

were in fact hardly more than ideological constructs. In reality Ottoman society was more flexible and more mobile than these constructs allowed. This is true for such central dichotomies as town and country (where migration to the towns was in fact considerable), guild and non-guild labour (guilds took in more outsiders than previously supposed) and women and men (with women acting as artisans, merchants, bankers and landholders).

Bruce McGowan's treatment of the eighteenth century gives pride of place to the *Ayan*, the provincial notables who, through their stranglehold on the tax-farming system and with their local power bases and private armies, became the most powerful factor in Ottoman society in this era. The far-reaching decentralization of the empire in the eighteenth century is reflected in McGowan's section, where the elites, the peasants and pastoralists, the merchants and the craftsmen are described separately for the different regions of the empire.

Donald Quataert's overview of the nineteenth century deals with demographic developments, transport, agriculture, trade and manufacturing (the latter part of course building on his pioneering studies in this area, which have been published in *Ottoman Manufacturing in the Age of the Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993)). As in this earlier monograph, Quataert demonstrates that the story of nineteenth-century Ottoman manufacturing was not one of linear decline under the impact of European industrial exports, but rather one in which the initial shock of the 1830s and 1840s, which did devastate the traditional industries in some sectors and in some geographical areas, was gradually overcome by an Ottoman manufacturing sector which was far more flexible than had been supposed. From the standpoint of social history, Quataert's discussion of the causes of rural and urban unrest is particularly interesting.

Unfortunately the editors of the volume have chosen not to include the World War I years, which saw the introduction of economic nationalism and attempts to build a native Muslim bourgeoisie. As an authoritative monograph on this subject (which has been very important in laying the groundwork for the economic development of the Turkish republic) by Zafer Toprak has been around since 1982 (*Türkiye'de Milli İktisat (1908-1918)*, Ankara: Yurt), it is hard to see why this should be so.

All in all, this one-volume social and economic history of the Ottoman Empire fulfils its dual purpose admirably: it gives students and general readers a convenient overview of the field and at the same time offers the specialist new material of interest, at least where the period 1450-1914 is concerned. Unfortunately size and price mean that it will remain outside the reach of the average student.

Erik Jan Zürcher

PANAYI, PANIKOS. *Immigration, ethnicity and racism in Britain, 1815-1945*. Manchester University Press, Manchester [etc.] 1994. vi, 170 pp. £29.99. (Paper: £7.99.)

This volume appears in the "New Frontiers in History" series, whose stated aim is to provide "up-to-date overviews" of historical themes, particularly in

areas where "revisionist" work is being undertaken and where a "fresh viewpoint" is to be presented. The series also claims to be seeking to explore established themes where there is debate and where synthesis of the discussion is required. Panayi clearly feels that he is operating at most or all of those levels, in producing a study of "the whole experience of immigrants in Britain". He is critical of those works which have, to his mind, attempted such an overview before and clearly intends his work of synthesis to both represent and advance scholarship in this area. The fact that a series such as this should produce a volume on this topic is commendable, indicative perhaps of the greater awareness within British historiography of the importance of "race" and ethnicity as subjects for mainstream history. However, it has to be asked whether Panayi has made the most effective interventions in this direction.

The structure of the book is clear. It is divided into five main chapters. After a brief excursion through pre-nineteenth-century communities in Britain, it has sections on explanations for the immigration of the period, on the structure of minority groups, on ethnicity and on racism. In addition, there is an appendix of primary sources, some 36 documentary extracts, which enhance the text in a number of ways.

The author has drawn together material from a range of secondary sources and identified some of the key areas of empirical research. As with the author's previous work, there is evidence of solid detail and comprehensive referencing. For those who wish to identify and to begin to understand the nature of "the immigration experience", this is a useful volume. However, questions have to be asked about the methodological approach and whether this study does genuinely engage with the critical debates in the discipline.

There are a number of ways in which this kind of criticism can be advanced. It is by no means certain that Panayi's structure, which he advances as superior to those of other writers such as Holmes and Walvin and more conducive to genuine comparative study, really offers anything different. What emerges at the end of all the chapters is a rather mystified statement about the complexity of factors, without any clear sense of how a comparative study of the various ethnic groups might be undertaken nor what such a study might offer, except to say that attitudes and experiences were different. In this way, it provides no advance on the existing literature, particularly on the work of Colin Holmes, whose *John Bull's Island* will remain as a standard work of historical reference.

Where Panayi may have advanced in scholarship on Holmes *et al.* might have been in methodological and theoretical discussion. However, despite the sometimes grandiose theoretical claims, there is little sign of this. Instead, where there is some attempt at theoretical advance, it seems to consist of what Panayi himself calls an apparently traditional approach. By constant reference to the complexity of the immigration and the immigrant experience, the reader is given a tantalizing hint of the ways in which recent work has sought to explore these dimensions. Panayi's study engages only tangentially with this work and thus does not provide the critical engagement which is promised in the series blurb.

What is produced is a very uneven study, veering from solid empirical material to bald assertion with no clear indication of how generalizations have been arrived at. In a work such as this, where space is at a premium, it is undoubtedly difficult to do justice to the complexities of the issues, but what is offered does

not provide the reader with the sense of debate required for critical evaluation. To illustrate the argument, two of the author's themes can be examined in some detail.

Firstly, he seeks to explore the ways in which class is an important dimension in the construction and maintenance of ethnicity. In one sense, this is an admirable, though hardly original, notion – the literature of even twenty years ago could often make reference to ethnic groups as if they were homogeneous entities. That having been said, however, Panayi's notion of the interplay between class and ethnicity is startlingly crude. The reader is offered little sense of "class" as a dynamic and thus is in effect simply told that some members of ethnic groups have greater access to economic and political resources than others and may choose to define themselves in wider economic or social terms than simply through some ethnic identity. No attempt is made to explore in significant ways changing notions of class, despite the vast literature on the subject, nor is there any sense of how ethnicity may have contributed to changing notions of "class" within British society in the period under consideration. Such unproblematic writing really reduces the chapter on ethnicity to a number of bald statements and examples of possible ways in which ethnic identities might be said to be constructed.

Secondly, the author writes at some length about the racist nature of the British state. Indeed, he chooses to conclude with this sentence – "Finally, Britain has always been a racist state" (p. 134). Again, this notion, whilst hardly having the dramatic effect that it seems to try to convey to readers, is in one way unchallengeable. Much of the recent literature, too numerous to mention, has pursued this route. To do justice to this writing, however, Panayi would need to reflect on the nature of "the state", on the different agencies involved and to see the interaction between these as not constant. Some hints about this are offered, but there is no feel for the particular conjuncture of circumstances which produce very different responses to aspects of immigration in the period concerned, nor to see the interplay between the agencies of the state and public opinion. Whilst these aspects are referred to obliquely, the reader gets no sense of the mechanics of operation and thus any hint of how a meaningful comparative study might be provided.

This reviewer would like to have been more positive in the evaluation of this work. The subject is a particularly important area of British social and cultural history, although whether it has been quite as neglected as Panayi suggests is open to debate. There is no doubt that it is an area which has been marginalized in the general study of British society and that its "ghettoization" has often been aided by the approach of some writers in the discipline. What is needed to advance its standing is to locate discussions of "race" and ethnicity within the main fields of theoretical discussion in British historiography. Simply reproducing the standard material, albeit in different formats, will do no service to its advancement. British history is, undoubtedly, a racist history but understanding that, and evaluating why that should be, needs more than its simple restatement. Whatever the target audience for this work, they will have been misled by its publicity and deprived of some of the most significant reflections within its research.

*Kenneth Lunn*