

Cleveland's study also offers two other important contributions to the field of labour history. On the one hand, the author emphasizes the importance of studying workers' forms of sociability outside regular working hours and workplaces as a means to fully understand and capture forms of unpaid labour, but also of studying mechanisms of collaboration and mutual aid developed among workers. On the other, *Diamonds in the Rough* provides a significant addition to the historiography on labour and business culture in the mining industry of southern Africa. Cleveland's research findings in what concerns both the behaviour of African workers and of Diamang, as a mining enterprise, contrast with the situation described by other studies on other southern African mining regions.

Finally, from a methodological point of view, these two books clearly demonstrate how historical studies benefit from combining written and oral sources. Ball's and Cleveland's works also illustrate how historians can make an effort to reconstruct the historical past by giving voice to "those from below" (skilled and unskilled workers) and relating their memories with the narratives of "those at the top" (colonial officials and the owners of private enterprises).

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RUEF, MARTIN. *Between Slavery and Capitalism. The Legacy of Emancipation in the American South*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2014. xvii, 285 pp. Ill. Maps. £24.95.

The failure of the post-bellum Reconstruction era (1865–1877) to effectively challenge the political and economic dominance of the cotton planters, and to provide a firm social basis for the political and social equality of African-Americans, has led many historians and sociologists to emphasize an almost *inevitable continuity* in the region's basic social relations and institutions before and after the US Civil War. On the one hand, many analysts of Reconstruction downplay the shift from centralized plantation agriculture using slave labor to sharecropping tenancy because the planter class maintained legal possession of the most fertile lands in the South. On the other, persistent racism in both the North and South purportedly made the restoration of "White Rule" in the former Confederacy inevitable.

Martin Ruef, a historical sociologist at Duke University, challenges the notions of both *continuity* and *inevitability* that mark some studies of the Reconstruction era in his *Between Slavery and Capitalism: The Legacy of Emancipation in the American South* (2014). Ruef emphasizes the profound social and institutional transformations wrought by the war and Reconstruction, arguing that "the New South that resulted after Radical Reconstruction evidences a more capitalist and market-driven society than its antebellum counterpart" (p. 2). He cites not only the end of chattel slavery and the rise of short-term tenancy and wage labor, but also the expansion in the number of financial institutions in the South, the shift from subsistence to commercial agriculture among small white farmers, and the rise of new urban and industrial centers in the interior of the region. While recognizing that both African-American

freedmen and formerly non-slaveholding whites did not realize their goals of political equality based on secure possession of land, Ruef is clear that war and Reconstruction fundamentally altered the character of Southern social relations and institutions.

The trajectory of the transition between pre-capitalist and capitalist relations and institutions was not predetermined. Drawing on the innovations in economic sociology and the study of social movements and collective behavior, Ruef relies on notions of *uncertainty* to avoid any *teleological* account of the outcome of Reconstruction in the South. Asserting that “attention to uncertainty has been understated in previous treatments of the economic transitions between pre-capitalist and capitalist institutions”, Ruef attempts to analyze how individuals, groups, and organizations faced two types of uncertainty.

The first is the *classical uncertainty* of any participants in markets – uncertainty about the supply and cost of wage labor in the wake of emancipation or the priorities (agricultural versus industrial growth) of local and state governments. The second, and most fundamental for understanding the transformations of this period, is what Ruef labels *categorical uncertainties* – primarily, uncertainty about what forms of land tenure (centralized plantations using wage laborers, sharecropping, or cash tenancy); over what social positions would be available to blacks and whites in the South; what financial and credit institutions would replace the coastal cotton factors; and whether or not there were alternatives to the dominance of cotton monoculture in the South. Ultimately, it would be forces working from both “above”, in particular the changing role of the Federal government and Southern state governments, and from “below”, in the struggles of former slaves and white yeoman farmers, that determined the course of social and institutional transformation in the South.

Ruef’s argument unfolds by examining both classical and categorical uncertainty at the individual, organizational, and community levels of analysis. In chapter 2, he examines the classic uncertainty planters faced about the supply and cost of agricultural labor after emancipation, and how the role of the Freedmen’s Bureau in regulating wage contracts and in improving the “human capital” of the former slaves through public education impacted the labor market. Chapters 3 and 4 continue the individual-level analysis, focusing on the categorical uncertainties around the social roles that would be open to blacks and whites in the South, as schooling and migration undermined the antebellum race-class order for those born after the end of slavery; and on the failure of the new entrepreneurial middle class in the cities to challenge the dominance of the planters. Chapter 5 begins with an analysis of classical uncertainty at the organizational level, examining the forces that shaped whether or not freed people would remain on the plantations as wage laborers. Chapter 6 concludes the discussion of categorical uncertainty at the organizational level, examining how struggles over land tenure in the post-bellum period provided new alternatives to plantation agriculture, the form of sharecropping for the former slaves, and cash tenancy for small white landowners. Despite their inability to maintain the plantations in the Reconstruction era, the planters were able to displace the cotton factors as the main merchant-creditors, allowing them to extract additional income from sharecroppers and transform the white yeomanry into tenant farmers. Chapter 7 begins with a discussion of classical uncertainty at the community level, parsing the debates that led local and state governments to prioritize agriculture in the 1880s and 1890s. Chapter 8 concludes the discussion of categorical uncertainty at the organizational level, examining regional political struggles over subsidies for cotton monoculture at the expense of a more diversified agriculture.

Ruef’s theoretical framework allows him to present an interesting account of the varied social conflicts in the context of both classical and categorical uncertainties at different

levels of social analysis. However, one is left somewhat disappointed by the results. On the one hand, there is relatively little new research and few new historical and empirical insights into the Reconstruction period. On the other, one wonders whether the elaborate categorical scheme Ruef utilizes produces any new interpretive results. The best works on the Reconstruction era, such as Du Bois's *Black Reconstruction in America* (1935) and Foner's *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863–1877* (1983), highlight the class struggles that unfolded between planters, former slaves, and white yeoman farmers. These works demonstrate the *contested* character of what social-property relations (in Ruef's terms "economic institutions") would replace plantation slavery, and the *contingent* outcome of these struggles. Despite a sophisticated categorical schema, *Between Slavery and Capitalism* fails to break any significant new ground historically or theoretically.

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CARU, VANESSA. *Des toits sur la grève. Le logement des travailleurs et la question sociale à Bombay (1850–1950)*. Armand Colin/Recherches, Paris 2013. 411 pp. Ills. € 42.50.

Based on her 2010 doctoral dissertation, Vanessa Caru's book traces the evolution of popular housing schemes in Bombay from the 1850s to the 1950s. A major colonial metropolis and large industrial centre, Bombay was also characterized by a remarkable degree of government involvement in the construction and management of popular housing. In this context, Caru's work offers a finely grained analysis of the housing policy of the colonial state, the autonomous, Congress-led provincial government, and the independent Indian state that succeeded it. As well as providing a close analysis of policymaking, the book illustrates the way the *chawls*, the embodiment of popular housing, became important sites of politicization for the city's labouring classes. The study relies largely on official reports and correspondence, as well as on local and national press. While this allows her to capture the tenants' perspective in their interaction with the administration, Caru also, avowedly, chooses to read these administrative sources "*along the grain*" (p. 26), to capture the structure and practice of the state at the local level.

A long-term perspective allows the book to identify shifts in the state's treatment of the housing question. Caru argues that urban policy essentially developed as an instrument of administration, designed to address sanitary, political, and social concerns by asserting its control over "dangerous" spaces, through a mixture of concessions and repression. Identifying a trend towards increased state intervention, she shows how the housing question came to constitute an important tool in handling working-class agitation – this, incidentally, gives the book its title, *Des toits sur la grève*, building roofs on urban disturbances. Spanning the period of colonial domination as well as of Congress rule at the