

There is, however, at least one exception to the lack of theoretical insight in the essays contained in this volume. It relates to the forgotten and divided memories of the internment of POWs and of forced labour in postwar and contemporary Europe. There are chapters convincingly portraying the Ustaša genocide against the Serbs as a decisive antecedent of the Yugoslavian wars of the 1990s (Levy), discussing the impact of the Soviet massacre of more than 20,000 Polish POWs in March 1940 on postwar Polish–Russian relations (Nowak), and presenting the archaeological project “Landscape of Evil”, which seeks to preserve the very structure of the Nazi camps in Norway so that future generations do not forget (Jasinski, Stenvik, Neerland Soleim). In this broader context, one chapter that seems to deviate completely from the book’s topic in doing so reveals its importance. Indeed, one might consider the essay by Isaac Herskowitz on the call by two rabbinic Nazi camp survivors for a religious protection of human prerogatives completely out of place, since it makes hardly any direct connection with the issue of POWs and forced labour. Yet, situated at the very core of this volume, it reminds the reader that research on these issues is not just about legal categories and statistics for economic compensation; it also addresses deeper ethical issues and the duty of memory.

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CURRY-MACHADO, JONATHAN. *Cuban Sugar Industry. Transnational Networks and Engineering Migrants in Mid-nineteenth Century Cuba*. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke 2011. xiv, 264 pp. Ill. £58.00; doi:10.1017/S0020859012000296

During the course of the nineteenth century, sugar reinvented itself as an industrially manufactured commodity. The essential dynamic related to its position on the cutting edge of the “first” industrial revolution based on steam power and metallurgy. The connection had begun in the 1780s, with the harnessing of steam engines to the mills that ground sugar cane for its juice. Over time, steam power both speeded up the process exponentially and rendered it a great deal more efficient in terms of rates of extraction.

Nonetheless, the crucial developments in the nineteenth-century revolution in sugar manufacture related less to the crushing process *per se* than to what happened to raw juice *after* it had been expressed from the cane. It was here that advances in metallurgy, machine technology, and chemical science really came into their own. Together, they were manifested in inventions that enabled cane juice to be clarified and condensed to a near-solid state, using steam heat under reduced air pressure in closed pans of an increasingly complex and sophisticated kind. The two key devices were the vacuum pan and (subsequently) the multiple-effect apparatus. These did away with the old, “rule-of-thumb” uncertainty of the open-pan manufacture, in which sugar was boiled into near-solid state over direct heat, that had previously reigned supreme, in one form or another, in sugar manufacture worldwide.

From the 1820s onward, these new – and continually evolving – steam-and-vacuum methods were taken up in metropolitan refineries (for which they were initially developed) and by “raw” sugar makers in the colonies. They were also adopted by an emergent European beet-sugar industry that was soon engaged with its cane counterpart in a

competition for markets that did much to spur the industrialization of the commodity's manufacture worldwide. An indispensable feature of this industrialization were the skilled operatives involved in the installation and subsequent maintenance of all this new machinery.

Jonathan Curry-Machado's *Cuban Sugar Industry* is a major contribution to our knowledge on this score. What he has to tell about the high technology of mid-century Cuban sugar manufacture (and its frequent location in systems of production that mixed the new with the old) both supplements and indeed largely supplants on a number of points the well-known pioneering work of Moreno Fraginals, dating from some fifty or so years ago. In so doing, Curry-Machado also provides a unique account of the *maquinistas* – the engineers and mechanics (the terminology was fluid until well into the mid-century) – whose migration to Cuba was as vital as that of the machinery that they so often accompanied on its journey across the Atlantic. In this context, Curry-Machado makes a number of crucial points, of interest (as is the book as a whole) not only to scholars of the Spanish Caribbean but also to people working in kindred fields elsewhere.

For example, he explains that “his” *maquinistas* – the majority of them British or North American – were predominantly temporary sojourners who tended not to be assimilated into the colonial society in which they found themselves. As students of the Java sugar industry will be aware, this contrasted markedly with what happened to their counterparts in Dutch Asia, people who for the most part became permanent settlers in their new environment. The reasons for this contrast must have been several: among them the relative proximity to “home” of the Cuba *maquinistas*, deep cultural differences, and last but not least, their often troubled location in an industry where the continuance and, indeed, intensification of barrack slavery in the mid-century decades led both to worker insurrection and sometimes to conflicted loyalties among the *maquinistas* themselves.

Nonetheless, this important new book is very much more than a narrative of engineers and of the machinery that they looked after, valuable as it is. It also focuses attention on the transnational networks that brought engineers and machines to Cuba (and, by implication, the slave labour that underpinned the sugar enterprise in Cuba until well into the 1880s). Inter alia, Curry-Machado points to the importance of the short but significant British occupation of Havana in the mid-1760s as, in effect, initiating the process of drawing the island into “trade networks beyond the bounds of the Spanish Empire” itself, a process that continued throughout the “long” nineteenth century that followed. Much the same might be said, of course, of the British occupation of Java between 1811 and 1816.

Perhaps the single most important facet of his discussion, however, relates to developments on the so-called colonial periphery in general. For what Curry-Machado's argument powerfully reinforces is a gathering awareness of the crucial dynamic provided by elite social groups located on the “periphery” rather than in the metropolitan “core”. As he richly demonstrates, the driving force behind the expansion and technological modernity of the mid-nineteenth century Cuba sugar industry was the island's “white Creole elite”. It was they, rather than expatriate or metropolitan Spaniards, who constituted “the prime mover behind much of the island's economic development [sugar very much to the fore] in the early and mid-nineteenth century”. It is a finding much in line (though not identical) with the conclusions drawn by such Dutch scholars as Ulbe Bosma and Margaret Leidelmeijer (and by the present writer) in relation to the mid-century development of colonial Java as the “Asian Cuba”. There too it was an emergent, largely “white” Creole colonial bourgeoisie – one that took good care, however, to maintain close links with its metropolitan counterpart – that brought in machinery and engineers to push ahead the industrial project in sugar from c.1840 onward. In short, what Curry-Machado

has to say serves to complicate further any residual, crude notions of a “world system” in which diffusion of capital, entrepreneurship, technology and the like followed a simple route from “core” to “periphery”. Likewise, it is a major stepping-stone toward a rethinking of the concept of “periphery” *per se*.

For the reader who is relatively unfamiliar with Cuba and its sugar industry, it should be pointed out that Curry-Machado’s presentation is exemplary, and that its opening “scene-setting” chapter is model of its kind. In all, it is a handsomely produced volume, richly documented from its author’s lengthy researches in Cuba, Spain, and the UK. A pity, though, that the publishers could not have brought themselves to include illustrations of mills and people that would have further enlivened its pages – and provided important visual cues to what was going on.

G. Roger Knight

SANGSTER, JOAN. *Transforming Labour. Women and Work in Post-war Canada*. University of Toronto Press, Toronto [etc.] 2010. x, 414 pp. Ill. £55.00; \$85.00; doi:10.1017/S0020859012000302

Joan Sangster’s book makes an important contribution to a body of research about a period about which not much is written. Assembling an impressively large amount of material, she looks at women’s work in Canada in the post-World-War-II period, a period when supposedly workers did well, and women for the most part returned to being housewives after their engagement in the war effort, where many workers in unionized jobs earned enough money to support a division of labour with a male breadwinner. But Sangster points out that women’s involvement in the labour force actually steadily increased during this period, although women workers did not necessarily benefit from the advances that many male workers made. In order to illustrate her argument, Sangster chooses examples in sectors where the Fordist accord helped or didn’t help improve women’s situation. The Fordist accord refers to the tacit deal where workers obtained union recognition and some legal protection in exchange for a system that provided stability to employers but also dampened the militancy of the 1930s. She frames these issues within a climate of rabid anti-communism that presented challenges to the status quo in any form as smacking of treasonous subversion.

Sangster argues a number of positions throughout the book. The first is to disabuse people of the notion that feminism arrived neatly in “waves”. Women of Sangster’s generation (and mine – although I’m more a product of the 1950s) have a tendency to take credit for inventing women’s activism in the women’s movement of the 1960s and 1970s in what is commonly characterized as second-wave feminism. Much of Sangster’s other work describes earlier forms of women’s activism in Canada, particularly on the left. Militant women were present in the 1920s, the 1930s, and are to be found in the supposedly quiescent period of the 1950s.

Sangster acknowledges the power of a dominant postwar ideology locating women’s place in the home. This thinking reflected and is influenced by the work of Talcott Parsons, a sociologist whose theories, called structural functionalism, dominated the field of sociology. He described a division of responsibilities where women were viewed as the expressive ones, while the men were in charge of “instrumental actions”, adding up to the