: Gareth Stedman Jones and the Politics of Language", *Social History*, 17 (1992), pp. 165–188; Jon Lawrence and Miles Taylor, "The Poverty of Protest: Gareth Stedman Jones and the Politics of Language – A Reply", *Social History*, 18 (1993), pp. 1–15; Patrick Joyce, "The Imaginary Discontents of Social History: A Note of Response to Mayfield and Thorne, and Lawrence and Taylor", *Social History*, 18 (1993), pp. 81–85; Patrick Joyce, "The End of Social

history, some of whom question the utility of the concept of class, and have turned away from studies of workers, employers and workplaces.³ On the other side are arrayed a number of scholars who decry the flight from class analysis and those who fear what they see as the relativism and subjectivism of postmodernist scholarship.⁴ *The factory question* refuses this opposition.

There are a number of aspects of the book that are particularly refreshing in this regard. First, Gray goes about the task of analysis without self-conscious theorizing. Second, he puts forth no injunctions about how to do history. Third, he is studiously and seriously non-reductionist. He neither reduces everything to language, nor does he advance explanations about who advocated what positions on the factory question by looking to some extra-discursive notion of "interest". Finally, in particularly deft analytical moves he uses the methods of social history to underscore the significance of cultural constructions.

Gray is acutely aware of exactly what it is he is doing. In the Introduction he writes, "The present study once more gives prominence to the factory, industrial employers and industrial workers. [...] In giving renewed attention to these issues, I have no wish to reinstate a teleological reduction of everything else to an effect of industrialisation and class. The first half of the nineteenth century was marked by transformations in a number of spheres. Indeed part of my purpose is to investigate how ideas and cultural forms derived from diverse sources influenced relations and identities in industry itself." As this passage intimates, Gray's argument is a critical response to recent historiography; to economic history that has downplayed the economic growth and technological advances of the period; to social history that has removed industrial entrepreneurs from center stage in middle-class formation; and to the new political history that has reinterpreted popular protest as being primarily about political exclusion rather than industrial or economic relations. Gray addresses these different historiographies, which demote the factory from its central role in the history of the period, by demonstrating its significance in cultural imagery, and arguing that this cultural imagery had "real" effects – it helped to reshape, as he put it, "relations and identities in industry itself".

Chapter 1 examines the role of working-class radical perspectives in short-time campaigns, how class identities and gender differences were rhetorically represented, and the significance of references to slavery in radical discourse. Gray suggests that the demand for a standard working day was central to all forms of social protest in the factory districts, and he maintains that the struggle over state regulation of the working day may best be understood as articulating a gendered class-consciousness. As in all of his chapters, Gray stresses the variations in people's lived lives coupled with the commonalities in their languages of contestation complicated by slippages in the meanings of these languages. In an

History?", *Social History*, 20 (1995), pp. 32–54; Geoff Eley and Keith Nield, "Starting Over: The Present, the Post-modern and the Moment of Social History", *Social History*, 20 (1995), pp. 355–364; and Gareth Stedman Jones, "The Determinist Fix: Some Obstacles to the Further Development of the Linguistic Approach to History in the 1990s", *History Workshop Journal*, 42 (1996), pp. 19–36.

³ See, for example, *ibid.*

⁴ See especially Bryan Palmer, *Descent into Discourse: The Reification of Language and the Writing of Social History* (Philadelphia, 1990).

insightful analysis Gray argues that regardless of the particularities of working men's occupations and the specificities of the local conflicts in which they engaged, their demands were intrinsically related to a defense of the family economy that intertwined gender divisions and class identities. Contra arguments like Stedman Jones's that popular protest concerned citizenship claims predating industrial transformation rather than being concerned with the restructuring of economic relations, Gray proposes that working men promulgated ideals of fair employment that *were* linked to an alternative political economy. But these arguments, he suggests, were connected to the radical claim of citizenship. Factory agitation empowered working men as free citizens and manly protectors of their dependents. Gray aptly calls this the "discourse of patriarchal protection".

In his examination of the symbolic use of slavery in the language of ten hours agitation, Gray suggests that the figure of the "white slave" connoted the idea that factory workers shared an oppressed condition with plantation slaves, but it also marked the difference between black plantation slaves and white factory slaves. He notes that the images of slavery not only resonated with the popular cause of abolition, but they also relied on deeply rooted radical political traditions in which the slave was the antithesis of the free citizen. The opposition between slavery and freedom became a standard way of debating acceptable and unacceptable forms of dependence and subordination.

In his chapters examining the roles and rhetoric of humanitarians, state officials, professionals and employers Gray stresses the variability in their positions, affiliations and motivations. For example, Gray contrasts an analysis of employer opinions from different textile towns, and in different textile industries to demonstrate that no single variable explains their responses. Furthermore, he suggests that although employers from the West Riding joined the debates, "it was Lancashire cotton that dominated employer responses, the official mediation of manufacturing interests and much subsequent debate – and historical interpretation. This 'Lancashire' perspective tended to associate longer hours, worse conditions and opposition to all regulation with small, water-powered 'country' mills". Gray notes that while there is evidence to support this point of view that eventually culminated in the construction of the factory as a site of improvement *and* which came to dominate historiography, the West Riding experience was different. There regulation could be proposed to defend small mills against the large steam-powered factories. While Gray notes that there may be an association at the aggregate level between particular sectors, processes and technologies and support for legislation, the pattern of variation was complex.

Gray confirms this analysis in his chapter on factory act prosecutions and employers' resistance. Again, he does *not* deny that there was some connection between mill size or locality and factory act compliance, but rather that economic studies fail to understand the variability in patterns of employer resistance. To make this point Gray reconstructed factory act prosecutions between 1838 and 1851 from returns published in Parliamentary Papers and traced individual firms through city directories and other manuscript sources. He presents his evidence in pie charts and both line and bar graphs showing that factory act cases involved a cross-section of local firms, and he deduces that it was not merely a "diminishing category of marginal producers that were the targets of enforcement activity [. . .] during the period analysed". Rather, large employers in technologic-

ally advanced firms could also be prosecuted for evasion. These findings reinforce one of Gray's main points that the image that was emerging during the period of the well-regulated factory governed by enlightened employers was a major *cultural* product of the debates over the factory question.

In concluding Gray suggests that while the factory acts surely had positive effects by eliminating some of the worst abuses, the benefits of factory legislation were unevenly distributed. "Employers recouped the concessions made by means of tighter control and intensified labour, and the burden of this fell disproportionately on the very workers to whom protection was extended, semi-skilled women and young people." Yet the debates over factory reform were crucial in shaping an "industrial culture of some duration".

I have been able to touch upon only a few of Gray's analyses in this very densely written book. Because of restrictions of space I could not cover Gray's intelligent discussion of paternalism; nor his provocative analysis of post factory acts stability and consensus as a cultural settlement. I had to omit detailed mention of his interesting observations on official inquiries and on the connection between religious teachings and the cultural contradictions of industrial capitalism.

If I have a complaint about the book, it is that Gray's delight in complexity, and his refusal to simplify by stressing main trends and single variables in the service of historical narration does not make this book an easy read. The book, in fact, raises questions about how to present effectively a history of linguistic slippages and variability rather than one of hegemonic ideologies and dominant trends in social behavior and attitudes. While Gray's approach makes this a difficult book to summarize because of its complex structure, it is highly successful in arguing for the importance of culture in the analysis of industrialization and social transformation.

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BOYER, JOHN W. *Culture and Political Crisis in Vienna. Christian Socialism in Power, 1897–1918.* The University of Chicago Press, Chicago [etc.] 1995. xvi, 702 pp. \$43.25; £29.95.

Books of major importance on *fin de siècle* Vienna are usually written not by Austrians but by American scholars. Thus it is hardly surprising that we now have to add John W. Boyer to the names of Carl E. Schorske, William M. Johnston and Andrew G. Whiteside, who did fundamental work on the pan-German movements some years ago.¹ Boyer, Professor of History at the University of Chicago and co-editor of the *Journal of Modern History*, is of course already a well-known author in Austria too. He published his first work on Viennese *fin de siècle* politics in 1981.² The significance of his new book is that it provides for the first time a fundamental historical analysis of a political mass movement that – together with social democracy – has until now formed the basis of Austria's two-party system. Since 1907, the first year of universal male suffrage, the Christian Social Party has

¹ See, for example, Andrew G. Whiteside, *The Socialism of Fools. Georg Ritter von Schönerer and Austrian Pan-Germanism* (Berkeley, 1975).

² John W. Boyer, *Political Radicalism in Late Imperial Vienna: The Origins of the Christian Social Movement, 1848–1897* (Chicago and London, 1981).