

and interstate competition for markets rather than simply the domination of the federal government by slave-holding interests” (p. 208).

Misevich’s essay “The Mende and Sherbro Diaspora in Nineteenth-Century Southern Sierra Leone,” looks at the unique effects of British efforts to suppress the slave trade on Sierra Leone. Combining records from the Registers of Liberated Africans with evidence from the Vice Admiralty Courts and the Courts of Mixed Commission, Misevich is able to show that the reorientation of the slave trade to southern Sierra Leone resulted in a high concentration of slaves from Mende- and Sherbro-speaking communities. Misevich and Eltis teamed up to launch the *African Origins Portal* (www.african-origins.org) and Misevich’s contribution to this volume argues that more than two-thirds of captives in southern Sierra Leone in the nineteenth century came from areas that were just 50 or 60 miles from the coast (p. 257).

Lastly, David Richardson draws on his decades-long collaboration with Eltis to present the transatlantic slave trade as structurally determined, governed by the worldwide demand for sugar. A more synthetic piece, Richardson’s essay presents some of his joint research on Caribbean slave and sugar prices and the impact that rising demand for slaves in the Americas had on prices and turn-around times on the African coast (p. 51).

Mann and Misevich’s collection is geared for the specialist reader. Anyone researching or teaching a facet of the transatlantic slave trade will find useful contributions here. Jelmer Vos’ chapter, “The Growth of the Atlantic Slave Trade on the Windward Coast of Africa,” uses the records of the Middelburg Commerce Company to reassess the slave trade on the Windward Coast in the mid-eighteenth century. Although the Windward Coast supplied a small proportion of overall slave totals for Africa, Vos argues that Dutch free traders looked to the Windward Coast as a less-competitive alternative to the Bights of Biafra and Benin and bought slaves from about 50 points of embarkation (p. 133). Like Misevich’s chapter, Kristin Mann’s contribution, “The Illegal Slave Trade and One Yoruba Man’s Transatlantic Passages from Slavery to Freedom,” takes Eltis’ arguments about British suppression and pushes them a step further. With a lot of archival sleuthing, Mann takes the micro-story of three children enslaved in the nineteenth century to show the impact of British suppression in the Lusophone world. She argues that organizational adaptations to the transatlantic slave trade post-1807 led a tighter integration of African and American worlds.

Ultimately this essay collection does what a good essay collection should do: It creates a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. Taken together, the essays effectively show the empirical and conceptual ways in which Eltis impacted the study of the transatlantic slave trade. The endnotes for individual chapters offer many trails for the specialist wanting more.

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Measuring Wellbeing. A History of Italian Living Standards. By Giovanni Vecchi. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. Pp. xvii, 645. \$ 97.19, hardcover.
doi: 10.1017/S0022050717000894

A first edition of the present book was published in 2011, in the context of the celebrations for the 150th anniversary of the political Unification of Italy (*In ricchezza e in povertà. Il benessere degli italiani dall’Unità a oggi*, Bologna, Il Mulino). This new

English edition is not a mere translation of the former publication. Three new chapters, on *Migration*, *Wealth*, and *Human Development*, have been added to the previous 11; each chapter includes new materials and new references; whenever possible the chronology comprises the most recent years; the Statistical Appendix (pp. 547–89) has been revised and updated with new series. The English edition is actually a new book and replaces the previous Italian volume. In this edition, as in the first, Giovanni Vecchi is both the editor of the book and the co-author of all 14 chapters; each of them written with one or more of the 18 scholars cooperating with him: Brian A'Hearn, Nicola Amendola, Vincenzo Atella, Alessandro Brunetti, Luigi Cannari, Stefano Chianese, Francesco Cinnirella, Giovanni D'Alessio, Emanuele Felice, Silvia Francisci, Giacomo Gabbuti, Matteo Gomellini, Lucia Latino, Cormac Ó Gráda, Mariacristina Rossi, Fernando Salsano, Marina Sorrentino, and Gianni Toniolo.

Several books dealing with Italian economic history since the Unification are already available. Among recent examples is *The Italian Economy since Unification*, edited by G. Toniolo and published in 2013 by Oxford University Press. The book by Vecchi also covers the entire parabola of Italian economic history from pre-modern lack of growth, in the first two decades after 1861, to present-day lack of growth. Compared to similar works, however, the perspective of the present book is different and original: GDP and productivity play a relatively marginal role. The center stage is occupied by the various dimensions of wellbeing and their changes: from nutrition, height, and education, to child labor, inequality, poverty, and vulnerability. The wide exploitation of a specific source already known, but marginally utilized, is also new, that is, the 20,000 household budgets covering the years 1855–1965 (Ch. 13). This main source is used in several chapters and particularly in the most innovative, the eighth, on *Inequality*, written by Vecchi with N. Amendola. Both for the approach and the basic source, the present work is a remarkable contribution to our understanding of the Italian economy over the last 150 years. No similar book exists for other European countries.

We could summarize the core issue of this work by saying that its central concerns are growth in wellbeing and inequalities in growth among social strata and among regions. During the long transition of Modern Growth, Italian per capita GDP rose by about 13 times (Table 7.A1, in the Appendix). Nutrition, health, and education improved remarkably, while absolute poverty fell from 40–45 percent of the population in 1861 to 4.5 percent in 2008. A distinct improvement in all of the indicators occurred in the decades 1950–1970, followed by a slowing down and some backward steps in poverty, inequality, and rates of income growth during the recent crisis. In the chapter on *Human Development*, the authors try to quantify these changes in wellbeing with the elaboration of two *Indices of Human Development*. The HDI—including income, life expectancy, literacy, and enrolment rates—increased 5.5 times from 1861 to 2013; whenever, following the methodology of Freedom House (pp. 488–90), democracy is included as an indicator for political rights and civil liberties, the rise has been 4.4 times. However, in this book on *Measuring Wellbeing*, the authors are critical of the measures of human development; deeply biased—they say—by the preferences of their creators (p. 454). It is better, in their view, to look at the dynamics of any indicator than to try a synthetic quantification.

Rise in human wellbeing spread unequally both among social strata and among regions. In this book, as in many recent contributions, the reconstruction of inequality seems to contradict the well-known view by Simon Kuznets, or “Mr. Kuznets’ Tyranny,” as the authors write (p. 319). No inverted U curve is discovered in the period of Italian

economic modernization. Inequality is high at the beginning of the new Italian nation, with a Gini index between 45 and 50 percent in the decades 1861–1931. The value of the index diminishes fast between 1961 and 1991, reaching 30 percent and rises again from the 1990s on. Thus, decline in inequality coincides with the high rates of GDP growth and its recovery with the slowdown and recent crisis.

Particular attention is devoted to geographic inequalities, that is North-South disparities in development; a classical theme when dealing with modern Italy. Some more or less remarkable diversity is found between the North and the Mezzogiorno in all dimensions of wellbeing, from nutrition, health, literacy, poverty, migration, and wealth to human development. As is well-known, the North-South disparity in income increased from the end of the nineteenth century and reached a peak in the years immediately following WWII. It then diminished until about 1975, but rose again and is still wide nowadays. According to the authors of Ch. 7 on *Income*, a disparity of about 15 percent in income per capita between North and South already existed in the aftermath of the Unification. In the stimulating and novel last chapter on the *Cost of Living*, we discover, however, that a disparity in prices between North and South of around 15 percent certainly existed from WWI onwards until today, and probably since the formation of the new state (as suggested on pp. 537–39). It is true that “by correcting GDP to allow for differences in purchasing power does not change the key features of the historical picture” (p. 280), that is, the overall trend of the North-South disparity. However, since immediately after the Unification the North-South inequality in incomes per capita was certainly more modest than later, the disparity could fade away upon taking the North-South gap in prices into account.

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UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Competition in the Promised Land. By Leah Platt Boustan. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016. Pp. 216. \$23.95, hardcover.
doi: 10.1017/S0022050717000900

As the most sizable internal migration in U.S. history, the Great Migration has been the subject of a large literature measuring its causes, its economic consequences, and its legacy in terms of music and art, northern ghettos, poverty, and residential segregation. Although both black and white southerners migrated in large numbers between 1917 and 1970, black migration rates were larger and their destinations almost exclusively urban. Indeed, the patterns of black migration and subsequent occupational choice indicate a population fleeing agriculture for the industrializing North; upon arrival, the majority of black migrants found work as operatives or unskilled laborers and, even in 1930, fewer than 2 percent worked in agriculture.

Leah Platt Boustan’s new volume is a critical addition to Great Migrations scholarship. Her focus is on the later and more intensive years of migration, between 1930 and 1970, and she breaks the literature’s previous focus solely on the economic consequences for the migrant themselves. Indeed, Boustan’s work spotlights how the