# Book Reviews



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King, C. Richard, ed. 2000. ***Postcolonial America.*** Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press. 361 Pages, ISBN 0-252-02531-8 (cloth), ISBN 0-252-06852-1 (paper). http://www.press.uillinois.edu/s00/king.html

Much of the writing that is labeled "postcolonial" is about the persisting effects of European colonialism on the contemporary historical and literary renderings of the relationship between Europe and its former colonies, particularly India. The primary goal of this book is to extend postcolonial arguments to the case of the United States as it relates to the rest of the world and to offer critiques of some of the established nostrums of postcolonial studies from a less-Eurocentric standpoint. The irony in the American case is not lost on the editor when he notes that the United States itself began as a post-colony to Europe even as it has generated its very own variety of imperialism, initially in North America but later at continental and worldwide scales.


Unfortunately for a book in which words seem to matter more than anything else, whether or not this usage stretches the term "postcolonial" to the point of meaninglessness, when words like imperial or hegemonic might do better, is not adequately examined. Indeed, many of the chapters favor such words in preference to the perhaps too ambiguous semiotic freight carried by the "postcolonial." Yet, two of the most stimulating chapters in the book, those by Jon Stratton and Jenny Sharpe, also show that American postcoloniality is qualitatively different in important ways from what the Europeans brought to their relations with subjugated others, suggesting that ritual invocation of terms such as postcolonialism, imperialism, empire, and hegemony without making them more historically and geographically specific is perhaps an even larger intellectual and political problem. What we call the relations these words try to capture does matter, if only because what they entail and therefore what can or cannot be done about them also varies. In the absence of explicit attention to these definitional issues, the book misses an opportunity to help clarify what are becoming increasingly murky and, by extension, increasingly scholastic debates among scholars with little or no public audience. If postcoloniality is only "some sort of global condition" (p. 10), then its analytic capacity leaves much to be desired.

At first sight, the United States does seem ripe for postcolonial analysis. Implicit in dominant representations of US history are national narratives and political practices that alternate between celebrating the triumphs of its Euro-American pioneers in settling and stabilizing an American homeland and lauding the possibility of including subordinated groups at home and abroad within



the cultural and economic framework established by the pioneers. Not only is the American experience thereby racialized but it is also profoundly deterritorialized or made available for consumption (in commodity form) around the world. This is a much more geographically expansive postcoloniality than that produced by the Europeans. The chapters range far and wide in pursuit of these themes.

In the first section of three chapters, the authors engage with the stories and narratives that have shaped the United States as an "imperial nation." Stratton's chapter is particularly coherent and strong in tracing the promised land and apocalyptic elements in American myths about the uniqueness and exceptional character of the United States. Whether this can be laid entirely at the door of the "insecurity" of the US as a settler state (p. 26), however, is open to question. The four essays in the second section address the ways in which US transnational connections (immigration, trade, investment, etc.) shape American self-images and external relations. Jenny Sharpe makes a good case for a postcolonial analysis of literature penned in the United States by ethnic and diasporic writers by showing how it differs in detail from that of Europe, yet how the US shares the same sorts of power differentials with subordinate groups and world regions manifested in European-colonial core-periphery and migrant experiences. But, in showing how postcolonial analysis emanates from the mutual influence of Edward Said and Michel Foucault on literary studies beginning in the late 1970s, she also demonstrates that analysis of the American case must emphasize transnationalism and power differentials rather than marginality and oppression. E. San Juan Jr., however, will have none of this. He sees postcolonial analysis as merely "demobilizing Fanon" or the literary equivalent of a maligned "world-systems theory." Without addressing in any way the main theme of the book, he embarks on a defense of the nation-state and national liberation as the antidote to a universal imperialism, whose most recent prime agent is the United States. In claiming that postcolonial analysis in its emphasis on the centrality of imperial culture must necessarily thereby celebrate it, San Juan turns to a national populism that for him, as for previous generations of revolutionary communists, miraculously prefigures a global public space. This truly is writing against the grain.

The final section of six chapters focuses on the forms that postcolonialism takes within American culture. The emphasis is on how different places and people invent, interpret, and resist literary, musical, and political messages with an eye to their relationship with the "postcolonial." Thus, if one chapter emphasizes the "will to difference" with the mundane of the everyday in one place (Taos, New Mexico), another discusses the particular settings in which hip-hop music has been invented. The strength of these chapters lies in showing

how the postcolonial "comes home" within the territorial confines of the United States itself.

Though individual chapters in this collection offer interesting perspectives on the "postcolonial condition" of the United States, I find that the book as a whole counts as something of a disappointment. Apart from San Juan's intervention, which fails to address the main theme of the book: the appropriateness of looking at the United States from a postcolonial perspective, there is little or no discussion of the term "postcolonial" and its various alternatives and what relative analytic punch they might pack. Of course, the language issue is part of a larger theoretical problem: the failure of contemporary literary studies to invest much in examining work in the social sciences, such as world-systems analysis, that might help them escape from the linguistic traps into which so much of the work in postcolonial studies seems to fall. In opening up to a new more analytic vocabulary this might have the incidental benefit of helping relieve readers from the tortuous circumlocutions and prolix prose that afflicts so much of the writing under the label "postcolonial studies."

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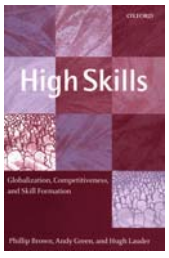
Brown, Phillip, Andy Green, and Hugh Lander. 2001. ***High Skills: Globalization, Competitiveness, and Skill Formation***. New York: Oxford University Press. 306 Pages. ISBN 0-19-924418-9 (cloth), ISBN 0-19-924420-0 (paper).
http://www.oup.com/academic/

*High Skills: Globalization, Competitiveness, and Skill Formation* is a comparative study of high skill formation in six countries: Britain, Germany, Japan, Korea, Singapore, and the United States. Policy makers and neo-liberals assume that a convergence of economic practices will diffuse across all free market economies across the globe, leading to a single model of skills formation and economic development. This emphasis on the crucial role of a highly skilled workforce in fostering not only economic and social welfare, but also international competitiveness in skill formation has stimulated the creation of a highly skilled work force, often with the encouragement of the United States and Britain. Phillip






Brown, Andy Green, and Hugh Lauder question this underlying assumption. In addressing what is the central question of their study: *What are the conditions under which different nation states attain a high skill economy?*

To answer this question, the authors develop an analytical framework of high skills derived from economic sociology that argues that skill formation and economic performance are socially constructed and experienced within social institutions such as schools, offices, and factories. The relationship between skill formation and economic performance can be organized in different ways, shaped largely by differences in historical and economic conditions, cultural, political, and social mores (p.30).

Phillip Brown develops seven key societal conditions that are necessary to attain an ideal-type high skilled society. According to the authors, in order for an ideal-type high skills society to develop, there must be links between the following conditions through state action across diverse domains such as education and training, labor market, social welfare, and economic strategies. These conditions are important precisely because they shape and become embedded in the key social institutions of a high skills society such as schools, offices, and factories. The seven C's of high skills are: (1) consensus, the degree of commitment of major stakeholders to upgrade skills; (2) entrepreneurial innovation rather than merely cost-cutting approaches to productivity and competitiveness; (3) capability, the continuous development in human capability, particularly in the use of new skill of "emotional intelligence" based on the assertion that all have the potential to benefit from skills upgrading and lifelong learning; (4) coordination, a recognition of the need to concentrate not only on the supply side issues of education but also a fostering of demand for labor; (5) circulation, a diffusion of high skills across society; (6) cooperation, the general development of high trust relations including individual empowerment as well as collective commitment to skills upgrading; and (7) closure, policies that promote social inclusion as opposed to social exclusion from benefits accruing in a high skill society. According to the authors, Germany is the only country that comes closest to the model of a "high skill society."

Hugh Lauder argues that the process by which these conditions occur is through skill diffusion systems where there is a strong link among a nation's: (a) labor market structure; (b) education and training systems; (c) key social and cultural characteristics; and (d) a strong interaction between the state and market. Germany has the high skills society model characterized by a strong occupational labor market and a close fit between education and training and the labor market, ensuring a high degree of social inclusion, income equality, and trust. Japan has high skills manufacturing characterized by a strong internal labor market regulated by the state and commitment to lifelong employ-

ment. There is a high degree of social inclusion and social conformism among men and significant inequities regarding women workers, and the SME sector. Singapore has the developmental high skills model characterized by state intervention in market relations, a complaint workforce, and significant inequities regarding Malay underclass, women, and SME sector. Britain has the low skills/high skills model characterized by a flexible labor market, employment insecurity, and minimum state intervention.

Hugh Lauder with Yadollah Mehralizadeh challenges the neo-liberal premise that market capitalism will lead to a high skill economy that will deliver prosperity, opportunity, and social cohesion, particularly promoted by recent United States presidents and Britain's Tony Blair. Rather, the relationship between skill formation and economic performance may differ greatly between nations, by historical and cultural experiences, as well as political and social factors. Even nations that come closest to meeting all ideal-type conditions for high skills society, such as Germany and Japan, are divided by their histories, cultural, social, and political construction of these practices, and thus, are divided by paths of progression. Britain and United States' flexible labor market strategy limits skill formation because it increases unemployment, discourages training, and results in a strong polarization of skill and income, and social exclusion. Findings from this study suggest that the national economies are not as permeable as neoclassical economists and politicians would like us to believe.

*High Skill: Globalization, Competitiveness, and Skill Formation* is a bold approach to developing an analytical framework of skill formation and economic performance and applying this framework to comparing economies from highly industrialized western countries and rapidly developing East-Asian countries. This book is not only empirically grounded but also theory-driven. Although the study focused on economies from developed and rapidly developing East-Asian economies, it has theoretical relevance that extends beyond the cases studied, and as such, provides fertile ground for subsequent theoretical and empirical inquiry.

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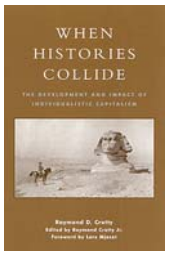
Crotty, Raymond D. 2001. ***When Histories Collide: The Development and Impact of Individualistic Capitalism.*** Walnut Creek CA: AltaMira Press. 311 pages,
ISBN 0-7591-0157-4 (cloth), ISBN 0-7591-0158-2 (paper).
http://www.altamirapress.com/

Ray Crotty was an interesting guy. He was an Irish farmer who observed his own failures and the general problems of farmers around him and then got a formal economics training which he used to explain the things he had observed. He made further observations of practical farming while working in Asia, Latin America and Africa with the World Bank and the UN, where he found similarities between Ireland and other former colonies. He then taught development economics in (of all places) the Statistics Department of Trinity College Dublin. Despite being marginalized by much of the Irish academic community, he had a major impact on critical Irish thought and practice since the 1970s, through his published work and his tireless campaigning against what he viewed to be the negative consequences on Ireland of EU integration. *When Histories Collide* is published posthumously due to the efforts of Lars Mjoset of the University of Oslo, who worked with and admired Crotty.




This is a two-part book in which Crotty lays out his interpretation of long-term world historical development and then applies his model with respect to Ireland (he also says some comparative things about North and South America and other colonised regions). He has a novel ecological theory of the origins of Western 'individualist capitalism', based on the ways in which pastoral migrants interacted with different factor endowments to develop specific systems of property relations and production/reproduction.

In the first half of the book, Crotty unfolds his basic historical analysis of the twin processes of 'individualist capitalist development' and 'capitalist *colonial* undevelopment'. Both processes are centred on the introduction of property. But private property (the identifying institution of individualistic capitalism) emerged autochthonously in Europe, and was thus a developing factor by inducing productivity in the limiting factor of production, but was 'undeveloping' when it was imposed onto collectivist societies. There, it worked only to the advantage of a privileged class that was identified with the metropolis and the masses of people sank into deep poverty.

Crotty's historical model unfolds something like clockwork, although it is a very long clock. Nomadic Indo-European pastoralists who were lactose tolerant attained an advantage over farmers because they could drink milk and eat

milk products when other sources of food failed. This enabled them to produce a surplus population, leading to invasions of different regions of Asia and Europe around 2000 BC. The invasions produced different outcomes according to the ecology of each region/society (note that Crotty's 'world-system' begins at about the same time as that of Frank, but it proceeds very differently according to Crotty's definition of individualist capitalism). In China, India and the Near East they did not produce capitalism. But invasions into Europe created *individualistic* constellations, in which the institutions of individual property emerged.

These European constellations took two forms. In southern Europe, conditions were such that the individual reproduction was possible only by extracting a surplus from slaves, so 'individualist slavery' emerged. The individualist slaveholder expanded extensively, by capturing more slaves, and the system expanded aggressively until it had to move northward. There, in central-western Europe, it was undermined by a more productive economy where individualism took a different and capitalist form because neither land nor labor was the limiting factor. The individualist farmer was able to adapt in a productive way to the environment by developing private property rights in capital (cattle, shelter, crops, food).

After these populations competed with each other for three millennia, the system exploded. Capitalist colonialism emerged as Spain and Portugal extended slave-based agriculture outward into the world-system. And the Tudors in England introduced property rights in land, which, together with the stimulus from the first outward movement of colonialism, provided the conditions for the rise of factory capitalism. England, however, was purely exceptional because it is the only place where property that was primarily in land developed autochthonously. The result was singularly 'developing' for England in an industrial sense, but because of the landed form of private property the English masses paid for its development and world leadership by enduring impoverishment for four centuries before they shared in the prosperity.

From this point, the rapid surge of individualist capitalist colonialism created two outcomes. In settler colonies like North America, where the indigenous populations could be largely swept away and land was virtually limitless, property was imposed and maintained by the settlers themselves. As in central Western Europe (but not England), they achieved development primarily on the basis of property in capital. The non-settler colonies, Crotty argues, were the only areas apart from England where property was based primarily in land. Since this was *not* an autochthonous development, property relations were forcibly maintained by the metropoles 'for squeezing the colonized nations' (P.121). Land that was previously used for popular sustenance now became a source of



profit for agents and collaborators of the metropoles and the local people were squeezed and had no way to avoid sinking into poverty. This is the essence of Crotty's 'capitalist colonialist undevelopment.'

The second half of the book concentrates on how this model of historical development applies to the Irish case. The 'capitalist colonization' of Ireland began with the imposition of private property in land after the Tudor conquest. Eventually, the combination of cheap land, ecological conditions and changing demands in the metropolis led in 1820–1921 to the collapse of the Irish economy after a collapse in grain prices throughout Europe and, then, the potato blight of the 1840s, causing widespread famine (over a million died), depopulation and poverty.

Crotty discusses the 'aftermath of capitalist colonialism' to make his analysis speak to the current needs for change in colonized regions like Ireland. His central theme is that independence is obtained in capitalist colonies only when the metropolitan-oriented elite is sufficiently strong and the colonized mass sufficiently debilitated to ensure the perpetuation of 'undevelopment' in the post-colonial period. Crotty calls this the 'essential continuity' of capitalist colonialism. When he wrote *When Histories Collide*, the Irish Celtic Tiger economy of the 1990s had not yet emerged. Ireland was mired in poverty, one in five was unemployed, the state was one of the most indebted in the world and it appeared as though dependence on foreign investments would be insufficient to change any of this.

Despite his pessimistic analysis, Crotty has a pretty simple way out of undevelopment that only requires substantial national mobilization. To reverse undevelopment, he argues, one must deprive the state, 'the enemy of the nation', of its control of the nation's resources; then one must recognize and implement the nation's title to these resources. His argument for doing this is a strange mix of populism and neoclassical economics. Since he argues that the central problem of undevelopment is the legacy of free land (for those who have it), cheap capital and expensive (although low-paid) labour, his solution is market-led. He proposes that a 'national dividend', a large guaranteed income transfer to all residents of the state, would increase the supply of labour and cheapen it by eliminating the 'poverty trap' where wages are too low to induce anyone to forego their state welfare benefits. A land tax would force holders of the land to use it more productively or dispose of it to someone who will. And restoration of sufficiently high profit and capital taxes would increase the cost of capital, forcing its productive use in some cases and its substitution by labour in others. The thrust of each of these proposals is to develop institutions that will realign factor prices in a way that will ensure their efficient use to the benefit of the mass of people. In other words, Crotty suggests that 'market-led individualistic capi-

talism' can be introduced successfully in post-colonies with the right policies.

This is a startling conclusion in two respects (apart from his eliding of the problems of Western poverty and inequality). First, such a simple market-based solution seems to be out of sync with a long historical analysis that centers on the embedding of institutions over the millennia, in a way that appears to be pretty unshakeable due to the powerful class alliances that underpin and benefit from those institutions. Second, it all seems dated, anyway, after a decade of rapid economic growth in Ireland that seems to defy *any* long history.

One wonders what Crotty would have made of the Celtic tiger. I think he would have been hampered by the fact that his historical model, interesting as it is, lacks sufficient interior analysis of different phases or cycles of underdevelopment, as we find, for instance, in the work of Arrighi. He thus has difficulty recognising the changes that have taken place in post-colonial Ireland (and in some other regions) to move it away from its agrarian past. Nonetheless, Crotty's is a rewarding long historical analysis and a serious alternative (or addition) to others. And I suspect, if he were with us today, he would insist that the 'essential continuity' of capitalist colonialism is proven by the fact that, in spite of Ireland's recent economic growth, many of its basic inequalities have remained.

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Crespo, Al, ed. (2002) ***Protest in the Land of Plenty: A View of Democracy from the Streets of America as We Enter the 21st Century***. Center Lane Press: Miami, FL, 186 pages (ill.), ISBN: 0-9722-1340-6. http://www.centerlanepress.com/

Whether one dismisses protesters and their actions or actively seeks to join their ranks, it seems impossible to simply ignore their presence these days. Though a steady undercurrent of social movement and protest politics has run throughout US history, sustained and mass mobilizations seem to follow a cyclical pattern. Since the November 1999 World Trade Organization meetings, when news media honed in on black-clad and often dreadlocked youths in contention with Seattle city police, and now the twelve-plus millions worldwide who




recently marched to protest against a US invasion of Iraq, it would seem that the protest cycle is nearing another apex. But who are these people? Why do they dress the way they do and engage in the sometimes symbolic, sometimes violent, acts that they do? Mainstream media barrages the public with pundits' opinions and selective film footage of today's radicals (but rarely the reactionaries), and seldom do we hear or see protests from the vantage of its participants. Al Crespo presents a rare and vivid photo project with the hopes of bringing the protests and protesters a little closer to the public.

During a visit to Buenos Aires in 1997, Crespo serendipitously found himself caught up in a student street protest. Subsequent interviews with the students caused him to question the contemporary climate of protest in the United States. Those questions led to his project of traveling the US and capturing the protests on film over several years. His journey covers the period from November 1999 to late September 2001 and takes us to sixteen different protest actions including the Republican and Democratic National Conventions, various Florida protests concerning the election, Elian Gonzalez, and the return of Haitian refugees, and even to KKK marches, death penalty protests, and the first peace demonstrations following the September 11th attacks. Amongst the hundreds of photos are also essays either introducing and contextualizing an event or are contributions from movement leaders who explain their groups and politics in their own words.

The book is primarily about the photos and it must be said that they are stunning. The first few black and whites capture the drama of recent protests, one depicting students drawing signs in the street while another stares down the barrel of a Los Angeles cop's shotgun during the tumultuous first night of the Democratic National Convention. Crespo evidently had no reservations of either crossing sides at rallies or getting close to the action as many photos even capture pro and con forces exchanging words, angry looks, and the ubiquitous middle-fingered salute. What comes across most vividly, and most importantly, is the great range of people and strategies that emerge in protest activities. Not all activists are young, or radical, and not all are chanting and waving signs. Rather, and in addition to the above, there are puppets, street theatre, occasional nudity, breathtaking colors and art, sit-downs, creative slogans, and a conscious type of drama that is difficult to convey. Crespo's photos capture much of this and do so in a compelling and accessible manner.

The essays deepen the overall picture presented by letting protest organizers explain their tactics and reasoning. Their perspectives are refreshing and go far in explaining the motivations people have in joining protests and the emotions that animate events. Some essays help elucidate the aims and histories of controversial organizations, while others present a view that was overlooked

by media and protesters alike at the time. Examples of the latter include a history of the School of the Americas Watch by its founder Fr. Rou Bourgeois and a compelling story of discrimination against Haitian refugees to the US by Marleine Bastien. Of particular note are the essays by Nicholas Barricada and John Sellers on the infamous organizations of the Black Bloc and the Ruckus Society, respectively. These organizations are often stereotyped by news media and have become sort of symbols of mainstream institutions protesting against protest itself. Having prominent activists of those societies explain what they do and why they do it helps cut through some of the disinformation and gives greater meaning to the photos of street action.

However, as interesting and useful as the photos and essays are, a little more verbiage would have done the book well. Though separate introductions to sections explain the basic scenarios of each protest covered, a more thorough introduction and conclusion to the book would have helped set the overall context of contemporary US activism. For instance, is now actually a more turbulent time with more and varied protests in the US than during the 80's or the 60's, or does it just seem that way because of the way protests are presented to us? Extra history on organizations, events, and protesting in general would have rounded out the book. Most glaring, though, is the lack of grassroots voices in the book and the lack of conservative protest movement leaders' essay contributions. As deplorable as the KKK may be, it would have helped balance the book some to have an essay by one of its leaders, or by another movement, that would give their perspective on organizing and animating protests. Omitting grassroots voices, however, is hard to forgive since the book is essentially about their experiences. Photos depict people from all walks of life banding together and at times risking their lives for a cause. Why do they do it? A consistent criticism of contemporary protests from mainstream press is that protesters don't know why or even what the issue of the day is. It would have been easy for Crespo to get waivers from a few people he photographed and ask them their views on direct action or how they got involved. Even a few short quotes would have deepened and enriched an already great pool of information.

Even considering the above criticism I would highly recommend this book to anyone. Its essays are engaging and the photos are sometimes impossible to describe. Though certainly not an academic book, the text and images combine with the subject matter in a way that I think still makes it impossible to read without stirring up critical thought on the events that are defining our times. I have actually participated in about a third of the protests that Crespo covers (and was somewhat surprised not to see me in it) so the book was especially intriguing for me. I can attest that the protests I attended were just as vibrant



and chaotic as they seem in Crespo's photos. If nothing else, *Protest in the Land of Plenty* is an historical photographical testament to the creativity, energy, and tenacity Americans can bring to their politics.

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Böröcz, József, and Melinda Kóvacs, eds. 2001. ***Empire's New Clothes: Unveiling EU Enlargement.*** Central Europe Review, 305 pages, ISBN 1-84287-009-2. http://www.ce-review.org see also http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~eu/

Concerns about imperial and colonial designs have recently resurfaced in the context of the realignment of political forces within Europe and between Europe and the USA. József Böröcz and Melinda Kóvacs's edited book *Empire's New Clothes: Unveiling EU Enlargement* deals with a related and very crucial aspect of the ongoing reshaping of the European Union, namely the role of empire and coloniality in the process of "eastern enlargement."


In the Introduction, Böröcz argues that the concepts of coloniality and empire, as used in postcolonial studies, are relevant for the study of the current re-division of Europe. According to him, all the institutional elements of an imperial order are present in the process of eastern enlargement. These elements are unequal exchange, coloniality (creating a fixed system of inferiorized otherness through cognitive mapping of populations), export of governmentality (through the standardizing control mechanisms of modern statehood) and geopolitics (global strategy of projecting the center's power to the external world). The EU's approach towards eastern European countries in the process of membership negotiations epitomizes the imperial order in the making. Some important aspects of this imperial outlook are the racial othering of the outsiders based on arguments about irreconcilable cultural and civilizational differences; the creation of a quantitative pattern of inferiorization and exoticization; the notion that post-socialist eastern Europe needs to "catch up" with the western half of the continent culturally and economically; and intensive involvement by prominent EU members in the

candidate countries' economies. For Böröcz, all of these factors have created the sense among east-central European countries that inclusion in the EU is a ratification of their "Europeanness" (or "whiteness"), an idea that is reinforced by the European Union's *synecdoche* representation of itself as "Europe." Böröcz's arguments inform the following six chapters of the book. Most of the essays employ discourse analysis to extricate signs of coloniality from EU documents written in the course of membership negotiations.

Böröcz analyzes the official communications between the Hungarian government and the European Commission (1996–1997) in the second chapter, entitled "The Fox and the Raven: The European Union and Hungary Renegotiate the Margins of 'Europe'." His conclusion is that the communication between the two sides is characterized by asymmetry of power, dependence (of Hungary on the EU), and asymmetry of the addressivity of the two sides' texts. In this way, the EU document denies subjectivity to Hungary and reserves it for only itself, since it monopolizes the power to judge whether the former is deserving of becoming part of "Europe" as defined by itself.

Salvatore Engel-Di Mauro focuses on geopolitics in the next chapter entitled "The Enduring National State: NATO-EU Relations, EU-Enlargement and the Reapportionment of the Balkans." He points out that the bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999 demonstrated that NATO's and EU's policies towards the Balkans have a colonial and imperialist element. Within the context of the partial membership overlap between NATO and the European Union, there is a realignment between Germany and France versus the alliance between the US and Britain. In this setting, the eastern enlargement of the EU is crucial in terms of both gaining the allegiance of the new members of NATO and the export of western European capital into the region. Nevertheless this process is ridden with contradictions since the EU cannot pursue its imperial aims in an unhindered fashion because of the unquestionable military superiority of the US.

In the next chapter entitled "Shedding Light on the Quantitative Other: The EU's Discourse in the Commission Opinions of 1997," Melinda Kóvacs and Peter Kabachnik pick up where Böröcz left off. They analyze the "Political Criteria" sections of the European Commission Opinions on ten east-central European candidates. They argue that the discourse used by the EC reproduces the eighteenth century western European construction of eastern Europe as its inferior other. Kóvacs and Kabachnik identify discursive patterns in all of the Opinions, which underline the othering of eastern Europe. In the EU documents, the ten candidate countries are said to be "lacking" in certain political criteria, there are institutional "obstacles" for their accession to membership, and they are represented as "rustic" (and therefore backward) societies.



The next chapter by Kóvacs continues with a similar discourse analysis of the 1998 and 1999 EU Reports on candidate countries. Inspired by Edward Said's study of Orientalism, she asserts that the EU's perception of the candidate countries is reminiscent of how colonial administrators viewed the "Orientals"—inferior and without subjectivity. Particularly, the EU Reports "put down" (inferiorize) the candidates through various discursive strategies and thus "put off" (delay) their accession to the EU by creating ambiguities.

Anna Sher, in the chapter entitled "A Di-Vision of Europe: The European Union Enlarged," has a similar approach in her analysis of speeches made by three EU leaders. She identifies several discursive strategies that are used in these speeches: dividing Europe along the Cold War axis into the west and the east, grounding this division on the economic and political backwardness of the eastern half, and constructing the western half as "Europe" itself.

In the last chapter, "The Austrian Freedom Party's Colonial Discourse in the Context of EU-Enlargement," Katalin Dancsi studies the 1997 party program of Austria's anti-immigrant and nationalist coalition partner. She argues that the Freedom Party employs a "colonial" dynamics in its political discourse. Particularly, it creates an image of a national self (defining "Austrianness" in an exclusive way), and engages in the othering of outsiders (exclusion of eastern Europeans and immigrants from the construct of the self).

This book is innovative in that it introduces concepts and methodological tools from postcolonial scholarship (coloniality, Orientalism, othering, discourse analysis) to the study of European Union's current enlargement process. But the application of these tools does not penetrate beyond the surface. In all chapters except Engel-Di Mauro's, the authors look for evidence of western European colonial intentions at the level of words and phrases in official documents or speeches, rather than undertake content analysis. Their assertions that certain types of wording in the EU texts are signs of coloniality are not well substantiated.

A further problem in the book pertains to relevance. The scheduled accession of ten countries (the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta) into EU membership in May 2004 means that some of the insights in *Empire's New Clothes* are already outdated. That would not have been the case had the book not had certain weaknesses. There is an implicit assumption throughout the chapters that the EU's inferiorization of eastern Europe is bound up with the membership negotiation process. Now that those countries have secured membership, is coloniality over? The answer is probably no. Then, we need a different type of analysis to pinpoint imperial designs. Some information is given in Böröcz's Introduction and Engel-Di Mauro's chapter, but there is need for a more rigorous analysis of

the economic and geopolitical motives behind, and the consequences of, EU's massive undertaking of eastern enlargement. Put differently, the facts pertaining to a new empire in Europe have to be established (or at least cited) before discourse analysis can be persuasive.

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Battilosi, Stefano and Youssef Cassis. 2002. ***European Banks and the American Challenge: Competition and Cooperation in International Banking under Bretton Woods.*** Oxford: Oxford University Press, 228 pages, ISBN 0-19-925027-8 (cloth).
http://www.oup.com/academic/

Between the 1950s and the 1970s—at the height of 'embedded liberalism'—US banks internationalized significantly, entering the European banking market and often experimenting with new financial innovations that would become central to the global financial order of the 1980s and 1990s. This edited volume explores the history of this transformation in US and European banking, which proved so consequential for the organization of the global economy.


Stefano Battilosi's introductory chapter argues that the foundations of the global financial order of the 1980s and 1990s are to be found in the Bretton Woods years and in the complex patterns of competition and emerging cooperation among US and European banks. Even as European banking markets (such as the eurodollar) grew in importance, they became more Americanized and increasingly central to US global economic and financial hegemony. European governments faced political opposition from the US in attempts to regulate these growing markets and European banks were drawn into these more speculative forms of banking.

Subsequent chapters outline the position of European and US banks before this internationalization process, assessing the competitiveness of the more thoroughly internationalized European banks (Cassis) and the motivation of US banks in entering the European market to escape US regulation (Sylla). Other chapters describe the fortunes of various institutional structures through which international banking was pursued—international financial



centers and clubs and consortia—while a chapter is devoted to the strategies of each of British, French and German banks. Harold James' final chapter returns to the themes of Battilosi's introduction, exploring how the emerging financial markets and the changing interests of the banks within them undermined the efforts in the 1970s of central banks and the Bretton Woods institutions to regulate these new markets.

The great contribution of this volume is to provide a careful, detailed history of the relations among US and European banks in this crucial period and arena where the organizational strategies of the new global financial order were in the making. Combining statistical data, documentary research and case studies, the book provides a comprehensive overview of the emergence of this new organizational space for banking. The most stimulating chapters are those that address these issues of the creation of a new global order directly (Battilosi, James) and those which seek to explain, rather than describe, why different patterns of cooperation and competition emerged (e.g. Ross, Bussière). There is a wealth of historical detail here for the specialist in the development of the global financial system and the volume is valuable in that it gathers together analyses of this emerging field of international banking from the perspectives of different actors in the US and Europe.

Throughout the book, the limited power of the Bretton Woods institutions becomes ever clearer in the face of the emergence of the Euro banking markets, which emerge as a crucial international financial space between US domestic regulation and the relatively static European banking industry. The authors provide multiple examples of the variety of strategies employed by US and European banks and how these strategies interacted to produce a new space for organizational innovations in finance. Perhaps most interesting is the implication that European banking markets were crucial to the process of the financialization of the US economy, despite the imagery of the US as the more 'liberal' regulatory environment for finance during the period. However, few of the authors set out to provide an analytical framework through which we might understand the reasons for these shifts. Given the emphasis on 'competition and cooperation' we might expect a more detailed exposition of the debates in industrial organization regarding how and when firms will engage in different mixes of competitive and cooperative relationships (although this is discussed in Ross' chapter).

It would also have been valuable if more attention had been paid to the political context within which banks shifted their strategies and to government-business relations. There are suggestions throughout the chapters of how bankers themselves attempted to shape the policy environment itself but this is not given any sustained analytical treatment. How might this emergent finan-

cial space have been structured differently? What might have been the consequences for the liberal financial order that emerged from it? What balance of industrial organizational and macro-political forces shaped these new banking strategies and institutions? There are clues and important pieces of information throughout the book but they are not integrated into an overall account of the broader political economy of this transformation of international finance.

The book is a valuable and comprehensive contribution to the history of this important transformation of banking relationships, but provides little explanation of how the dynamics described in the analyses might fit together within a broader framework. The book directs our attention to the importance of this new 'organizational field' where international banking became Americanized through the pursuit of financial innovation in Euromarkets. The wealth of historical detail provides a solid foundation for future analyses of the broader political economy of this organizational field but the current volume will be of interest primarily to specialists in banking history and the particular role of the industrial organization of banking in the shift to a liberal financial order.

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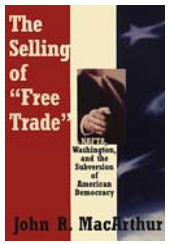
MacArthur, John. 2001. ***The Selling of "Free Trade": NAFTA, Washington, and the Subversion of American Democracy.*** Berkeley: University of California Press, 400 pages, ISBN 0-520-23178-3 (paper). http://www.ucpress.edu/books/pages/9599.html

John MacArthur's *The Selling of "Free Trade": NAFTA, Washington, and the Subversion of American Democracy* is an ambitious book on an important topic.




A study of the political battles surrounding the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), *The Selling of "Free Trade"* takes the reader on a journey from the factory floor to the highest levels of corporate and political power and back again. In the process, the book touches on questions of economic restructuring, the ideology of free trade, union and presidential politics, the transformation of the Democratic party, and the consequences of trade legislation for workers in the United States and Mexico.

Although *The Selling of "Free Trade"* has much to recommend it, the book's strengths are often difficult to distinguish from its weaknesses. To his credit,



MacArthur has written a highly readable account of a topic that has been recast in recent years as the exclusive province of technocrats and policy wonks. MacArthur writes about trade policy with flair displaying a keen sense of social justice and never losing sight of the social consequences of trade.

He puts a human face on trade by introducing the reader to Gorica Kostrevski, a Macedonian immigrant working in a stapler factory in Queens, New York. The factory is slated for relocation to Mexico after the signing of the NAFTA and Gorica provides the hook that MacArthur uses to pull the reader away from the esoterica of trade theory to the real-world costs of trade. *The Selling of "Free Trade"* follows Gorica's job: from its origins in a non-union plant, through the acquisition of the family-owned company by American Brands/ACCO, and a union organizing drive and strike that improve wages and working conditions in the plant.

MacArthur then traces the NAFTA debate through the corridors of Congress, presidential ambitions, party politics, corporate lobbying and public relations campaigns. In the concluding chapter, MacArthur seeks out Gorica's counterpart at the newly relocated plant in the Mexican border town of Nogales and finds an illiterate, sixteen-year-old girl working for barely $50 a week in Gorica's old job.

Along the way, *The Selling of "Free Trade"* makes a number of important observations. MacArthur concludes that the NAFTA was never really about trade as much as it was about providing investment security for U.S. corporations operating in Mexico. He points out that Mexican President Salinas was driven to enter into the trade deal out of the desperation caused by Mexico's crushing debt burden. And MacArthur raises other interesting points about the trade-offs that corporations must calculate between low-wages and control over the work process and the possibility of labor becoming so cheap that the process of production is actually "deautomated."

And yet, MacArthur addresses such a wide range of topics that he is unable to examine fully many the arguments he makes or explore their implications. Without a strong theoretical framework to harness its ambitious scope, the book meanders among anecdotes and then, at various points, leaps to grand assertions regarding the nature of the trade deal or politics more generally. The NAFTA, we are told, was "entirely about money (p. 101);" it "was an investment agreement designed to protect American corporations (p. 133);" "politics is self-interest…complete self-interest (p. 201);" "the way politics really works in America" is through the manipulation of public opinion with sales, marketing and advertising (p. 304).

And, while MacArthur invokes Gorica Kostrevski as he travels from Capitol Hill, to corporate seminars and the offices of lobbyists, the link back to

Gorica ultimately proves tenuous, more of a rhetorical flourish than a clearly established connection. In the Afterword, written in 2001 following an initial printing in 2000, we learn that Gorica received educational assistance under the Transitional Adjustment Assistance program in the NAFTA and had found a job cleaning office buildings at $4 an hour more than she earned working in the stapler factory. Given the unequivocally negative conclusions that MacArthur draws about the consequences of trade, this revelation highlights the difficulty that the book has in dealing with a more interesting but more ambiguous story that would take into account unintended consequences and unexpected outcomes.

Moreover, the interviews with elite informants that provide much of the empirical core of the book have limited value if the purpose is to assess the motives and beliefs of these actors. Not only are these actors probably the least credible sources of information on their own motives, but interviews on the topic are not likely to provide much beyond what is available in already published sources. MacArthur acknowledges as much when he discusses his inability to arrange an interview with then Vice President, Al Gore.

Finally, through no fault of its own, *The Selling of "Free Trade"* falls victim to bad timing. Despite the grim storyline, it is difficult not to feel a touch of nostalgia for the political battles that MacArthur documents. Back when it was fashionable to note that there wasn't a dime's worth of difference between Democrats and Republicans, it may have seemed that the Clinton White House was uniquely cynical, that corporate interests completely dominated our political institutions, and that the major media were little more than scribes promoting the administration line.

The Clinton presidency may not have been a golden age of ethical purity and political autonomy. But with the benefit of hindsight, many of MacArthur's assertions regarding the Clinton administration seem hyperbolic. Indeed, having learned what real cynicism and corruption look like during the last two years, it is difficult not to think, "what I wouldn't give for that dime's worth of difference."

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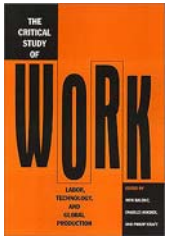
Baldoz, Rick, Charles Koeber and Philip Kraft, eds. 2001. ***The Critical Study of Work: Labor, Technology, and Global Production.*** Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 285 pages, ISBN 1-56639-797-9 (cloth), ISBN 1-56639-798-7 (paper).
http://www.temple.edu/tempress/titles/1546_reg.html

Contributors to this volume seek to understand recent global trends in work relations from the ground up, taking the workplace and worker consciousness as their starting point. By assembling these empirically rich and theoretically innovative studies, many of which were presented at the "Work, Difference, and Social Change" conference at Binghamton University in May 1998, Baldoz, Koeber and Kraft have deepened our understanding of the "mechanisms that organize and change work" (p.6). The volume offers a panoramic view of how managers have recently tried to achieve more productive and compliant service sector workers (Part II), industrial workers (Part III) and professional and technical workers (Part IV).




We learn that employers have recently used new technologies to both "deskill" and "reskill" labor, confirming one of the central tenants of Harry Braverman's seminal work on labor process. For example, while managers have recently used computer-based technologies to de-skill labor in the apparel, software and high-tech industries, automobile as well as high-tech industry managers have recently used computer-based technologies to simultaneously re-skill production workers. According to Bonacich, the computerization of the design phase has eliminated the need for apparel manufacturers to keep production staff in house, intensifying the division between conceptual and manual labor. From Sharpe, we learn that the software industry has repeatedly tried to automate software development in order to de-skill the industry's elite labor force. Similarly, Chun notes that computerization of computer component assembly "effectively reduced an entire workforce devoted to board stuffing to performing a single task on the surface mount technology (SMT) line" (p. 137). Yet, by the 1990s, Rinehart tells us that auto employers used computers to compress quality control and design development tasks into production jobs—a process euphemistically referred to as "reengineering." Similarly, as Silicon Valley contract manufacturers have branched out beyond just making printed circuit boards (PCBs) to "a wide array of electronic development, marketing trend analysis and computerized testing" (p. 137), they increasingly expect many of their workers to be multi-skilled.

We also learn about the divergent ways that managers have recently restructured production organization—another strategy to control labor identified by

Braverman but one, the editors note, is often overlooked. For example, Bonacich and Sharpe chart the growing use of subcontracting in the apparel and software industries respectively. At the same time, Chun relays that computer component assemblers have shifted away from subcontracting to capital-intensive contract manufacturing. Similarly, while the software and automobile industries have recently tried to shed internal labor markets, computer component assemblers have recently introduced them. Rinehart traces how the American and Canadian automobile industries gradually shrank the number of mid-level supervisory positions. They dismantled the industry's Fordist and Taylorist labor process with Quality of Work-Life policies in the 1970s, Total Quality Management systems in the 1980s and Re-engineering in the 1990s. Yet, Chun finds that Silicon Valley managers have become more competitive by offering temporary workers the possibility of permanent status.

Finally, we learn that managers have diverged in their reliance on ethnically defined labor recruitment strategies to control labor. According to Bonacich, white apparel manufacturers in Los Angeles continue to employ predominantly Asian subcontractors who then hire mostly Latino immigrant production workers. Nakano Glen shows that private individuals hiring help around the house as well as public care-giving institutions continue to recruit women of color, although immigrant women from poorer countries have begun to replace domestic women. In contrast, Chun finds that Silicon Valley managers no longer recruit workers from within their ethnic community. Instead, they place greater emphasis on fostering the collective pride of workers in high quality production, yielding a more ethnically diverse labor force.

Many contributors also extend labor process theory in new and provocative directions, building on the editors cogent articulation of a new critical study of work. Burowoy opens Part I with an intellectual autobiography that draws on more than 20-years of ethnographic research in the U.S., Hungary and Russia to demonstrate why we should extend analyses of the labor process to include worker-consciousness. Doing so, he argues, will help uncover distinct labor regimes—systems of labor control jointly defined by how workplace managerial strategies interact with the political context.

Based on field work at one of Silicon Valley's new contract manufacturers, Chun concludes that capitalist managers have forged yet another labor regime: flexible despotism. This new labor regime, Chun argues "require[s] more complex and rationalized coordination of worker consent" (p. 129) than Burowoy's market despotism because it subjects workers to "constant layoffs, compulsory overtime, and production shutdowns" (p. 149). Subsequent chapters suggest that flexible despotism may apply equally to non-industrial work settings. Meiksins and Whalley find through survey research that technical professionals work-



ing as contingent workers rationalize the high levels of self-discipline needed to earn a living without job security by internalizing a professional etiquette. Similarly, Ó'Riain reveals, with his lively account of Irish subcontractors working for an American software company, how workers in "off-shore" units manage both local and global identities in order to rationalize working hard to meet deadlines imposed by distant managers and simultaneously maintain relationships with future global employers.

Lan challenges us to integrate sexuality, emotions and physical representation into analyses of worker consciousness, particularly when studying labor control mechanisms in the expanding service sector. Although her selection of the Taiwanese cosmetics industry, an industry self-evidently oriented towards managing bodies, weakens her argument somewhat, her research shows how managing bodies can contribute to forging productive service workers. Soares' analysis of cashiers in Québec and São Paulo illustrates how managing emotions and self-representation are key aspects of controlling low-wage service workers, even though he does not reference Lan's thesis.

Haydu reminds us that changes in employer consciousness as well as worker consciousness may shape emergent labor regimes. He shows us that the formation of an embattled employer consciousness helped determine capitalist victory over organized labor in America at the end of the late 19th century.

Those interested in longer historical processes will find Nakano Glen's 100-year overview of reproductive labor and Sharpe's sweeping analysis of capital-labor struggles in the software industry particularly compelling. Those concerned with how workers might resist new managerial strategies will be interested in Soares' descriptions of grocery clerks subverting clients and managers, Bonacich's constructive assessment of recent organizing efforts in Los Angeles' apparel industry, and Webster's sobering analysis of the forces that dampened militancy among South Africa's shop stewards.

Taken together, these studies confirm capital's ability to adopt myriad labor control strategies and demonstrate the advantage of more sophisticated approaches to analyzing the labor process if we want to comprehend (and/or undermine) capital's logic. The volume's geographic breadth and theoretical depth make it a valuable resource for labor scholars and students alike.

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