

frontières pourrait être à la base de nouvelles limites. Or, en bout de ligne, ce seront des considérations géopolitiques de sécurité qui prévaudront : la situation explosive en Amérique du Nord milite pour l'établissement de zones neutres. Cette solution est celle qui est finalement retenue, la tâche des diplomates consistant désormais à s'entendre sur les limites de ces zones « abandonnées aux Sauvages » (p.420). Ce plan n'aura finalement pas lieu : la guerre est officiellement déclenchée au printemps 1756.

Cette recension met l'accent sur l'axe transatlantique et ne peut faire justice à la richesse des autres thèmes abordés avec brio par le Professeur Ternat: la société et la culture des diplomates au milieu du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, la complexité du processus de restitution territoriale outre-mer, les débats sur le remboursement des prises faites en mer, la liberté de commerce et la crainte d'une monarchie universelle britannique, le rôle des compagnies à charte lors des discussions sur les Indes orientales, l'importance accordée à la présence des Indigènes sur les territoires disputés, et bien d'autres encore.

Un petit bémol : il aurait peut-être été souhaitable que la chronologie présentée en annexe de l'ouvrage soit plus détaillée, ou que certaines thématiques aient été restreintes afin de mieux orienter le lecteur. Au final, Ternat parvient à accomplir un tour de force. Il démontre que loin d'être futile, la diplomatie de la paix franco-britannique de 1748 à 1756 est un véritable laboratoire sur « l'outillage mental », comme l'indique Lucien Bély dans sa préface (p.10), des dirigeants métropolitains et sur l'évolution de leurs visions du monde outre-mer. L'œuvre de Ternat devient une référence incontournable.

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TOMKA, Béla – *A Social History of Twentieth Century Europe*. London and New York: Routledge, 2013. Pp. 526.

Béla Tomka has set himself the daunting task of producing a social history of twentieth century Europe that covers all of the continent's geographical regions, provides as much comparative analysis among regions and nations as feasible, and attempts to grasp general trends without neglecting the national and local specificities that call into question general explanations of contemporary social development. He explicitly eschews adopting particular theoretical perspectives or grand narratives, preferring to let the data either support or call in question existing approaches, as the case may be. He finds this self-denial to be appropriate to what he refers to as a "post paradigmatic world" (p. 6) where the myriad exceptions to general trends must be allowed to emerge.

Tomka largely succeeds in his attempt to be as geographically comprehensive and as comparative as possible within the framework of a single volume and the limits of the data. Europe's Northwestern, Scandinavian, Central, and Southern

regions are carefully distinguished for differences in the pace of social development and treatment of the East Central and Southeastern zones, in both their capitalist and non-capitalist phases, is included in the analysis. Considerations of space and a shortage of adequate comparative data lead him to exclude the USSR and Baltic states.

The book is divided into ten chapters, including an introduction and conclusion. The central chapters each constitute a separate essay tracing the shifts in a particular realm of social reality from before the First World War to the turn of the twenty-first century. Beginning with population, Tomka notes that, by the century's end, falling birth and death rates had signalled a demographic transition from the higher mortality and birth rates of the first half of the century. One is especially struck by the stunning decline in infant mortality and rise in life expectancy over this period. Family and household structure were transformed, the nuclear family dominating over more extended versions after the Second World War, but accompanied after 1960 by the remarkable increase in divorces and the rising frequency of unmarried cohabitation and increasing numbers of children born out of wedlock. Issues of social mobility, shifts in class structure, and distribution of wealth and income are extensively analyzed, with Tomka arguing that class remains more fundamental than factors like gender as a determinant of inequality. For Tomka, one of the central social realities in Europe has been the creation of the welfare state, which from its beginnings in the nineteenth century and interwar years became a central feature of European life after the Second World War. He finds that while the expansion of social provision tapered off after the 1970s, it mostly endured at the century's end despite some fraying and the challenges globalization posed to the national state. The century also saw the transformation of work and living standards: the hours of work in a calendar year declined significantly, offering more leisure to working people, though women only gradually came to enjoy some measure of the leisure available to their partners. Benchmarks of the progress of living standards and consumption over the century are exemplified by the near universality of bathrooms by 1990 (for example, 99.5% in Britain compared with 62.4% in 1950 (p. 230)) and by the widespread consumption of such items as cars, radios, and television. Politically, after the setbacks of the interwar years, parliamentary democracy prevailed, the Stalinist zone and the authoritarian regimes in Spain and Portugal eventually making the transition. The political importance of class waned after the Second World War and new social movements based on identity politics came to the fore after 1960. Urbanization grew, accompanied by sub-urbanization and re-urbanization. Education expanded at all levels, including the post-secondary, where by 1995 women often constituted half of the students; yet, educational opportunity remained adversely affected by social inequality. Europe also became increasingly secular, at least as indicated by declining church attendance and numbers of baptisms and marriages, though there are wide regional variations; both atheists and those failing to declare a religious affiliation remained in the minority.

This is only the merest sampling of Tomka's material, which is rich in detail, the range of questions considered, and in analytical reflection. Tomka finds exceptions

to almost every general trend he considers and typically rejects claims for linear or irreversible development. He has an admirable love of data and for the way quantitative information so often reveals the difficulty of making generalizations about a continent of such diversity. Though respectful of and impressively engaged with the social sciences, he consistently subjects theoretical claims to empirical evaluation and emphasizes the many questions that remain unanswered. Along with the analysis, his data is usefully presented in some seventy-five tables, which are a major source for students, teachers, and researchers.

Historians who, like the present writer, are interested in global political economy rather than social history *per se*, may well wish for stronger moorings in class and capital than Tomka provides. For example, when discussing the origins of Nazism, Tomka does not register Adam Tooze's important point (*The Wages of Destruction*, 2006) that Hitler was preoccupied with meeting the challenge of American world power, a global political-economic factor that must complement any analysis based on German domestic social factors. Again, when explaining the origins of the welfare state, Tomka generally favours functionalism over conflict theory, citing evidence that social reform was not only supported by working class parties. Yet, as Gary Teeple has argued, the welfare state's contribution to capitalist reproduction included the maintenance of social peace as much as the creation of such essentials as a healthy and educated workforce, making reform acceptable across the political spectrum. Nor was the potential threat to domestic peace simply a matter of party politics: the larger threat of extra-parliamentary popular radicalism at home, memories of the Great Depression (the longer term impact of which Tomka underestimates), popular mobilization during wartime, the presence of Communist-led anti-fascist resistance movements, the political impact of expansion of non-capitalist regimes into Europe itself and of on-going Communist threats in the Third World had to be matters of domestic political concern for those determined to protect capitalism after the Second World War. Here, political economy intersects with social reality in ways Tomka's approach cannot capture. What is missing is a sense of the enormous impact thirty years of upheaval driven by war and economic crisis had on European development after the Second World War, resulting in both the expanded welfare state and increased state intervention in the economy.

In his *Age of Extremes*, Eric Hobsbawm reminds us that underlying the remarkable and problematic transformations of the twentieth century is the development of global capitalism. Hobsbawm's chapters on economic expansion after the Second World War and the social and cultural revolutions that it generated are masterpieces of social history that integrate the economic and social in compelling ways. One misses that integration here. That said, Tomka's project is different and his book is without question remarkably learned and full of useful material. It is a work that would surely have found its way into Hobsbawm's bibliography.

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