

forms of food delivery, Consegne Etiche persists in its efforts to develop and establish roots in the community.

The fourth and final section is dedicated to a comprehensive reflection on the evolving landscape of contingent workers' representation, taking into account recent developments in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Here, the case studies analysed are positioned within a conceptual space defined by two primary axes: from collective voice to entry into the market with alternative work arrangements, and from bottom-up to top-down approaches to representation. This effectively visualizes a typology of new forms of collective action, serving as an analytical tool for numerous case studies that scholars can explore, both within the countries covered in this book and in other European countries and beyond. Acknowledging the potential and limitations of emerging forms of workers' collective organization and their diverse strategies of resistance, as previously outlined by the editors, has intrinsic value for both research and the actors involved. This is undoubtedly a strategic approach, even when the effectiveness of case studies is confined within specific spatial and temporal constraints. Portraying the complexity of attempts and the "chiaroscuro" that characterizes both success and failure is an integral part of a valuable knowledge endeavour.

In conclusion, this book provides a necessarily partial and provisional, yet valuable, cross section of what is transpiring on the periphery of the traditional industrial relations system in Spain and Italy. It frames peculiar and symbolic traits of the current phase of capitalism, which may potentially assume a central role in the near future. It is a recommended read for both researchers wishing to explore these issues and for those approaching them for the first time.

Paolo Borghi

Department of Economics "Marco Biagi",
University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Modena, Italy
E-mail: paolo.borghi@unimore.it
doi:10.1017/S0020859024000427

ADAMS, THOMAS McSTAY. *Europe's Welfare Traditions since 1500*. 2 Vols. Bloomsbury Academic, London [etc.] 2023. Vol 1: 1500–1700, 278 pp. Ill. Vol. 2: 1700–2000, 451 pp. Ill. £200.00.

Thomas Adams's *Europe's Welfare Traditions since 1500: Reform Without End* is the product of many years of research and writing on the topic, which began with the author's work on ancien régime France, and has focused most recently on the comparative history of the European welfare state in the modern period. The current, two-volume study draws on both of these lines of research.

As indicated in the title of this study, Adams sees the long-term history of European charitable and welfare institutions as a series of episodes of "reform without end". He seeks to illuminate successive examples of policy innovation through a "mosaic

of microhistories” (vol. I, p. 1) in which he tells the stories of key actors who advocated for various responses to poverty and/or social disorder in both texts and actual policies.

The author lays out a wealth of detail about these different episodes of investigation, policy advocacy, and, in some instances, the implementation of plans to address what are nearly constant problems, such as unwanted children, unemployment, or disease. So, it is not only the search for remedies that appears as continuous in the study, but also the problems that charitable efforts were designed to address.

The text relies on both a deep and wide reading of the secondary literature on charity and welfare over the *longue durée*, and occasional detailed readings of primary sources, in which Adams explores the rationale for and, occasionally, the actual functioning of charitable projects in their specific historical contexts. This occurs especially in Volume I, when key local actors play a major role in the text as authors and sometime implementors of the policies that Adams wishes to highlight. There are occasional general overviews of social conditions that inspired various charitable interventions, and a broad treatment of the effects of industrialization but the book is at its liveliest and most evocative when Adams writes about charitable activists in some detail.

The study as a whole privileges Britain, France, and Germany, with treatments of Southern European municipal efforts (especially in vol. I) and brief reflections on Scandinavia (vol. II). The study unapologetically concentrates on the invention and implementation of charitable and welfare institutions constituting what used to be referred to as “history from above”. Key elements of Adams’s treatment of charitable and welfare traditions include the search for policies that optimized the “public good”, a concern for providing work to the poor, and, particularly in the modern period, the insurance of social discipline.

Adams highlights elements of continuity among early modern, modern, and contemporary developments at various points of the text by referring back to the work of early modern innovators already discussed, such as Juan Luis Vives, a well-known sixteenth-century Spanish scholar whose advocacy of secular as well as religiously based assistance to the poor inspired many Reformation-era efforts to consolidate and rationalize urban poor relief programs in both Roman Catholic and emerging Protestant areas. His name and values reappear, for example, in later discussions of the French National Convention, the Prussian revolution in 1848, and the author’s “Concluding Reflections” in Volume II (pp. 366–370).

The two volumes, one focused on 1500–1700 and the second on the period from 1700 to 2000, are rather different in style. As noted, in Volume I, Adams evokes social conditions of the poor and explores programs for charitable relief in some detail. The second volume dwells less on the social history of specific places where charitable or welfare plans were implemented, and emphasizes the political history of welfare-state-building, with the long treatment of the French Revolution (vol. II, chs. 10 and 11) serving as a kind of turning point both historically and stylistically. Here, Adams sees the French National Assembly’s well-known *Comité de Mendicité*, and its chair, the duc de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt as key players in the French story, given its emerging promise of citizens’ legitimate entitlement to relief from the revolutionary state. If the theories and policies of the early modern period – as revealed by Adams’s exploration of England and France, and, to a lesser

extent, the German lands and Southern Europe – laid the bases for traditions of poor relief, it was the period from 1700 to 1850, with the Enlightenment and French Revolution, that laid out a vision of “social citizenship” (vol. II: p. 169) that would begin to be realized after the middle of the nineteenth century.

By Volume II, the cast of actors necessarily changes to include more public health figures, emerging political parties, spokesmen for the working classes, and an increasingly active administrative state. Here, Adams’s discussion turns to a focus on state building that he pursues to the end of study, reaching up to the present. The method of microhistories, based on named activists continues, including thumbnail sketches of the work of such figures as Rudolf Virchow, Beatrice Webb and the Fabians, William Beveridge, and Alice Solomon. Discussion of the more contemporary history of European welfare states evokes the search for a “European model” and features political actors such as René Cassin and Pierre Laroque.

Adams highlights well-known contrasts across space within Western Europe by organizing most chapters or chapter sections by nation or region. He notes the perennity of national-level traditions established in earlier periods and links twentieth and twenty-first century events to them. For example, he focuses on the continuing influence in French efforts to build welfare policies that conform to its revolutionary republican traditions. Adams emphasizes England’s traditions of philanthropy, its successive poor laws and the continuing tradition of influential government inquiries, including the 1944 Beveridge Report and its impacts after World War II. The treatment of Germany’s traditions of poor relief and welfare includes both top-down efforts to co-opt working class mobilization through welfare policies and the country’s long-standing tradition of charitable and welfare plans in local municipal government efforts.

Given the enormity of the subjects that Adams tackles, one might dispute the advisability of occasionally extending the discussion to very brief treatments of Scandinavia (vol. II, ch. 19) or themes that can appear as afterthoughts to the main discussion (vol. I, ch. 9), or even of the treatment of very contemporary events, which, while doubtless important, are sometimes cursory and not well integrated into the book’s larger goal of tracing long-term continuities.

Since noteworthy episodes in the various nations’ histories did not necessarily occur at the same time, there are often abrupt shifts in the chronology of the discussion, when the text moves, for example, from a detailed discussion of innovations in French policies during the revolution’s various stages back to the seventeenth century in a discussion of the Elizabethan Poor Law as the author catches up with English developments.

Adams does not provide an overarching theory of how and why various Western European charitable programs arose and then declined, only to be replaced by newer efforts. But the implication is that it was not until Western societies became sufficiently wealthy and their political structures sufficiently democratic that perennial problems of poverty became solvable.

At the end of this ambitious study, Adams offers his own thoughts about the future of the European welfare state’s “social model” in a world from which the vast majority of the planet’s people are excluded. Given Adams’s wide knowledge of the historical evolution of Europeans’ extensive institutions for charitable relief and social welfare,

it would have been interesting to have his opinion or speculations on what combination of forces – ideological, social, economic, or political – combined to create such a unique set of traditions and institutions in this small corner of the globe. Given Adams’s mastery of such a wide-ranging history, he would be highly qualified to offer them.

Katherine A. Lynch

Department of History,
Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh (PA), United States
E-mail: kl18@andrew.cmu.edu
doi:10.1017/S0020859024000403

BENSIMON, FABRICE. *Artisans Abroad. British Migrant Workers in Industrialising Europe, 1815–1870*. Oxford University Press, Oxford [etc.] 2023. xiii, 286 pp. Ill. Maps. £83.00. (Open Access.)

Artisans Abroad recovers the lost story of the workers whose migration carried industrialization from Britain to the European Continent and beyond in the nineteenth century. Scholars have focused on capital and machines, neglecting and erasing the human brain and sinew essential to technology transfer. The book painstakingly reconstructs the movements of skilled and unskilled men and women, whether Nottingham lacemakers or Welsh ironworkers, and the indispensable role they played introducing British industrial methods in France and elsewhere in Europe. While eighteenth-century migrants consisted largely of artisans, the period examined here increasingly produced a labour force with skills acquired in British industry. Not only Britons, but migrants from across Europe could be found in many Continental workplaces, supporting the author’s contention that “there is no such thing as a self-sufficient economy and labour market” (p. 253).

The author frankly confronts the challenges of reconstructing the lives of mobile working people who rarely left documentary traces. He has overcome this by skilfully assembling a remarkable array of sources from regional archives ranging from France, Britain, and Belgium to Canada. These include business and industrial records, family histories, parliamentary papers, consular records, press accounts of strikes and other conflicts, memoirs, biographies, and autobiographies, some by workers themselves, as well as a wealth of contemporary visual evidence.

The book examines four case studies: textiles, specifically lace, mechanized through Nottingham lacemakers’ migration; iron and steel, which benefited from the importation of British puddlers; machines; and railways. In some industries, employers drove migration by importing workers to set up and run machinery in France; these included linen production, iron, and railways. In lacemaking, however, workers themselves initiated migration, bearing skills to France and elsewhere.

Nottingham led the world in machine-made lace from the early nineteenth century into the twentieth. Too expensive for individual artisans to own, steam-powered