

Editorial Foreword

SLAVERY AND AFTER Slavery and its after-effects continue to shape our world. The first two articles deal with the making of slavery in a world of free trade, and the remaking of labor and citizenship following emancipation.

Dale Tomich studies the way in which Francisco Arango y Parreño combines advocacy of slavery with free trade and agricultural improvement in late eighteenth-century Cuba. He rejects interpreting Arango, and Cuba, under the notion of flawed liberalism, of archaic and modern tendencies uneasily juxtaposed, arguing rather that Arango's program is perfectly coherent for its place; liberalism and pro-slavery inhabit the same time, the time of the world market. Enlightenment thought and liberal political economy are constitutive elements of Cuban pro-slavery reasoning, linking slavery and the production of sugar with world trade. In this interpretation Adam Smith's free labor and Arango's pro-slavery versions of the liberal project are variants of the same thing.

Slavery and the post-emancipation effect is the topic of a review essay by **Kristin Mann**, surveying the field through four recent books. From slavery to emancipation is the historical trajectory of one of them (Drescher); the processes that *start* with emancipation is the topic of a major comparative theoretical intervention of another (Cooper, Holt and Scott), with case histories of Mauritius (Allen) and Suriname (Hoefte). (On the same theme see G. Ugo Nwokeji, "The Slave Emancipation Problematic: Igbo Society and the Colonial Equation," 1998:318–55.)

COLONIAL LOCATIONS The next two essays take up what happens to make German colonialism different in three different sites, and what happens when progressive education goes colonial in British India.

George Steinmetz seeks to overcome the split between discourse-based and economic or material approaches to the explanation of colonialism. He tracks the formation of "native policy" at the core of colonial rule in the German colonies of Samoa, Qingdao, and Southwest Africa. Economic forces and international military aims do not explain the variation among the very different native policies that emerge in these colonies. Their true determinants are a combination of three factors: precolonial racial/ethnographic discourse; colonial officials' competition with one another through claims of superior ethnographic knowledge; and the degree and nature of colonizers' imaginative identification with the colonized (Sinophilia, for example). Economic interests never impinge directly on colonial practice; they are always mediated by the details of European ethnographic representations. (Also by George Steinmetz: "Critical Realism and Historical Sociology," 1998:170–86.)

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Parna Sengupta shows how the object of an “object lesson”—a peppercorn, for example—is used by the teacher to elicit from pupils its sensual properties (spherical, black, pungent), but that geographical and imperial attributes (foreign, tropical) are also packed away inside what is supposed to be a method of bare empiricism, leading the child from tangible individual objects to ever more inclusive and abstract classes. This educational method of the Swiss pedagogue Pestalozzi acquired colonial and Christian content when translated into Britain by reformers and British India by missionary educators. In its missionary form the object lesson became a way of teaching the true relation between matter and spirit, as distinct from what they considered the false ones embodied in the idols and fetishes of Hinduism.

HISTORY BY NUMBERS Population (control of, enumeration of), is the topic of the next two articles.

Population control “is history” as they say, or soon will be, according to **Matthew Connelly**. Now that population control has achieved a certain success (falling rates of fertility) and the end of the story is in sight, it is time to consider it as history rather than policy. The author proposes to knit up the raveled sleeve of histories that diverge as they multiply: top-down v. bottom-up ones, and the history of the control of population numbers v. the older and troubled project of controlling population quality (eugenics). In the end, the history of population control eludes a unified view because it does not have a singular nature. It is “an arena rather than an agenda,” international in nature and inescapably multiple.

Sumit Guha examines the census before, during, and after colonialism in India, beginning with the Mughals. Enumeration presupposes categorization of social groups; seeking to restore the agency of Indians in the historical analysis of identity formation, the author examines the significance of enumeration in sustaining social boundaries. Enumeration was *not* an innovation of colonial rule. The chief effects of enumeration in colonial times and later have to do with the creation of an all-India political arena and the institution of electoral politics in which numbers count in a very direct way. The article makes a pair with that of Norbert Peabody, “Cents, Sense, Census: Human Inventories in Late Precolonial and Early Colonial India” (2001:819–50). Both argue against the essentially colonial character of classification and enumeration of populations.

CLASS, CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS The last two pieces concern a weakening psychic connection of middle classes and the state in Morocco, and failure of the nobility to form a class in Austrian Lombardy.

Shana Cohen proposes the term “detached middle” to capture the mentality of non-identification with the nation among young middle-class Moroccans. At Independence, the development of the Moroccan middle class and of the state were mutually implicated and university education was the gateway to

success, open to all. Now, under conditions of global market integration and the unemployment, instability of employment, and limited social mobility it has brought, together with greater attachment to conspicuous consumption and greater levels of debt, we find alienation, melancholy, and a readiness to emigrate in search of self-satisfaction that is no longer attached to national well-being. We need to think “not in terms of a society constructed upon the establishment of a modern middle class, but of a society collapsing around the detached middle.”

In eighteenth-century Austrian Lombardy an urban patrician nobility deeply involved in capitalist agriculture failed to form itself into a class, in spite of having all the prerequisites (common economic interests; centralized state pressure to reform; enlightenment ideas . . .), says **Dylan Riley**. Why did it not? The structure of political society matters for group formations, he answers: in this case, the structure of municipal government was such that Lombardy nobles made claims upon the state in terms of their city of residence, which divided them, and did not do so through the agrarian interests around which they could have united.