

Editorial Foreword

DISPLACED PERSONS Territorial states create population displacements, if only by drawing boundaries. The longing that links displaced peoples and the places to which they seek to return is a potent force in history. The first two essays concern themselves with situations of return and re-emplacement, the first in Germany, the second in Rwanda.

Daphne Berdahl proposes an alternative ethnography of the nation-state that focuses on the performances and practices of citizenship rather than state institutions. In the post-industrial state the duty of the citizen, one might almost say, is shopping. Television advertisements penetrated the Iron Curtain, provoking desires that only markets can satisfy in the citizenry of the German Democratic Republic. Choosing for free markets and reunion with West Germany, East Germans had to learn how to be modern citizens of a united Germany by acquiring a cultural competence in consumption. As Leipzig's manufacturing jobs virtually disappeared, how-to-get-a-job seminars for women led by representatives of a cosmetics firm showed the unemployed how to become "transition winners" and not losers of the enlarged free-market Germany created by the collapse of the Communist regime, through the skilful application of cosmetics—much as, post 9/11, New Yorkers were encouraged to fight back by shopping. (For more on citizenship, see the pair of articles by Immanuel Wallerstein and Lisa Wedeen, *CSSH* 2003:650–713.)

David Newbury examines the various and historically contingent meanings of "home" and processes of "coming home" for the displaced in relation to the African nation-state of Rwanda. He compares four kinds of displaced Rwandans: those who were culturally Rwandan but were excluded by the drawing of colonial boundaries at the beginning of the twentieth century; those who fled the colonial state to avoid its exactions; those who left Rwanda as political refugees when the independent state was created in the early nineteen-sixties; and those who fled the genocide in 1994. Holding place and culture constant, the comparison of cases follows the differences of times, actors, and power relations, and the ways in which identities get changed by changing circumstance.

RACE RELATIONS Even while anthropologists are hard at work sapping the foundations of an essentialized concept of race, it remains the case that essentialized racial concepts have been endlessly productive in history. The growing distance between a relativistic scholarship and essentialistic conceptions acting in the world generates ever more new interpretations of well-known racial topics, as the next three articles show. (See also the trio of articles on race

in *CSSH* 2000:576–661, by Aline Helg, Tammy M. Proctor, and Antoinette Burton.)

Recent political turmoil in Melanesia has elicited a number of writings that choose “Africanization” as a rubric under which to examine the troubles of these new states. **David Chappell** is highly critical of these writings. He avoids the trap of embracing the negative implication of the Africanization idea in ways that prove interesting. First, he looks at comment on political turmoil in Africa, and finds that while the majority opinion may be Afro-pessimist, there is also a countervailing Afro-optimist position. Second, he shows how Melanesia has been doubly linked to Africa, on the one hand in the conceptualizations of the colonizers (the name Guinea is an example), but on the other hand by pioneer Melanesian nationalists, who were very interested in the African nationalist leaders such as Nkrumah and Nyerere and modeled themselves upon them.

Brian Owensby writes on Brazil’s supposed racial harmony and lack of discrimination, proposed by Gilberto Freyre in the 1930s as the key to Brazilian national culture. The author finds something fresh to say on this well-worn topic by inquiring into the history of the myth and how it came to be embraced by Brazilians. He sets out from the surprising contradiction between official statistics showing that whites are a (slight) majority in Brazil and a large survey by a newspaper in which respondents self-identified their race, the largest segment returning themselves as brown, implying that a majority of Brazilians are non-white. The discrepancy launches an interesting discussion of how Brazilians cling both to the idea that racial discrimination exists and to the belief that Brazil is a racially mixed and racially harmonious society—a cocktail of opposites the author calls “cordial racism.”

Ivan Kalmar considers the peculiar Jewishness of the ever-fascinating Benjamin Disraeli, nineteenth-century British prime minister and novelist, self-identified as Anglican by religion and Jewish by race. Disraeli, dwelling on the antiquity and Oriental origins of his Jewish ancestors, comes to a conception of the Oriental very different from the image of an inferior Other lacking important Western qualities such as rational thought. Disraeli saw the assumed irrationality of the East as a positive attribute, being the source of universal spirituality. He regarded the Orient as the home of his own race, though he had limited interest in Orientals of his own day. The task of empire was to revive a decayed Eastern spirituality through British intervention, and in doing so to reinvent British Christianity by putting it in touch with its Oriental origins.

FOOD FIGHTS The search for subsistence is a constant in history, and because it is a constant it often fades into the background of historical explanation. The next two essays seek to show how it determines the outcomes of revolutions and guides the directions of civil wars. (See also the three articles on the social history of food in *CSSH* 2004:428–96, by John D’Arms, Stuart Borsch, and Lauren Morris McLean.)

Anthony Oberschall and **Michael Seidman** observe that in the revolutionary situation (two competing sovereignties) food shortage, hunger, poor harvests, and high food prices converge, precipitating riots and popular unrest that force the resignation or propel the overthrow of governments. Manipulation of food under conditions of severe shortage decides outcomes between governments and insurgents. The examples examined are the Bolshevik consolidation of power in Russia, Franco's victory in the Spanish civil war, the Sino-Japanese war, the Chinese civil war, and the Bosnian war. Since desperate people are compelled to make choices about survival and security without reference to ideology, victory goes to those who better secure the food supply and use it more effectively and ruthlessly.

Enrico Dal Lago aims to show the validity of Marxist interpretations of the American Civil War and the southern Italian "brigands' war" of 1861–1865. Both, he argues, can be understood as wars having a strong element of class conflict between a peasantry in search of landownership and a landowning class wishing to retain its privileges. In the United States freed slaves pushed for redistribution of the slaveholders' property to form homesteads for the freedmen. In southern Italy peasants fought for control of land illegally expropriated by the large landowners. In the course of the American Civil War and its aftermath the U.S. government supported the claims of the freedmen against the planter class who had rebelled against the Union, at least initially; but in Italy the government opposed the claims of the peasants and repressed their revolt.

DESIDERATA In previous issues we have signaled a desire for more submissions on ancient history and archaeology. We also thirst for something that is similar to ancient history but at the same time quite different. We could call it deep history, or perhaps wide-angle history, by which we mean, not the study of particular, limited periods of the past, but of objects in a large time-frame encompassing past and present as a unitary field of vision. Some *CSSH* pieces that have been especially satisfying in that respect have been Engseng Ho's stunning deep history of the Arab diaspora and its resistance to European empire from the sixteenth century to the al-Qaeda insurgency ("Empire through Diasporic Eyes: A View from the Other Boat," 2004:210–46), and Francisco Vaz da Silva's magical deep history of European folk theories of where babies come from ("The Madonna and the Cuckoo: An Exploration in European Symbolic Conceptions," 2004:273–99). Fernand Braudel and his idea of the *longue durée*, of course, and the Annalists as a class, are historians who immediately spring to mind in this connection, but it is striking, too, that a number of the best practitioners are anthropologists. Jack Goody is a stellar instance, for whom one could cite virtually everything he writes, including his *CSSH* piece, "Rural Manufacturing in the Rouergue from Antiquity to the Present: The Examples of Pottery and Cheese (with Dick Whittaker, *CSSH* 2001:225–45); and Marshall Sahlins, especially for his recent book, *Apologies to Thucydides: Un-*

derstanding History as Culture and Vice Versa. Sociology abounds with scholarship of this kind, from the founding ancestors to S. N. Eisenstadt and others. Yet lately (as it seems to this writer) we are abandoning the project of scrutinizing the deep past in order to understand the present and future, under an impression that the processes of history are now under entirely new laws and the past is not just a foreign country, but a distant planet. *CSSH* invites your assistance in the recuperation of deep history and the reintegration of the ancient and the modern.