

A. ALVAREZ OSSORIO, *La República de las parentelas. El Estado de Milán en la monarquía de Carlos II*. Gianluigi Arcadi Editore, Mantova, 2002, pp 443.

The multinational character of the Spanish Empire is well known. However, a certain lack of interest in this basic aspect of the country's history has been one of the most intriguing marks of Spanish historiography. Fortunately, in the last decades of the past century this began to change, so today we have a long and ever-growing list of books and articles focused on the analysis of centre-periphery relationships, and the interest on the topic is alive, as the recent publication of L. A Ribot's book on Messina's War and A. Alvarez Ossorio's "La República de las Parentelas" certifies.

In "La República ..." Alvarez Ossorio analyzes the duchy of Milan during the government of Charles II of Spain. According to the author, during this period this strategic region of northern Italy experienced a deep change which could be summed up as follows: Milanese politics had traditionally been controlled by a compact oligarchy which emerged in the middle ages, the *patriciado*, but in the central years of the seventeenth century the hegemony enjoyed by this group began to be questioned. A gifted and influential Milanese official, Bartolomeo Arese, used his position as President of the *Magistrado Ordinario* (the governmental body which controlled the Duchy's finances) and the Milanese Senate to promote his allies in their careers in the Duchy's administration. This marked the birth of a new and powerful faction whose members, very often relatives of Arese, monopolized key bureaucratic posts in the core of the Milanese State, and the power of this group grew in the years between 1673 and 1676, when many of its members bought the offices sold by the government.

The development of the new political faction was a direct threat to the more traditional *patricio* families, whose anger grew after the frequent sales of offices. These sales had been an important part of the policy promoted by Fernando de Valenzuela, the *Valido* in the first years of Charles II government, and pursued by the Crown not only in Milan, but in the other territories ruled by the dynasty, so the Milanese *patriciado* joined many other discontented regional elites who welcomed the end of Valenzuela's regime and the arrival of the new *Valido*, D. Juan Jose de Austria, was seen as the beginning of a new reformist era.

The plans of Juan José de Austria included the fight against the sale of offices, something long desired by the *patriciado*. But the problem was that the new *Valido*'s projects also included measures to strengthen the King's presence in the Duchy, so there was less common ground between Juan José de Austria and the Milanese elites than appeared at first sight.

In the light of all this, it could be argued that *La República ...* is another example of a long list of books on the relationships between rulers and ruled. In the same way, it could also be said that the rich and detailed view of the

complexities of Milanese politics portrayed by A. Alvarez Ossorio is not new. After all, centre-periphery disputes were frequent in nearly every European state during the early modern period.

Such judgement, however, would be unjust, because *La República...* has at least two basic and significant merits we would like to remark upon.

First, the author includes in his analysis one aspect hitherto forgotten by historians, the family, a fact that has prevented us from fully understanding some basic aspects of the political processes in precapitalist European societies. In his book on Portugal in the seventeenth century ("As Visperas O Leviatan"), A. M Hespanha, heavily influenced by the theories of Otto Brunner, described the political structure of this Iberian Kingdom as the aggregation of a group of intermediate powers, such as the cities and noble factions, all of them endowed with their own political space and jurisdiction. In this context, the government had to keep the balance between these entities, respecting their privileges. This was the meaning of the idea frequently expressed in the treatises of the time, that the King had to preserve the distributive justice, giving "suum cuique". Today, of course, things have changed and nobody would dare to criticize the right of every government to implement the reforms whenever appropriate. This notion, however, was completely foreign to the mentalities of the Ancien Régime, because the proper task of the government was not the reform of the social order, but its preservation.

As the fruitful research carried out after the publication of "As Visperas" has shown, the model proposed by A.M Hespanha is valid for most European states of the early modern period, and the merit of A. Alvarez Ossorio lies in that he adds a new element to the constellation of intermediate entities studied by Hespanha: the family. According to the author of *La República...*, the family can be seen as a political entity, on the same level as cities and noble factions, and with its own jurisdiction. This helps us to understand what happened in Milan after 1677 and the limits of the reformism of Juan José de Austria. Many Milanese families had bought offices in the previous phase and, although the traditional oligarchy had supported the new *Valido* hoping that he was going to suppress the offices sold, this was impossible. According to the principles of distributive justice, once bought, those offices were part of the buyers' patrimony so Juan José de Austria opted for an intermediate way. He fought against the worst excesses of Valenzuela's *valimiento*, but the families were able to preserve a lot of what had previously gained. As a result, during the years of Juan José de Austria and the subsequent decade there was a profound renewal of the Milanese elite. The old *patricio* families preserved their power but in exchange for this the government forced them to share it with the newcomers.

There is a second interesting aspect we would like to emphasize. A long and important historiographical tradition has described the government of

Charles II in terms of decay and failure. However, Alvarez Ossorio provides us with new data to question this view. As he shows in the book, the Habsburg government preserved more efficiency than is commonly admitted. Thanks to its complex net of officials and agencies in the Court and in Milan, it was always well informed about the political process in the Duchy, so neither Valenzuela nor Juan José de Austria had serious problems in enforcing their political and administrative projects in Milan.

In conclusion, we think that the publication of *La República...* will be welcomed by all those interested not only in Italian, but in Spanish and European history in the early modern period. By emphasising the political meaning of the family, Alvarez Ossorio reminds us of the importance of a strong and too-often forgotten patriarchal element in Milanese society. When we observe that the same element was still strong, even in progressive seventeenth century English society, which was well on the path towards capitalist individualism, as P. Laslett showed in *The World We Have Lost*, we may conclude that *La República ...* is good proof of the need for a much more careful consideration of the role played by the family in the politics of the time. In the same way, some of the more significant findings of the author are in line with other scholars who have studied other regions of the Spanish Empire, such as Gaetano Sabatini, Mario Rizzo or Alicia Esteban. Far from being completely weak and inefficient, the monarchy portrayed by Alvarez Ossorio was still very alive, retaining its capacity to enforce its will on the periphery. Obviously, this is an important argument in favour of a rethinking of the traditional "foralista" paradigm frequently employed to describe the Spanish Empire during the last decades of the Habsburg dynasty, and it is clear that the author is conscious of this.

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R. DOMÍNGUEZ MARTÍN, *La riqueza de las regiones. Las desigualdades económicas regionales en España, 1700-2000*. Alianza, Madrid, 2002, pp 402.

As in other European countries, the existence of serious regional inequalities is one of the most important characteristics of today's Spanish economy. If we also remember that since the end of the nineteenth century Spanish politics has been dominated by the nationalist problem, then it is easy to understand the interest Spanish historians have shown in the study of the country's economic development from a regional point of view.

In *La Riqueza...*, Martín's analysis of the regional economic imbalances is a case in point, and is the most recent fruit of a research agenda which has been carried on in Spain since 1700. Of course, all those familiar with Spanish

history will know that this process did not exactly begin in 1700. In fact, the trend began in the seventeenth century, when Old and New Castile, two of the most dynamic Castilian regions from the end of the middle ages, lost their former hegemony. The only and basic exception to this was Madrid, which enjoyed all the benefits of being the capital of the state that owned the richest silver mines of the world, so in 1700 the city was the richest region in the country, as Domínguez Martín acknowledges. This can be considered the starting point of the book. During the eighteenth century (chapter four) Madrid preserved its privileged position, while in a group of northern regions including the Basque Country, Catalonia, Navarre, Aragón and Asturias, some transformations took place, which we may view as the prelude to nineteenth and twentieth century economic development. According to the author, this period was very important, because it would not be unjust to say that the basis for Spain's economic geography today was laid in these years.

From a regional perspective, the development of the Spanish economy has closely followed the path laid down in the eighteenth century. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, it seems clear that the history of Madrid, the Basque Country, Catalonia, Navarre, Balearic Islands, Aragón and La Rioja can be written in terms: of success (measured in "per capita" terms: the G.N.P levels enjoyed by all these areas in 1999 were above average European values) but, unfortunately, the same cannot be said about other regions, especially those in the centre and in the southern half of the country.

What have been the reasons for this disparity? In Martín's opinion, it is necessary to consider three sets of causes.

In the first place, some regions benefitted from the advantages of a good political and geographical position. Needless to say, Madrid would be the best example here, while their proximity to the most advanced poles of the European economy has been an important asset for north-eastern regions, such as Catalonia or the Basque Country.

Second, Domínguez Martín also includes the way the differences in the endowment of natural resources has affected Spanish agriculture. Being a dry and high plateau, Castile was (and still is) naturally suited to grazing and to low-yield extensive cereal agriculture. On the other hand, their favourable environment allowed Catalonia and Valencia to develop a highly profitable and competitive agricultural export sector which has always been considered, on good grounds, one of the keys to the economic success of both Levantine regions.

Contrary to what one might think, it should be emphasized that there is no place for geographic determinism in the book because, in the third place, the author also stresses the importance of other factors, such as the land-ownership structure, one of the most basic reasons for the unequal distribution of the incomes generated by the Spanish economy. In regions such as Andalucía and Extremadura there were large numbers of day

labourers, while in others such as both Castiles, where day labourers were not unknown, most peasants had to lease the plot of land they used on short term contracts, which eased the rise of land rents. As a result, the peasantry of the interior regions of Spain never had the capacity to invest in the improvement of the land they cultivated and this, more than anything else, prevented the development of the sector along lines similar to those followed in the eastern regions. Seen from this perspective it is easy to understand some of the major problems of these regions, such as the low level of aggregate demand and the slow pace of accumulation of human capital.

As Domínguez Martín clearly says in the introduction, the book has been written in an easy and clear style, with the aim to reach a wider audience than the academic one, but preserving academic rigour at the same time. It must be said that this objective has been achieved, and there are two other important aspects we would also like to comment on.

First, its easy and clear style should not hide the fact that the author has adopted an ambitious theoretical approach, as is set out in chapter three. Using the region as the basis for research, he has tried to show, convincingly in our opinion, that economic development must be explained in economic but also in historic terms, as A. Marshall and, more recently, P. Kruggman, have suggested. The history of Spanish regions contains many examples to validate this approach. In some of them (such as the Basque Country, Catalonia and the Balearic Islands) the presence of a dynamic and well developed network of commercial relations and contacts since the middle ages has been one of the more important factors of their economic growth in the long run. In others such as Castile, Extremadura and Andalucía, it seems clear that the inequalities in land-property structure since the seventeenth century, a problem caused more by political and institutional factors than by economic ones, has been one of the reasons for their present backwardness.

Second, being an expert on the economic history of Cantabria, Domínguez Martín has heavily relied on the empirical research carried out by other Spanish scholars in the last decades, so, for example, his debt to E.F de Pinedo in his work on the Basque Country will be evident to all those familiar with the topic. This has allowed him to offer a clear and accurate view of the economic history of different Spanish regions which will be a great help to students and teachers. But there is something more in the book than an abstract of the most updated research, and we can also find interesting perspectives on some problems of Spanish economic history.

Among them are his comments about the significance of Madrid in the Spanish economy. An old-established and influential theory sees the economic growth of the city as the result of its status as capital, first of the Spanish Empire and then of the Spanish Liberal State. The theory continues saying that the development of the capital was one of the reasons for the crisis and decay of the Castilian economy in the seventeenth century, and that

in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Madrid functioned as a consumer market, but not as a pole of real economic growth.

The problem with this approach is that recent research has shown the need for extensive rethinking about this issue. First, according to J.M. Delgado and F. Cayón, although it would be difficult to deny the benefits of its status as a bureaucratic and government centre, there are some grounds for arguing that the effects of Madrid on Castile's economy in the seventeenth century were less negative than it was usually assumed two or three decades ago. To this we should add the fact that in the twentieth century, and especially in recent decades, the capital has experienced evident economic growth, thanks to its developed financial network and to its advanced secondary and tertiary sectors. It seems clear that Domínguez Martín is in agreement with Delgado and Cayón about this question, and this enables him to offer a more accurate and balanced perspective on one of the most interesting and sometimes very hotly debated issues of Spanish economic history.

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J.B. FRIEDMAN-K.M. FIGG (eds.), *Trade, Traders, and Explorations in the Middle Ages*. An Encyclopedia, Garland Publishing Co. – Taylor & Francis Group, New York-London, 2000, pp. XXXIX-715.

The fruit of six years' labour, the present book is an encyclopedia of monographs and specific studies in various languages and is therefore both a departure and arrival point for the history of the subjects referred to in the title.

The entries refer to a period of time spanning from 525 A.D. to 1495, although earlier and later periods are also mentioned, as in the case of the entry related to the Huns and another relating to Bartolomé de las Casas.

Overall the book contains 435 entries by 177 authors, not all of the same length. Some number only 100 words while others exceed 5000. The shortest provide only immediate references, while the longer entries contain substantial syntheses of specific populations, complex economic developments, the movement of ideas and technologies. There are frequent references to other entries which make possible a cross-discipline approach embracing history, science and literature and also comparisons between developments in the West and in the East. Each entry has its own bibliography and there is a general bibliography at the end of the book.

The entries are set out in alphabetic order and deal with over 40 topics. These include: Architecture; Battles and Sieges; Cartographers and

Geographers; Crusades; Diplomats and Envoys; Dynasties; Economics; Explorers; Geographical Concepts and Methodologies; Geographical Works; Historians and Chronicles; Historical Concepts and Terms; Historical Events; Itineraries; Law; Learning; Literary Works; Genres and Authors; Manuscripts; Illuminations and Printing; Maps and Plans; Marvels and Wonders; Military; Missionaries; Mongols; Mountains; Mythical Beings and Places; Natural History; Pilgrimage; Places and Place Study; Popes; Professions; Occupational Groups and Societies, Voyages and Women. There is also a table of the most important explorations and expansions from 100 B.C. to 1500 with the names of contemporary encyclopedists and cosmographers, travellers and travel stories, maps and their authors, with reference to each period.

There is also a list of the kings, popes, governments mentioned in the entries and the periods in which they exercised their power. The book is further enriched by numerous maps relating to the main towns and centres in Europe after 1200, to Mediterranean regions at the beginning of the twelfth century, to north Africa and Arabia, to Asia and the expansion of the Mongols in the period 1211-1239 and to African trade with the indication of gold fields. Pier d'Ailly climate map of the *Imago Mundi* is also reproduced as are details of Beatus's map, the Borgia map and numerous contemporary documents, paintings and city maps.

At the end of the book there is an exhaustive and well structured index of the subjects, figures and problems mentioned in the text.

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L. HILAIRE-PÉREZ, *L'invention technique au siècle des Lumières*, Préface de Daniel Roche, Albin Michel, Paris, 2000, pp.447.

Using a prose that is at times complex and elaborate but always precise and controlled, Liliane Hilaire-Pérez in this very sound work tackles the subject of technological development in connection with English patents and industrial licences granted in France. The period examined is that which preceded the Industrial Revolution and that of the Industrial Revolution itself, roughly from 1730 to 1770. Hilaire-Pérez has two aims: firstly, to trace the historical evolution of industrial patents from their initial juridical formulation (a decree by the Venetian Senate in 1474) to the innovations introduced in England and in France; secondly, to understand the basic differences between the definition given to them by those two monarchies, in so far as this type of legislation in England and in France was influenced by a very different historical context, rooted in the political and juridical structures and in the mentalities of each country. This comparison is very welcome since

historians in both countries have not always shown the interest they should do about what is published on the other side of the Channel.

Liliane Hilaire-Pérez shows that the dynamism of business and industrial enterprises in France and in England led to a shift from the Venetian legislator's first aims back in 1474. At that time it was the inventor's rights that were protected, especially from an intellectual point of view (the first patent concerned the art of printing and was granted to Giovanni da Spira); there was a direct relationship between inventor and the State and in that society solidarity was more important than competition and private enterprise. Later it was Bacon's ideals and his concept of science geared to the interests of the State that prompted a new definition of a patent. In Bacon's idea of science, inventors, intellectuals and craftsmen made common cause and were protected by the State, and thus defined and organised the juridical elements of the system. The Statute of Monopolies was promulgated in 1624: it abolished monopolies, in that they caused "serious harm to the King's subjects" and it established a series of procedures with which the inventor had to comply to obtain a "patent" (these laws remained in force until 1852). The granting of a patent was somewhat expensive, and not within everyone's financial possibilities. It cost £100 sterling, to which declared and undeclared expenses had to be added i.e. possible financial pressure put on the various offices which the applicant had to go through, such as the Attorney General's Office, the Signet Office and the Lord Privy Seal's Office. In the following decades, Bacon's ideal of the public purpose of a patent tended to lose ground in favour of an overall concept in which private interests prevailed, although they were subject to a series of checks and rules which prevented their abuse. The Royal Society (1662), the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (1754), the Society of Arts and, even earlier, the Dublin Society (1731) awarded prizes, collected private funds and encouraged inventors. There is no doubt that the world of science and technology (related to both industry and agriculture) in England was more dynamic: it interwove with the world of art to the mutual benefit of both. A sort of division into cultural and scientific policies gradually came about: the Royal Society dealt with scientific inventions and the Society of Arts with utilitarian inventions (but also with the art world, copying a similar French institution, the *Société des arts de Sully et Languet*, founded in the previous century).

Hilaire-Pérez presents a series of data on all these matters which reveal the inventors' social origins, the type of research, the dealings between members, for example, of the Royal Society, and the inventors who requested patents (of the 170 inventors who presented their projects (257 in all), 35.8% was made up of members of the Royal Society itself. The *Académie des Sciences*, founded in Paris in 1666, on the other hand, was the only society operating nationwide, at least until the founding of the *Lycée des*

arts et de la Société d'encouragement pour l'industrie nationale at the time of the French Revolution. Furthermore, the *Académie* seemed to be less interested in pure science, although the range of inventions examined was wider. For example, textile and agricultural machinery, metallurgy and food were better represented than in the Royal Society, where even musical instruments, heating apparatus, clothes, hats and majolica were not to be found. It is apparent that France and England had two different concepts of science and applied technology which were linked to differing cultural and political realities and involved a different power symbolism that certainly affected well-defined economic sectors such as the textile industry and the food industry.

It was the market and consumption which burst forcefully into European society, and more so in England, where in the mid-seventeenth century William Petty, who was close to Samuel Hartlib's circle, had observed with some anxiety the abandoning of inventions to the whims of the market. However, although a source of uncertainty and a promoter of social inequality, profit established itself more forcefully in England than in France. The government played a greater role in France: by means of the *licence* granted to the inventor, it fixed the limits of its use in society. A certain knowledge about craftsmanship together with the protection of collective values, were thus ensured. In England, too, there had been a clash between English artisans' experience and professional ability and the patents granted to inventors. But the problem had been overcome by the concept of natural law which gave the inventor the right to defend and apply his own invention, granting him sole responsibility with regard to society, contrary to any cooperative logic. In France, positive law made testing and an examination of the inventor's expertise obligatory: these were carried out by the *Contrôle général des finances*, and from 1722 by the *Bureau du commerce*. But even in the context of reforming and enlightened politics, the granting of an exclusive licence always remained a separate process from the English patent. It was only during the French Revolution, after various moves towards liberalising had been encouraged by Turgot, Necker and Tolozan, that there began to be a certain liberalisation of the exclusive licence, understood then as an instrument of "freedom and egalitarianism". Previously the inventor had to demonstrate the usefulness of his project, in line with the monarchic ideal of economic growth and progress, but towards the end of the eighteenth century, the members of the *Académie de France* began to consider only the innovative aspect of an invention. Alexandre-Théophile Vandermonde's theoretical considerations set in train a compromise between the utilitarianism of the "*libéraux égaux*" of the new political age and the champions of the restrictive and positive policies of the past, which was still supported by Necker.

However, as Hilaire-Pérez convincingly concludes, the strength of the market and consumers' supposed ability to cope with new products and new inventions did not render superfluous collective logic and the necessity to guarantee the interests of the majority. Hilaire-Pérez argues that it was England which had to consider the legal and social aspects that had developed in France. In this respect, in view of Hilaire-Pérez's analysis of the question of patents over the centuries, starting with the Venetian legislation at the end of the fifteenth century, it would not have been out of place to have included some general considerations on patents and licences in a later period in a wider context. The book deals only with France and England, and although interesting and well investigated, it does not exhaust a subject which has such great economic and cultural significance. The non-specialist reader would certainly have benefited from a wider context.

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H. JAMES (ed.), *The Interwar Depression in an International Context*, Schriften des Historischen Kollegs 51, Oldenbourg, Munich, 2002, pp. XV-192.

From 31 May to 1 June 1999 Harold James assembled an international group of well-known economic historians to re-evaluate the international causes and consequences of the Great Depression of the 1930s under the aegis of the Munich Historische Kolleg, a charitable foundation that supports historical scholarship. Eleven lectures given at the colloquium "The Interwar Depression in an International Context" are published in the book under review. The articles have two implicit questions in common: 1. Why was the Great Depression so pronounced? and 2. Why was it so widespread internationally? However, the approaches used to answer these questions are quite different. Six articles analyse international capital and commodity flows on a macroeconomic level, three papers discuss the merits and failures of international organisations, there is one firm-level study about insurance company collapses, and the volume includes an essay analysing John Maynard Keynes' interpretation of the Great Depression.

On the basis of a careful examination of the timing of turning points in the development of some business and financial indicators Albrecht Ritschl concludes that the German depression was not triggered by the sharp decline of U.S. capital exports in 1929/30, but had its autonomous beginning in 1927 when domestic investment demand, the stock market, and foreign borrowing already started to decline. This stylised fact raises the question what actually set off Germany's "crisis before the crisis". Christoph Buchheim identifies low

capacity utilisation as the main cause of high fixed costs per unit of output and therefore low entrepreneurial profits and low investment demand in German industry during the second half of the 1920s. In his view the low capacity utilisation itself resulted from insufficient export growth because of the increase in protectionism world-wide. Forest Capie also argues that the protectionist beggar-thy-neighbour policy of the inter-war period was both a primary reason for, but also a fatal consequence of, the Great Depression. He blames the United States in particular for accelerating the vicious circle of protectionism by adopting the Fordney-McCumber tariff in 1922 which made it difficult for many debtor countries to earn the dollars they needed to repay their international debts. The resulting balance of payment problems, in turn, considerably increased incentives for the debtors to reduce imports by raising tariffs also. In contrast to Buchheim and Capie, Solomos Solomou believes that protectionism was a reliable policy option to foster national economic growth in the 1930s. In support of this assertion he shows that those British industries which were newly protected by the General Tariff of 1932 attained higher growth rates than before. However, this argument is not really convincing, inasmuch as one would have to consider the impact of protectionism on the whole economy, which considers the welfare losses of the discriminated producers and consumers as well – and not only the gains of a few privileged industries. In an interesting paper Dietmar Rothermund analyses the economic and social problems of some Asian countries trying to peg their currencies to the gold standard by deflationary measures. The main victim of this policy were the peasants who simultaneously had to face falling prices of their agricultural products and rising taxes and debt payments during the Great Depression. In the final macroeconomic article Barry Eichengreen asks why the international economic crisis of 1998 did not lead to a global depression such as it did seventy years before. He concludes that in 1998 it was, above all, the continued strong economic growth in the United States, the robust international trading system and the regime of floating exchange rates which facilitated a fast recovery of the world economy.

The three papers on the role of international organisations in the inter-war period reach similar conclusions, namely that international co-operation to re-vitalise the world economy failed because of national egoism and strong preferences for traditional economic policy. Monika Rosengarten and Carl-Ludwig Holtfrerich discuss the economic policy positions of the International Chamber of Commerce during the Great Depression. As it turns out, the recommendations of this organisation were hardly suitable to increase sluggish demand, but were primarily aimed at decreasing supply by limiting production and by creating cartels. Patricia Clavin shows that the failure of the London World Economic Conference in 1933 finally taught the United States administration the historical lesson that it was absolutely necessary to take a leading role in the reconstruction of the world economy

after World War II. Harold James explains why the Bank for International Settlements founded in 1930 was not able to serve as a central bankers' central bank during the European bank crises. A striking detail of his analysis is the observation that central bankers refused any responsibility for the economic turmoil by claiming that monetary policy is in general totally ineffective.

Robert Skidelsky examines John Maynard Keynes' actual comments on the causes of the Great Depression. He demonstrates in some detail that Keynes was highly critical of the gold standard for being an independent source of economic instability, on account of the system's insufficient adjustment mechanisms. Gerald D. Feldman demonstrates that inadequate managerial practices made many firms vulnerable to the severe macroeconomic shocks of the inter-war period on the basis of case studies of two insurance companies: the Frankfurter Allgemeine Versicherungs AG and the Austrian Phoenix.

This collection of excellent papers demonstrates convincingly that the Great Depression was not brought about by a single factor, but was the result of a disastrous combination of processes and events none of which would have brought the world economy crashing down by itself. The main factors were: 1. the ill-advised adherence to the gold standard, 2. the vicious circle of protectionism, 3. the unwillingness of the United States to play a more active role in the world economy, 4. managerial miscalculations, and finally 5. the continual belief in the efficacy of classical economic policy. This short review obviously cannot do justice to this rich collection of essays. Suffice it to say, the high quality of scholarship in this volume makes it essential reading for all those who want to be well informed about the most recent scholarship on the Great Depression.

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G. LA CAVA, *Italians in Brazil. The Post-World War II Experience*, Peter Lang, New York, 1999, pp. XX1-174

This is another *tessera* in the history of overseas Italian emigration that provides further ideas for research on topics which should have been more closely examined and linked to the studies on emigration conducted years ago.

As the title reveals, the book focuses on the Italian experience in Brazil after the second world war but seeks in the first chapter to establish a link with Italian migrations in previous periods, from the second half of the nineteenth century to the great exodus in 1900-1901. However it seems to

lack the perception of several important factors determining emigration in the period which, even leaving aside the most recent studies on the subject and considering older but still valid works like Antonio Annino's "Espansionismo ed emigrazione verso l'America Latina. 'L'Italia coloniale' 1900-1904" in *Clio*, XII, 1976, pp.113-140, are now widely accepted by historians, such as the abolition of slavery in Brazil in 1888 and the sponsored and free emigration of Italian agricultural labourers and operatives to Brazil in which the vested interests of the Italian shipping companies played a part.

In effect – and this would appear to be the basic fault in La Cava's overall approach – the author interprets the intention, firstly of the *fazenderos* and then of the Brazilian post-second world war governments to attract Italian labour as a deliberate racial policy to raise the number of whites in the population, which was at that time made up of a growing number of half-castes in relation to the Creole elite.

Indeed La Cava states her view explicitly in this respect: "Generally speaking, most studies on Italian and other ethnic groups concentrated on the uniqueness of that experience, rarely on policies and racial/ethnic ideas of the host society".

While the racial element was not totally absent from the attitudes of Latin American society, it was the abolition of slavery which caused problems for the planters who, by paying in advance for the passage of Italian agricultural workers, procured a new pool of subservient but perhaps more sought-after labour since they were more skilled than their African and Asiatic counterparts, and whose wages were probably lower than the cost of maintaining slaves. This is borne out by the counter measures adopted by the General Commissariat in 1902 against emigration to stem the uncontrolled and illegal exodus of agricultural labourers who were exploited and forced to live in wretched conditions. These worsened as a result of the customs war between Brazil and Italy which had caused the collapse of the price of coffee at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Just as unconvincing is the application of this interpretation to the migrations that followed the second world war. In 1951 Belgium and the United States promoted an international conference on emigration in Brussels. This gave rise to the PICCME (Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for the movements of migrants to Europe) which shortly afterwards became the ICEM (Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration), a special body set up to address the problem of refugees and to deal with the selection and the settling of emigrants in overseas countries .

The ICEM was created under the aegis and with funds of the United States which had an interest in using and rationally distributing the labour surplus which had arisen in the aftermath of the second world war. Describing the setting up of the Committee (which could, perhaps, have been illustrated in more detail considering that the author had consulted the National Archives

and the Archives of the United Nations), La Cava lays bare the overtly political nature of its origins: "the United States established the condition that only non-Communist countries would be allowed to participate in an international organization that would be funded to a large extent with American money (about 40% of the total budget). Finally... the Provisional Inter-governmental Committee for Migratory Movements in Europe was created with the membership desired by the U.S."

Political and social reasons also underlay the policy of the Italian Christian Democrat governments to promote the overseas emigration of the great masses of Southern Italian peasants in the 1940s and 50s who might have provided pockets of discontent and have lent dangerously to the Left, as La Cava points out: "In the modernization model to be pursued by Italy, emigration was a means to balance the population surplus, that was considered to be a structural cause of unemployment and low per-capita income"; as an "expulsion" policy, emigration was, in fact, a crucial factor for maintaining the political, social and economic status-quo as far as the new Italian political class was concerned, in line with the policy of the United States which financed such operations. This is without taking account of the government's calculations regarding emigrants' remittances and the potential use of Italian enterprises as a means of competing in international markets with positive effects on the Italian economy. In this respect the agreement between Belgium and Italy in June 1946 to send 50,000 Italians to the Belgian mines was an authentic exchange of Italian labour with Belgian coal.

Although the ratio of Italian emigration to Latin America and, in particular, to Brazil was higher than in other European countries, in the end the experiment turned out to be negative both as regards urban and rural emigration. There were concrete reasons for this which, on the one hand, made it impossible to repeat the old labour experience in the *fazendas* and, on the other, was related to the failure of land colonization as a result of inadequate funding and organizational strategies: "the Italian emigration policies, including land colonization, seemed to respond to a rationale dictated by an emergency situation rather than by a careful cost-benefit analysis". The subsidized urban immigration was likewise unsuccessful because large contingents of unskilled workers were sent to Brazil and had great difficulty in finding adequately paid jobs due to the competition of local workers migrating from the countryside.

There was massive repatriation in the 1970s, partly due to the recovery of the Italian economy but above all due to the disillusionment of the immigrants, whose situations contrasted with the more favourable positions of first-generation emigrants, although La Cava tends to ascribe the emigrants' return to their failure to adapt and unwillingness to integrate into Brazilian society.

La Cava, in fact, devotes a special chapter to the problems of integration and assimilation in which she carries out a historiographical survey, once again resorting to the racial interpretation and "the racial ideology of the host country as one major determinant of the migration experience". These are all themes which need to be more closely studied, with perhaps more investigation into sources in Italian archives.

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J. LUCASSEN - L. LUCASSEN (eds.), *Migration, Migration History, History. Old Paradigms and New Perspectives*, Peter Lang, Berne, 1999, pp.454.

Published by two Dutch scholars who are lecturers in social history, under the aegis of the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam of which Jan Lucassen is the Director of Research, the papers in this updated second edition (the first edition was published in 1997) are the result of the conference on "Migration and Settlement in a Historical Perspective: Old Answers and New Perspectives", held in September 1993 at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in Wassenaar.

It is an interesting collection with a very precise methodological aim: to define the exact significance of a historiographical subject, the *reductio ad unum* of a fundamental category of research, identified by means of the different strands or "paradigms" of applied research. This both allows their variety to be safeguarded and offers the opportunity to include the most recent interpretations about emigration.

In the Preface, the two editors summarise the issue, showing that the traditional interpretation of migration flows as evidence of a crisis, related above all to Western society's moving towards modernisation at the height of the industrial era, in contrast with an immobile precapitalistic society, is now outdated. In the most recent historiography, mobility is interpreted as a "general human pattern, essential for the functioning of families and crucial to the operation of the labour market", and in substance the history of European emigration is seen as a real history of social life.

The book is divided into three sections: "Theory and Methodology; Between Free and Unfree Labour Migration; Migration and its Enemies". The sixteen papers contained in the book are by specialists from universities in the U.S.A., Canada, Australia, England, Holland, Germany and France.

The way different aspects and diverse subjects are interwoven (the economy, ethnic issues, the history of slavery and gypsies, the stereotype of

the eternal vagabond of the good emigrant) widens our perspective on emigration, both when it is dealt with chronologically (Leslie Page Moch, "Dividing Time: An Analytical Framework for Migration History Periodization") and from a social and political point of view (Leo Lucassen, "Eternal Vagrants? State Formation, Migration and Travelling Groups in Western Europe, 1350-1914").

The papers are based on very precise schools of thought which enable the authors to reinterpret an extensive bibliography on the subject. In the Preface, the Lucassens examine these theories, including the difference between "free and unfree migration" (Ralph Shlomowitz, "Coerced and Free Migration from the United Kingdom to Australia, and Indentured Labour Migration from India and the Pacific Islands to Various Destinations"; Eric Richards, "Migration to Colonial Australia: Paradigms and Disjunctions"; Arian de Haan, "Migration of the Border of Free and Unfree Labour: Workers in Calcutta's Jute Industry, 1900-1990"; Pieter C. Emmer, "Was Migration Beneficial?"). The concept of migration stretches to include deportation ("Historians writing on European migrations rarely discuss the transportation of Jews, gypsies and other victims to concentration camps or the forced movement of European labour into the wartime factories of the Nazis as forms of migration"). The distinction is made between labour migrants and refugees ("economic motivations prevail among labour migrants; persecution, war, indiscriminate violence or massive natural disasters drive refugees from their homes"). Consideration is given to the importance of the immigrant's integration, which has rarely been observed over a long term and therefore has been tackled by historians who have too often been influenced by theories relating to the negative impact of such integration and have lacked a more flexible view of a process of gradual assimilation (Kenneth Lunn, "Immigration and Reaction in Britain, 1880-1950: Rethinking the 'Legacy of Empire'"). Transatlantic emigration is compared with emigration from Asian countries to the West in the framework of a "world systems approach" which implies the comparative analysis of the different racial reactions, for example towards Italians and Chinese (Donna Gabaccia, "The 'Yellow Peril' and the 'Chinese of Europe': Global Perspectives on Race and Labor, 1815-1930"; Aristide R. Zolberg, "The Great Wall Against China: Responses to the First Immigration Crisis, 1885-1925").

The shaping of the concept of modernisation understood in terms of a greater capacity and acceptance of the labour market which is part of every period of history, not only the contemporary era, is very interesting (Ida Altman, "Moving Around and Moving On: Spanish Emigration in the Sixteenth Century"; Dirk Hoerder, "Segmented Macrosystems and Networking Individuals: The Balancing Functions Of Migration Processes"; Georg Fertig, "Eighteenth-Century Transatlantic Migration and Early German Anti-Migration Ideology"; David Eltis, "Seventeenth-Century Migration and the Slave Trade:

The English Case in Comparative Perspective"). The editors conclude: "The structural causes of migration remained largely the same. Only the scale and distances changed".

It is worth considering what the two editors, particularly Leo Lucassen in the already-quoted paper "Eternal Vagrants?", write about the idea of "State-centrism": "Assuming that migration is mainly triggered by state action or that settlement processes are determined only by the state, however, raises problems. In the first place, during the medieval and early modern periods, cities, rather than states, determined migrations by actively attracting foreigners and assigning them a place in the local society", but the mercantilist modern state and the imperial states of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries increasingly "require linking the poor relief with the process of state formation". The contemporary state, "which is characterised by direct rule, has an interest in controlling migration and needs to know the locations of its citizens for general purposes (conscription, taxes etc.)". This transpires, for example, from the above-mentioned paper by Kenneth Lunn, and from the papers by Robin Cohen ("Shaping the Nation, Excluding the Other: The Deportation of Migrants from Britain") and by Colin Holmes ("Hostile Images of Immigrants and Refugees in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Britain"). In this state-centred development, however, there are apparent contradictions determined by the labour market's real needs which eventually favour and fuel the permanence of the groups of migrants ("The emergence of the welfare state in Western Europe yielded all sorts of unintended and unexpected benefits for migrants.").

Methodologically - and this seems its most "open" aspect and its value for future research - the book demonstrates what Nancy L. Green writes in her paper "The Comparative Method and Poststructural Structuralism: New Perspectives for Migration Studies": "In each case, comparison is salutary (...) Comparisons can help us understand both the structural constraints surrounding individual experience and understand the specificity of responses to that global experience", an inter-relationship which, according to Nancy Green, seems to be confirmed by the concrete situations of immigration.

This seems to reiterate what the editors had already alluded to in general terms in their Preface: despite inevitable specialisations, knowledge as a whole requires an all-embracing concept of emigration. "A general definition of migration is necessary to accomplish the integration of migration studies into mainstream social, economic, political and cultural histories".

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C. MAITTE, *La trame incertaine. Le monde textile de Prato. XVIIIe - XIXe siècles*, Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, Villeneuve d'Ascq, 2001, pp.494.

A thesis for a doctorate, this piece of research fills a gap in the industrial history of Prato, a town which is well known to economic historians but one where research using documents and archives is not always very thorough. Corine Maitte has made good use of the archive resources both in Prato and in other parts of Tuscany (Florence, Leghorn, Pistoia), and by means of a rich bibliography and printed sources has examined both the history of industry in general (in Italy and in Europe) and the case of Tuscany and Prato in particular. Now we know a good deal more about a town which has always attracted the attention of historians and a wider audience thanks to the speed and capacity with which it reinvented itself, favouring sometimes one sector, sometimes another, and considering the market without betraying its long history as an industrial centre dating from the Middle Ages (everyone has heard of Prato's most famous citizen, the great merchant who knew no frontiers, Francesco Datini).

However, this long history has witnessed difficult and "uncertain" times, especially in the crucial period Maitte studies, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During this period, the entrepreneurs of Prato (Maitte uses this term explicitly in its general sense, well aware of its ideological and cultural limitations in the context of a pre-industrial economy) had to deal with difficulties both at home and abroad and hence reorganise their production. During the eighteenth century (although this had begun previously), the entrepreneurs of Prato realised that they had no real possibility of exporting their products outside the Tuscan market, both because they had to compete with the capital, Florence, with which they had a love-hate relationship, and because they could not count on national institutions, like the ones taking shape in some European countries, to support their production and trade.

During this period problems concerning production and the institutions, such as the existence of corporations and the presence of a small peasant ownership, became apparent. This all took place in a complex international setting which presented difficult challenges. The textile sector, the town's pride and glory, was by a long chalk the most important of all the production sectors: in 1766, it accounted for 89% of industrial production. Copper, leather, paper and glass were still being worked; straw hats were produced, and this was a sector which was to expand on a large scale in the following century. However, at this time, pure wool cloth accounted for only 10% of the total textile production, the rest consisting of material made of wool and linen (linsey-woolsey), linen and cotton blend. It is evident that the quality of the product had taken a downward trend, a development which had been going on for some time and which was in part due to international competition -

which had forced a large section of Italian textile production to opt either for very high-quality textiles or for low quality materials - and in part due to competition with Florence which from the late middle ages had kept for itself the weaving of the highest quality woollen cloth, allowing Prato to weave only less valuable cloth. In the eighteenth century, however, the situation was reversed, and although woollen cloth production at Prato was of a lower quality than that of European production (Miette makes comparisons with Sedan, Lille and Amiens), it had, without a doubt, outdistanced Florence: in 1738, only 15% of Tuscan woollen cloth had been woven in Florence, compared to 34% in Prato. Furthermore, the town had become an important centre for finishing processes (fulling, dyeing and shearing were all carried out within the city walls) compared to the other small towns in Tuscany.

Nevertheless, the complex interplay between town and country (F. Braudel), the distribution of work at home (which had urban characteristics in Prato, to the extent that Prato is referred to as a "protoindustrial" town) and the entrepreneurs' natural interest in reducing labour costs by moving spinning out to the country reopened the question of the centrality of the textile industry concentrated within the city walls. Prato thus clashed with Florence, which was also trying to use rural labour in order to cut costs, especially with regard to spinning. But although the "protoindustrial" model appears completely natural in this context, we should be wary about accepting all its variables uncritically. The same critical attitude should be taken when examining the role played by the corporations (in Prato the *Arte della lana*), which, despite being opposed by the merchant-entrepreneurs and in the end abolished, had constituted both a technological-productive and a social landmark. It was no accident that after the abolition of the *Arte della lana* in 1782, in the nineteenth century its functions were carried out by the Commune and by that public institution known as the *Tiratoio*, a building where woollen cloth woven in the town and in the surrounding countryside was taken and recorded.

The nineteenth century proved to be the period in which the "uncertainties" of the previous centuries now had to grapple with a different production logic (the factory system, mechanization, the "industrial revolution"), and with a European market which was still very competitive. The arrival of the Napoleonic armies, and "French" technology and methods were the first signs of these difficulties, and both the big and small entrepreneurs of Prato (the "*impannatori*") reacted by further adjusting to market demand. Studying the correspondence of some of these (such as Giuseppe Pacchiani and the Mazzoni family) has enabled Miette to follow both the financial and the entrepreneurial and family problems that arose when faced with difficult choices. People became more and more convinced that they could not change a production sector based on medium-small family-run businesses by transforming them into large factories, in which a

huge amount of capital would have to be invested, and, above all, economies of scale would have to be created. These decisions revealed a basic flaw in terms of the availability of capital (the attraction of the land was still too strong) and the ability to operate on international markets, but they also revealed a flexibility which in the long run paid off in times of difficulty momentary and in the context of the regional economy. In fact, if we examine another regional context, for example the Veneto (where Maitte found even more elements for comparison, especially for the modern period, than in the above-mentioned French towns), we discover different development trends for the textile sector, and the wool sector in particular, which were characterised by higher investment rates, the predominance of fixed capital, and mechanisation and vertical concentration in the production processes within the factory system. In the case of Tuscany, the situation was different and there were fears about not being able to cope in a larger-scale environment.

By following its own development pattern, in keeping with the agricultural and demographic conditions of its province, during the whole of the first half of the nineteenth century Prato witnessed a flourishing cottage industry, based on the production of straw plaits and straw hats, as well as on textiles. The spread of sharecropping contracts, which according to some historians did not aid the cottage industry (in that a peasant family would be occupied full time on the land), in actual fact did not prevent entrepreneurs from finding a source of cheap labour in young and not so young females. In this way the manufacturing of straw plaits and hats stole precious labour (spinners above all) from the woollen industry, which, however, managed to renew itself in the first decades of the nineteenth century by supplying the market with products such as Levantine caps (the traditional *chechia*), used everywhere in the Mediterranean basin, from Morocco to Greece, among the most varied social groups and communities. The success of the Levantine caps enabled the various Pacchianis and Mazzonis to profit from the opening of international markets during the Napoleonic era, but, after a difficult period (stagnation of the European economy, uncertainties in the modernization and mechanization processes in Prato's small and medium concerns), it was recycling woollen *chiffons* that was the trump card in the town's textile industry. By large-scale adoption of the technique B. Law introduced in England in 1813, Prato became in the 1850s "the woollen *chiffon* capital" in Europe (in the meantime there had been an obvious decline in straw-hat manufacture). Once again Prato had succeeded in reinventing itself.

Production remained linked to small enterprises. Still in 1927 only a quarter of Prato's entrepreneurs (23) controlled simultaneously both spinning and weaving, with some stages of production delegated either to cottage weavers or to some smaller enterprises. A close network of family

relationships linked the various enterprises to one another; it was an entrepreneurial world in which females and the constant appeal of landed property were the characterising elements.

Some explanatory pages are to be found at the end of this detailed and exhaustive book, which has a wealth of histograms that illustrate many of the problems examined rapidly. The most recent interpretations of the industrialization processes (protoindustry model, multi-role activity, flexible systems, industrial districts) are analysed in order to understand their heuristic value, but above all to point out their limitations when applied to cases like that of Prato, which was not *en retard*, but *différent*. Corine Maitte opportunely concludes that comparing Prato with Solingen or Roubaix does not help much. The presence in the town of so many cottage workers, and the fact that the putting-out system and the factory system existed side by side simultaneously until the first decades of the twentieth century means we must reject the idea of mechanical evolution and the transition concept of protoindustrialization.

I have only one doubtful point. Why does Maitte make such frequent use of the adjective "uncertain" when referring to Prato's industrialization process? Does this word imply that there were other paths which were less uncertain, and were successful and dominant in the international markets and which Prato had to adopt if it wanted to survive? Are these paths, perhaps, those of large-scale industry, the anonymous businesses that obtain capital from the financial and share system? However vital, flexible and rich in historical experience Prato has been – and this applies to most of Italy – is there not a basic difference between these two situations which makes it impossible to provide a definitive answer? Flexibility does not always mean strength and security. However, there is no doubt at all that C. Maitte's book gives us food for thought on such problems (beginning with the very concept of the Industrial Revolution).

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A. MARTELLINI, *Fra Sunny Side e la Nueva Marca. Materiali e modelli per una storia dell'emigrazione marchigiana fino alla grande guerra*, Franco Angeli, Milan, 1999, pp.270.

Soon after this book was published, the author, Amoreno Martellini, founded the *Archivio storico dell'emigrazione marchigiana* (the Historical Archive of Emigration from the Marches) in Ancona at the *Centro per i beni culturali della Regione Marche* (the Marches Region Cultural Heritage Centre). This project, in line with the now widespread policy of creating local

documentation centres alongside the State Archives and the *Soprintendenza* Archives with their institutional function of preservation and protection, aims to collect documents (including diaries and memoirs) and photographs concerning emigration from the Marches between 1876 and 1976.

A year after publishing the book reviewed here, Martellini published another volume (*I candidati al milione. Circoli affaristici ed emigrazione d'élite in America Latina alla fine del XIX secolo*, Rome, Edizioni Lavoro, 2000) which took up the only truly new area of study in the first book, i.e. the reconstruction of the economic and social characteristics of emigrants from the Marches, and the various categories to which they belonged, both job-wise and class-wise, in particular, the least "traditional" component i.e. white-collar workers, professional people and an enfeebled local aristocracy that tried to make new fortunes in the American continent. Using the Colocci-Vespucci family archive which is now kept in the town of Jesi's Historical Archive, Martellini has been able to reconstruct the eventful but disastrous migration of Marchese Adriano Colucci, son of the patriot and deputy Antonio, who merited an entry written by Sergio Anselmi in 1982 in the *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*.

A scholar, a journalist, an explorer, an entrepreneur and several other things as well, after various vain economic enterprises in Uruguay, Marchese Colocci tried his hand at founding an agricultural colony in Argentina, initially with fifty peasant families from the Marches (the *Nueva Marca*). However the government withdrew authorisation because of the serious financial crisis in the Rio de la Plata area at the end of the 1880s and the project ended in failure.

Emigrants from the Marches went for the most part to Argentina and the United States, especially until the first world war. Martellini examines another venture which hitherto had not been analysed: the agricultural colony of Sunny Side in Arkansas on the banks of the Mississippi, the result of an agreement between the New York banker Austin Corbin, a big cotton plantation owner, and the then (in 1895) Mayor of Rome, Prince Emanuele Ruspoli, "whose family bore the title of prince of Poggio Suasa, a village in the hills inland from Senigallia".

The venture infringed the laws on emigration, and before they left Italy, emigrants had to sign an agreement whereby they were committed to buying a piece of land, paying for it over a period of 22 years at a rate of 5%. This proved to be a fraud, bringing to light, especially in the second attempt to carry out this plan, all the worst aspects of the emigration agents' wheeling and dealing (recruited initially from the administrators of the Ruspoli estate and later from the more needy Mississippi colonists). The wretchedness and the reality of the living conditions that the emigrants were to face were revealed: after 1906, there were some cases of *peonage*, an offence for immigrant workers which was widespread in some southern states in the

U.S.A. and which reduced individuals to virtual slavery if they did not pay a debt, be it real or alleged, or if they broke a contract.

Martellini's book also contains information about the early migration flows from the Marches to places in Europe and the Mediterranean Basin. However, these statistics are not entirely new, nor are they entirely connected with particular regional origins. This data is perhaps partially to be attributed to a spirit of commercial initiative rather than to real migration flows.

A considerable amount of attention is given to the emigration of "subverters", the emigration-deportation of politically dangerous individuals which in some ways echoed the emigration policy practised by the Papal government in that region during the Risorgimento and recently studied by Elio Lodolini ("Deportazioni negli Stati Uniti d'America di detenuti politici dello Stato pontificio, 1854-1858", in *Rassegna storica del Risorgimento*, LXXXVIII, 2001, III, pp. 323-354) and by Antonio Drei ("Sommarie biografie di patrioti faentini deportati negli Stati Uniti d'America dal governo pontificio, 1854-1858", in *Rassegna storica del Risorgimento*, LXXXIX, 2002, III, pp. 427-433).

It is evident that Martinelli wants to reconstruct a regional cross-section of the more general migration phenomenon (backed up by official statistics) by examining local archives (state and local authority archives, a list of which would have been useful at the beginning of the book) and some periodicals connected with the social reality of the Marches, such as the *Rivista di emigrazione*, printed in Pesaro.

Despite Emilio Franzina's attributing to Martellini a well-balanced solution which takes into account both local (or regional) history and general history, the fact that Martellini states explicitly that he wishes to tackle the problem of emigration from the Marches from a national point of view, but then in fact, using very scanty research, hastily dismisses fundamental problems of a general nature in the two central chapters ("Agenti di emigrazione e rappresentanti di vettore; La 'caccia all'emigrante': prassi migratoria al di fuori della legge") in the middle part of the book ("Strutture, soggetti, modalità di insediamenti") leaves us frankly perplexed.

Warning the reader that his research is not meant to be exhaustive and that the subjects tackled have not been dealt with in every aspect and once and for all, Martellini writes of the second part of the book: "in drafting and writing these chapters, the discovery (sometimes by chance and sometimes after much searching) of a series of sources which opened windows on scenarios that, although not entirely new, had scarcely been frequented at all even by specialists in this particular section of historiography, together with the possibility of accessing these sources, proved to be of fundamental importance. For this reason, the bibliography available on the issues dealt with proved to be very limited and most research has been done in archives (in various archives)". This statement seems rather obscure, since there exists

a historiography on the subject, both research published some time ago (e.g. the work by Ciuffoletti and Degl'Innocenti in the 1970s, *L'emigrazione nella storia d'Italia 1868-1975. Storia e documenti*, and Assante's *L'emigrazione italiana dall'Unità ad oggi*) and research published recently (including outside Italy) but Martinelli scarcely mentions these publications.

There is no doubt that Martinelli should not have ignored the writings of the time, which is widely available in the specialist magazines of that era such as *Rassegna Nazionale*, *Rivista d'Italia*, *Rivista delle comunicazioni*, *Rivista coloniale*, *Vita italiana* and *Rivista marittima* to mention only a few. Similarly, references to Acts of Parliament and daily papers are missing: in particular there is no wider research on material for example from the state central archives, such as the *Ispettorato dei servizi marittimi* or the *Direzione generale della marina mercantile*, that could have provided a substantial contribution to a reconstruction that aimed to integrate a single case study, however interesting that may be, in the broader and more complex issue of the migration phenomenon in post-unification Italy and of the regulatory measures concerning it.

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J. SCHNEIDER (ed.): *Öffentliches und privates Wirtschaften in sich wandelnden Wirtschaftsordnungen*, Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial und Wirtschaftsgeschichte, Beihefte 156, Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2001, pp. 266.

This volume contains papers on a presently relevant topic, namely the dichotomy between public and private enterprises in an historical perspective, presented at the XVIIIth meeting of the German Economic History Association (*Gesellschaft für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte*), in Innsbruck (April, 1999). The interest in this topic has been enhanced by the crisis facing public companies since the mid-1970s, and by the ongoing debate on the proper economic (and social) role of the state fuelled by the transformation of the socialist economies at the end of the 1990s.

Norbert Andel (Frankfurt/Main) examines the development of the public sector in several European economies beginning with the 1960s. He identifies the increase in social expenditure as the driving force, and the shrinking tax base in a globalising economic environment as two of the most daunting challenges to European fiscal policies. Jürgen Nautz (Kassel) highlights in detail the role of political parties in the same process in the case of Austria. The article traces the Austrian model of corporatism and (*Sozialpartnerschaft*) back to the late-nineteenth century and shows how it developed *pari passu*

with liberal trade policies. One cannot help but wonder how this Austrian model survived the steady increase in unemployment since the late 1970s. Franz Mathis (Innsbruck) examines the economic consequences of public ownership of firms in Austria after 1945. He argues that in contrast to conventional wisdom there was no negative impact of public ownership on economic performance as measured by a firm's number of employees. It remains unclear, however, how this measure might be related to the question of efficiency, which is at the very heart of every privatisation debate. Wolfram Fischer (Berlin), in turn, argues on the basis of the German experience with the transformation of the GDR economy. He concludes that the efforts of the "Treubandanstalt" to privatise and create spin-offs from big industry-conglomerates within a short period of time was both successful economically and the best solution to the problem, given the political and financial constraints faced. He justifies this view by stressing the political and fiscal constraints that the government was facing.

The other articles in the book raise more methodological questions. Christian Dirninger (Salzburg) looks at the development of local self-government and local public business in Austria, a cross between a private and a public issue. While the paper is very informative, it lacks any reference to recent research on the economic analysis of municipal government and local public business. In an interesting article not related to the theme of the volume, Harald Witthöft (Siegen) examines the emergence of a dynamic, market-oriented understanding of the nature of money between the eighth and seventeenth centuries, and finds evidence for a turning point from a static towards a dynamic view around the twelfth century. André Steiner (Mannheim) uses the public-private dichotomy to undertake a comparison between the GDR and the Third Reich, starting from their concepts of public weal. While both systems sacrificed the welfare of individuals for the welfare of a group, the resulting economic orders differed a lot. Since the NS State did not – unlike the socialist GDR – treat economic policy as an end in itself but subordinated it to its racist goals, it kept more elements of a market economy than its socialist counterpart. The seeming inconsistency of the Nazi economic order shows up in the difficulty of distinguishing the private from the public sector. Similar problems face Markus A. Denzel (Göttingen) and Uwe Schirmer (Leipzig). Both authors provide careful and detailed case studies of late-medieval and early modern states and their economic activities. Both show how monetary incentives led to intensified economic activity of the ruling sovereign with varying degrees of success, even if it remains unclear whether those activities constituted public business (*öffentliches Wirtschaften*).

The central issue of defining a business as public vs. private is raised by Jürgen Schneider (Bamberg) in the introduction and in the article by Oliver Volckart (Jena). Schneider defines public business applying the characteristics

of the prevailing decision-maker, which leads him into a short survey of economic thought on public weal and welfare. Oliver Volckart's article shows that this line of research runs into two problems. First, since more recent historical research has deconstructed much of our understanding of a sovereign state, and therefore also the definition of a public decision-maker, the distinction between public and private business becomes blurred. Second, such a definition disconnects the analysis from the whole body of economic research which relies on the characteristics of the produced good rather than the decision-maker. Both problems are representative of the book in general. It would be fruitful to continue research and discussion of the highly interesting topic studied in this book in close connection with the ongoing debates in economic theory and policy.

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SH. SIMONSHON, *The Jews in Italy, The Jews in Sicily*, volume III, 1392-1414, Brill, Leiden-Boston-Köln, 2001, pp.12-1253-1812.

This is the sixteenth volume of the *Documentary History of the Jews in Italy*, and the third in the series on the history of the Jews in Sicily. The first concerned the period 383-1300, the second from 1302 to 1391; the present volume deals with the period 1392-1414.

The book reproduces over 1200 documents, more than 500 of which are completely unknown. Written in Latin, interspersed with writings in Sicilian Italian, each document is preceded by a short summary of its contents. Many are set out in a concise way. Most come from the Crown's archives and from the archives of local authorities. All of them testify to a period that was especially prosperous for the Jewish community and was marked by fertile relations with the two Martini who ruled in Sicily and with the Christian world. Jewish communities, backed by royal support, operated in Syracuse, Palermo, Marsala, Catania, Trapani, Mazara del Vallo, Noto, Agrigento, Paternò and Messina, that is, all the main centres of Sicily. However, the Palermo community was considered the most important and prestigious in the Kingdom.

The Sicilian Jews were money lenders both to the Crown and to the population and the documents show that not all loans were paid off when they were due. Often extensions were granted. Loans were also contracted between Jews.

Jews were also engaged in trading activities, often maritime trade which was not just local. Trade was carried on with Sardinia, an island which, like Sicily, was under Catalan rule at that time. Wine, grain, pepper and indigo

were the main goods traded, although slaves were sometimes traded too. The documents published in the book record reveal that there were frequently conflicting interests and litigation which was usually settled by local authorities and in special cases by the King.

With regard to professions, some documents refer to the practice of medicine which according to the documents was practised by Jews throughout Sicily. The Jews were not forbidden to own houses and land, which passed to the Crown if they died without heirs. However property could be confiscated if it were proven that Jews had sided with Sicilians in rebellions against the King, as was the case of the revolt led by Guglielmo Raimondo di Montecatini, Marquis of Malta.

Two special taxes were levied on the Jews : the *gisa* and the *agostale*. Nevertheless, sometimes their community was exempted from the payment of such taxes if it had rendered services to the King.

In conclusion, the material reproduced in the book widens our knowledge of the structure of Sicilian society, throwing light on the relations between the Jews and the authorities, and between Sicilians and the Jews, as well as reconstructing the main features of Jewish family life and their occupations in Sicily.

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S.STEIN - B.STEIN, *Plata, comercio y guerra. España y América en la formación de la Europa Moderna*. Crítica, Barcelona, 2002, pp. 350.

The way America influenced the economies of Castile and Europe in the early modern period has long attracted the interest of scholars. How can Castile's economic decline be explained when we take into account the fact that Castile was the owner of the richest empire at the time? What was the relationship between American markets and the growth of the French, Dutch and English economies, especially from the middle of the seventeenth century? These have been the two most basic questions traditionally addressed by researchers, and the objective of *Plata, comercio y guerra...* is to give an answer to these two fascinating and closely interrelated problems.

The first chapter of the book offers a short view about how the Castilian Crown arranged the administration and economic life of the lands conquered in the new continent. As is well known, the discovery of Mexican and Peruvian silver mines in the first decades of the sixteenth century was the final step in the consolidation of Castile's rule in America. The rich and famous mining centres of Zacatecas and Potosí gave rise to a complex network of commercial relationships which linked the New World with

Castile and Europe. Around them, an important agricultural sector was developed in order to provide the mines with the supplies needed, while manufactures came from Europe, exported from the famous port of Seville. This last factor led to the rise of powerful mercantile groups in the colonies, such as the famous merchants of Mexico City and Lima, who acted as intermediaries in the trade of American precious metals and Seville.

The Castilian government tried to control as closely as possible all the benefits obtained from America through a rigid mercantilist system designed to exclude foreigners from American markets, concentrating all the trade in the port of Seville. From a long-run perspective, it is clear that this policy was a failure. As their contemporaries already knew too well, the profits drawn from the colonies through mining and commerce were reaped not by Castile, but by the more dynamic and advanced northern European economies. This was caused by at least two basic reasons.

First, the Habsburgs' ambitious foreign policy was expensive, and American silver was employed by the Crown to finance it (chapter two). Thanks to the continuous arrival of precious metals from America to Seville, the Castilian government had access to European capital markets, and the public debt grew throughout the period, with damaging consequences for Castile's economy.

Second, although Castile's industry was probably more developed than is sometimes thought (think, for example, of Segovia's woollen textile sector) it cannot be denied that, due to the serious problems suffered during the seventeenth century, the period was a phase of crisis and decay. This opened interesting opportunities to the industries of foreign countries. From the last decades of the sixteenth century English, French and Dutch manufactures were transported to Seville and, once there, the city's merchants exported them to America. Although Seville enjoyed a significant part of the benefits generated by this trade, this should not confuse us: the Seville merchants were subordinated to their English, French and Dutch counterparts, so the lion's share of these profits was gained by the foreign economies, and the rich American markets spurred the growth of northern industries.

Chapters 3 and 4 describe this complex process. In doing this, the authors have stressed one aspect which helps us to understand the problem more clearly. Its political weakness forced the Crown of Castile to grant all kinds of franchises to foreign merchants in the treaties signed during the seventeenth century. These treaties, which may be viewed as a precedent to those signed in the nineteenth century between England and ailing powers such as the Chinese and Ottoman empires, opened the door to English and French pressure for the control over American trade. As a result, it is quite evident that at the end of the seventeenth century a situation had developed in which the costs of Spain's colonial empire were paid by the Spanish crown, while its benefits were enjoyed by foreigners (and specially by French merchants,

helped by the ambitious and consistent mercantilist policy pursued by Louis XIV).

At the turn of the century, the arrival of a new Bourbon dynasty marked the beginning of a new policy designed to regain control over American trade. In fact, this was the main objective of the Spanish government throughout the eighteenth century, but the previous period had left a legacy of more than a century of administrative mismanagement and close cooperation between local and foreign merchants which was the main obstacle in the path of the government's new policy. In spite of being mere subordinates, the merchants of Seville and, from the end of the seventeenth century, Cadiz, had drawn major profits from the colonial trade, so they never had the slightest interest in changing their privileged role as intermediaries between America and Europe. In the light of this, it is easy to understand the failure of the reformist projects in the first half of the eighteenth century in government circles and in the treatises of Campillo and Ulloa (chapter 7). On the surface, there was a general agreement on the need to reform colonial trade and to end foreign control, but this was an illusion. As many reformists experienced themselves, there was always a subterranean but well entrenched and well-placed opposition to prevent any change, and this explains the failure of these plans.

As its title clearly says, *Plata, comercio y guerra* deals with the period 1492-1750, so the authors do not analyze the second half of the eighteenth century, one of the most interesting phases in the history of Spain's American empire. These fifty years were marked by deep changes and transformations. For example, the old mercantilist system built in the first decades of the sixteenth century was replaced by a new one, based on the famous Free Trade laws of 1765 and 1778, the cornerstone of the Bourbon's reformist colonial policy, designed to strengthen Spain's hold on its colonies and, at the same time, to promote a more balanced economic growth of Spanish and American regions. In the same way, we should not forget the defiance posed to Spanish rule by the new international situation after the French revolution either. In the light of the undeniable importance of these changes perhaps it would have been interesting to include this period in the analysis in order to preserve historical continuity and to provide the reader with a broader perspective.

Of course, this should not hide the obvious merits of the book. The view offered by this book is in line with the results of research carried out in recent decades, so the reader will find a clear and precise view of the main trends in colonial trade until 1750. At the same time, we would like to comment on the explanation given by the authors about foreign advances in the control over colonial trade. Of course, this was the result of economic factors. Northern economies were more efficient than the Castilian economy, so French and English merchants, for example, enjoyed the advantages of better commercial

and industrial structures. But there were other important causes. As the authors clearly show, foreign penetration into American trade would be difficult to explain if we forgot how the political weakness of Castile's government helped foreign merchants to control vital parts of American trade. Obviously, this is a good reminder of the importance of political and institutional factors in economic history.

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