

Editorial Foreword

BECOMING NATIONALISTS Two articles explore ways of coming to nationalism from the margins, so to say.

Ulbe Bosma seeks to knit up the raveled sleeve of the standard story of nationalism, which makes it endogenous in Europe and the Americas but exogenous and somehow second-hand in Asia and Africa, an imported product disseminated through colonial education. Examining the creole nationalism that grew up in Indonesia, with comparative forays into the early comprador nationalisms of Bengal and Senegal, the author argues that nationalism in Asia and Africa does not differ essentially from the creole nationalism of immigrants in the Americas, and that both are anti-imperialist at the core.

The Dömnö of Salonika, descendants of seventeenth-century Jewish converts to Islam, remained a distinct community from Ottoman times through the creation of the Turkish republic. **Marc Baer** follows their negotiation of the rough terrain crossed in their (incomplete) transformation from a religious group to citizens of a (not quite completely) secular state. (On the Dömnö, see also Leyla Neyzi, “Remembering to Forget: Sabbateanism, National Identity, and Subjectivity in Turkey,” *CSSH* 2002: 137–58.)

FRONTIER PATROL The next three essays patrol the frontiers of pre-modern states, of colonial empires, and of the global economy. (See also the “border crossing” articles of *CSSH* 46, 2: Belinda Bozzoli’s “The Taming of the Illicit: Bounded Rebellion in South Africa, 1986” (*CSSH* 2004: 326–53), and Eric Tagliacozzo, “Ambiguous Commodities, Unstable Frontiers: The Case of Burma, Siam, and Imperial Britain, 1800–1900” (*CSSH* 2004: 354–77).)

Charles Jedrej places the ethnographies of small-scale societies of the Southern Funj region of Sudan in their larger historical context, which is to say as elements of a frontier region in complex relations with a series of states, involved in slaving, tribute taking, and trade, beginning with the Muslim Funj Sultanate (from the sixteenth century), continuing with the Ottoman and English rulers of Egypt, and ending with the independent state of Sudan—and the conflicts reported in today’s newspapers. The most intimate features of the social structure of such frontier societies are shaped by these relations to the state. The Funj sultans, being both Muslim warriors and merchants, wishing both to extract tribute by arms and conduct peaceful trade, maintained their southern frontier as something in between a zone of state violence and one of state order. “Institutionalized insecurity” best characterizes the sum of these vectors.

In the nineteenth century, the Tanzimat reforms of the Ottoman empire brought new, state-led courts to the Danube Province (present-day Bulgaria),

in addition to the existing religious (*sharia*) courts. **Milen Petrov** examines the records of the state courts to determine the relation between the two systems. Among other things he finds it was now possible to be tried twice for murder, and with different outcomes. The Bulgarians responded quickly and learned how to work the new courts to their own interests, engaging in an active struggle over ways of representing the past and assigning blame—the opposite, perhaps, of “everyday forms of resistance” to oppressive rulers. A decade later Bulgarians got independence thanks to the Russians, but there is no evidence here that the locals thought the Ottoman state was teetering on the brink.

Sharad Chari gives us an ethnography of how peasants become workers in small knitwear factories in Coimbatore, in the south of India, and then, through an ethic of toil, become factory-owning capitalists. On closer examination these “self-made men” are made by kinship and marriage networks. The success of these businesses, many, small, articulated into local networks and doing a roaring trade in global markets, is a striking story. It has the irony of members of Communist unions, bearing names like Lenin Kaliappan, turning capitalists.

CULTURE NATION The politics of national culture and its dilemmas is the subject of the next piece.

Hong-luen Wang analyzes the predicament of national culture in Taiwan, in the face of a stronger, competing Peoples Republic of China version of Chinese national culture, and an indigenist Taiwanese nationalism. National culture, the author says, has to function both on the domestic and international levels, and failure to articulate well at either level leads to a crisis of identity, which is the case in Taiwan today. The material discussed is the vast (600,000-item) collection of Chinese antiquities brought to Taiwan with the retreating armies of Chiang Kai-shek, and the problems of the simplification of the Chinese script and the pinyin system of Romanization. In both areas the PRC has set an international standard followed by overseas Chinese and others, against which Taiwanese alternatives make no headway outside of Taiwan itself.

INDIAN GIVING The last article concerns the circulation of portraits as gifts between heads of states.

At the beginnings of British rule in India, the governor-general had oil portraits painted and gave them as gifts to Indian princes, more or less requiring oil portraits of them in return. European artists as a consequence found India a lucrative place to set up shop, and overcharged their more-or-less captive patrons, who reciprocated by being slow to pay. **Natasha Eaton** elucidates the appearance of oil portraiture in India by locating it in this largely obligatory circulation of gifts, deliberately created by the British as a departure from the established protocols of gift-exchange among political leaders under the old regime in India, that of the Mughals, in hopes of escaping the supposed corrupting influences of that system by confining gift exchange to objects of little

commercial value—the pure gift that, Mauss teaches us, arises only with its opposite, the price-making market.

CSSH DISCUSSION

Crisca Bierwert, in a review essay, examines two new works on the intersection of Native American rights and the law in the United States, one of them a struggle over legal jurisdiction between a state, a municipality, and a reservation, the other a struggle over the repatriation of human remains and sacred objects from a museum to Native American claimants.