

## Editors' Introduction: *Journal of British Studies*, 54:2 (April 2015)

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This is the last issue of the *Journal of British Studies* to be produced by the current editorial team headed by Brian Cowan and Elizabeth Elbourne. We are pleased that in our final issue articles touch on aspects of the complicated and overlapping histories of Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, and Wales. We are also pleased to be publishing analyses of interaction between Britain and the wider world, including the political activities of white settler women in Kenya and the domestic impact of British sailors. This speaks to a capacious vision of British studies that we have found consistently helpful. We are also delighted to be publishing articles with a range of methodological approaches and sources, including several essays that tackle material culture and visual materials in interesting ways. Nonetheless, no one set of articles could capture the variety of British studies in the early twenty-first century, and for this we are grateful: it speaks to why we have found our work over the past five years so stimulating.

In “The ‘Political Thought’ of the ‘Monarchical Republic of Elizabeth I,’ Discovered and Anatomized,” Peter Lake revisits what has become a classic question in early modern English political history: How could the fact of monarchical rule be reconciled with the growing interest in, and admiration for, a civic republican mode of politics that placed an emphasis on participation by citizens (rather than subjects) in their own self-rule? Patrick Collinson offered an attempt to square this circle in his studies of the Elizabethan regime, which he famously dubbed “the monarchical republic of Elizabeth I.”<sup>1</sup> In the Elizabethan exclusion crisis of the 1570s and 1580s, it has been argued, the queen’s inner circle was forced by the prospect of attempts on the queen’s life to consider an emergency response that would involve an interregnum commonwealth government. Lake finds evidence for the theoretical articulation of the principles that underlay this political vision in two manuscript tracts that were composed to support Lord Burghley’s interregnum proposals in 1584–85. He finds this political theory to be “not very republican at all,” and instead argues that the manuscripts reveal “a vision of mixed monarchy, centered more on English legal and political history than on classical theory or precedent.” (p. 283)

The next two articles, also focused on the early modern period, take material objects as their point of departure. In “‘Men of the World’: British Mariners, Consumer Practice, and Material Culture in an Era of Global Trade, c. 1660–1800,”

<sup>1</sup> Patrick Collinson, “The Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 69 no. 2 (1987): 394–424.

Beverly Lemire revisits the questions of consumerism and commercial culture that she raised in an earlier article for this journal.<sup>2</sup> Here, Lemire considers commodities carried by sailors, whether handkerchiefs and trinkets they smuggled from Asia to Britain, or even the trousers they wore. Sailors in the merchant marine brought exotic goods back to the communities from which they came, and through these material items influenced local tastes. They were often looked up to as models of a particular kind of masculinity. They had a particular influence on the material culture of port towns. According to Lemire, seamen were at the heart of networks of goods that overlapped with, but were also separate from, the more formal (and legal) trade networks of the merchant companies for which they worked. The mariner's trunk, in short, was a powerful vector of exchange.

Maria Zytaruk also focuses on material objects, although in her case these objects speak to confinement and loss. The Foundling Hospital in London in the eighteenth century asked those who abandoned a child to leave a personal token, pinned to the child's clothes, to be filed and used for the bureaucratic ends of identification should a family member wish to return to claim a child. Many of these tokens survive today, as do some brief written records related to the tokens. In "Artifacts of Elegy: The Foundling Hospital Tokens," Zytaruk asks whether and how these tokens can speak. There is some irony to this question: one might imagine mothers themselves willing mute objects to convey meaning. Zytaruk ultimately sees the tokens as more than bureaucratic mechanisms: they might be seen rather as "artifacts of elegy," bearing witness to difficult emotions. The essay certainly uses written records, but it keeps the material object, at once eloquent and silent, at the heart of its analysis.

David Barrie turns to a very different type of record: the reports of police court proceedings in the nineteenth-century Scottish press. He asks who was named and who was not in the reports of police courts, and what this distinction meant. He investigates what criteria determined whether or not those whose appearances were detailed in the media were publicly shamed through naming. He uses this analysis to make some larger arguments about shaming and modernity. Barrie argues that the naming and shaming rituals of the nineteenth-century press, often in line with the courtroom politics of local magistrates and reflecting class and gender assumptions, were a disciplinary technique. He also notes how these rituals echoed early modern shaming practices such as kirk discipline. In this, Scotland was typical of other jurisdictions: with the emergence of the industrial era, shaming rituals did not disappear, but were shifted to new fora. The press might therefore be seen as a way to create a community that enforced its own disciplinary norms and tried to bring its errant citizens under control.

Daniel Wilson focuses on the history of ideas. His essay "J. A. Hobson and the Machinery Question" has the dual aim of examining the climate of debate about machinery in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Britain, and more specifically of showing how central ideas about machinery and the economic impact of mechanization were to the thought of J. A. Hobson in a manner that historians have underestimated. Wilson argues that the unorthodox economist Hobson saw mechanization as a crucial reason why societies could accumulate surpluses that would remain unspent,

<sup>2</sup> Beverly Lemire, "Consumerism in Early Industrial and Preindustrial England: The Trade in Second-hand Clothes," *Journal of British Studies* 27, no. 1 (January 1988): 1–24.

enabling increased productivity without trickle-down benefits. Hobson's approach to mechanization echoed his view of imperialism as a search for new markets in a context of underconsumption. Wilson argues that Hobson made a holistic and ethical attempt to understand the impact of new technology at a time in which mechanization appeared to be changing work patterns permanently. He makes a convincing case for re-reading understandings of machinery and mechanization at the turn of the nineteenth century in a manner that might indeed have some resonance for the turn of the twentieth.

The last three articles focus on the interaction of individuals with the state and competing ideas of citizenship in the twentieth century. In "A Nation Depends on Its Children: School Buildings and Citizenship in England and Wales, 1900–1939," Tom Hulme looks at how classroom design changed in the early years of the twentieth century in England and Wales. He is interested in the larger question of how the physical environment of schools was expected to help forge future citizens, enabling them to function as productive members of the nation. The analysis thus moves between the physical details of lighting, floorboards, and ventilation to ideological constructions of citizenship and changing conceptions of childhood. The body of the child was to be strengthened and remade in modern classrooms designed to foster healthy citizens for a new era.

Deanne van Tol examines more contested ideas of citizenship in colonial Kenya at the tail end of the period examined by Hulme—around 1930. White settlers were concerned to deflect government efforts to give more self-government to Africans, but in order to do so they needed to demonstrate the morality of their own claims to govern. To show these efforts, Van Tol examines the records of the East African Women's League (EAWL). Her article "The Women of Kenya Speak: Imperial Activism and Settler Society, c. 1930" shows the white women of the EAWL promoting female voluntary work on the one hand, and on the other hand playing a role in trans-imperial settler politics through a woman's delegation sent to Britain to oppose the project of "Closer Union." Like Hulme, Van Tol shows some of the wider stakes of efforts to improve the lives of others at a time of shifting ideas of citizenship and belonging. Van Tol inserts settler women into a narrative about imperial voluntarism and transnational networks.

Citizenship has never been a settled issue in late twentieth-century Northern Ireland. Erika Hanna's essay, "Photographs and 'Truth' during the Northern Ireland Troubles, 1969–72," examines the use of photographs as evidence in the Scarman Tribunal, which examined the events of the turbulent summer of 1969, and the Widgery Tribunal, which inquired into the deaths of Bloody Sunday. Hanna turns, then, to another type of visual source, paralleling Lemire's focus on textiles and Zytaruk's analysis of foundling hospital tokens. Not surprisingly, photographs were scarcely used in neutral ways, even as they were presented as objective statements of fact. Hanna unpacks the processes of production of many iconic images of the Troubles, while simultaneously exploring state uses of these images. As she argues, it is important to show how state-sponsored "explanatory regimes" have shaped understandings of the "Troubles" and have found their way into historical memory.

Finally, we conclude our last introduction on a personal note by offering our sincere thanks to the many people who have written articles, offered helpful and substantive reviews, given editorial advice, and contributed in many other ways to an

enterprise of scholarship that is deeply dependent on cooperation and mutual aid. Editing a journal has allowed us to see in action the generosity of the wider scholarly community. We would particularly like to thank our associate editors, Jeffrey Collins, Sandra den Otter, Brian Lewis, Nancy Partner, Bob Tittler, and Faith Wallis, who have worked tirelessly over the past five years, as well as our excellent editorial board. We thank our publishers, Chicago University Press and more recently Cambridge University Press. And finally, we offer our heartfelt thanks to three superlative assistant editors, Leigh Yetter, Anna Dysert, and Matthew Wyman-McCarthy. We look forward to seeing the future development of the *Journal of British Studies* under a new editorial team headed by Holger Hock of the University of Pittsburgh.