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context. Second, being in such a privileged position, how does white Batswana's belonging relate to the global political economy? Since "their bush-based identities are mobilized as a commodity within the tourism industry" (90), these seem to have strengthened their economic position. Arguably, whites play an important role in spreading global neoliberal capitalist values and ideas and the inequality this creates locally. Paradoxically, their "love of freedom clashes with the increasingly regulated, organized, capitalist machine that is global tourism" (80), but they are also important players in the Okavango, supporting the global growth of tourism, an industry that "has been one of the core drivers of neoliberalism in the last 20 years" (Duffy 2013:606). This contradiction needs further exploration and could well relate to contemporary hegemonic ideas about neoliberal capitalist values in which the whites' role in nature conservation and development legitimates their belonging in relation to various other groups, such as the government and local black groups. Furthermore, another reason why the small group of white Batswana of the Okavango belong so harmoniously could be that they do not own commercial farms to the same degree as their white counterparts in Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa and their fellow citizens in the Ghanzi district. Land in this part of the world is highly symbolic and more than a mere commodity. As well outlined in chapter 1, however, they are still among the privileged in the country to obtain access to land but not to become land owners. This is a crucial difference with the other white southern Africans.

These concerns are more questions that I believe need further clarification than criticisms; Gressier's *At Home in the Okavango* is a great read for anyone interested in studies about belonging, tourism, and southern Africa. Its particular value is that it shows the importance of belonging as a broad phenomenon; groups that are not under pressure also use structural ideas of belonging. Gressier shows how important these ideas can be in the whereabouts of a society.

References Cited

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Distinctiveness and Totality

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From Acorns to Warehouses: Historical Political Economy of Southern California's Inland Empire. By Thomas C. Patterson. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2015.

From Acorns to Warehouses is a long material history of Southern California's "Inland Empire," a "distinctive space in its own right" (7) that includes parts of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, east of Los Angeles. The Inland Empire is often maligned in Southern California and beyond for thick smog, sprawling suburbs of foreclosed homes, and enormous warehouses. In 2013, 45% of US imports from China and Asia passed through the 1.65 billion square feet of warehouse space that has been built in this area since the 1980s (227). These warehouses are largely staffed by temporary and part-time, near-minimum-wage workers, a precariat generated by a regime of accumulation organized around production overseas and debt-driven consumption in the United States. Thomas Patterson's book makes sense of the political economy of the Inland Empire by tracing evolving constellations of land resource use, colonization and conquest, immigration and settlement, state formation, capital, and labor.

This book is a valuable model for doing historical political economy and makes a sometimes-rarefied perspective accessible to a wide range of readers. At a time when people in the Inland Empire and all over the globe are keenly aware of the problems of social inequality and environmental destruction, this book provides an intelligent Marxist perspective on these issues. It is not an overly scholarly or theoretical work but rather seems directed at undergraduate college students and a wider public interested in Southern California. Concepts of world history are quickly explained and then deployed to good effect in interpreting the complexity of the region's past. *From Acorns to Warehouses* reflects Patterson's commitment to the Inland Empire, in the presentation of fine-grained details of regional history, in a pace and tone suited to a wide readership from and in the region, and in the larger project of explaining how folks there make their lives within conditions they have not chosen and likely would not choose.

The book starts with a brief first chapter that displays the theoretical assumption of the book that people make their lives and livelihoods within material conditions and schematically discusses the long evolution of these human-environment relations, framed in terms of "modes of production" in chapter 2. The rest of the chapters take a chronological order, guided by a series of concepts that explain the particular issues that stand out in each moment: social class, class struggle, social formation, primitive accumulation, social identity, capital (venture, merchant, industrial), land, plunder economy, labor, profit, state formation, and so on. Chapter 2 is about the First Nations peoples before conquest. Chapter 3 deals with a Spanish colonial economy based on ranching, church and state power, and native labor. Chapter 4 concerns the period between Mexico's independence from Spain in 1822 (California was part of the Spanish Empire) and the military annexation of the state of California by the United States in 1848. Chapter 5 describes the transition from an economy based in ranching and to one oriented toward extensive production of grains. In chapter 6, Patterson identifies another phase of the historical political economy of Southern California between

1860 and 1930, one marked by the commoditization of land, the creation of infrastructures for transportation and irrigation, and the turn to high-value citrus crops. Chapter 7 narrows the geographical focus of his history to the Inland Empire region, a focus that he maintains in chapter 8 when describing the years between 1940 and 1978 as ones marked by a transition from citrus production to military expenditure and home building. Chapter 9 completes the long historical arc by analyzing the creation of a “warehouse empire” over the past 35 years. Chapter 10 recaps this long story, and the epilogue reminds the reader of the key concepts used in the book: society, modes of production, totality, social-class structures, states, resistance and protest, and culture. The book closes with a series of lessons that this political economy approach teaches us about the history of Southern California and the development of industrial capitalism more generally.

From Acorns to Warehouses is at its best in the chapters that discuss the earlier periods, before the advent of industrial agriculture in the 1860s. This is because Patterson is at his best when using his theoretical toolkit to make sense of longer periods of time for which the secondary literature is sparser. For example, while Patterson covers some well-trod empirical ground when explaining the arrival of the Spanish to California as a confluence of civil, military, and religious projects, his theoretical insights concerning land, labor, and class formation (native workers, *rancheros*, Anglo merchants) during this period stand out. These earlier chapters also provide the elements for understanding race, class, and modes of production in later years.

The biggest challenge involved in writing such an ultralong history of a social “totality” (247–248) is to achieve some balance with the distinctiveness of particular moments, peoples, and places. Patterson relies solely on secondary sources, avoiding the messiness of primary archaeological or archival material. Even so, earlier chapters are more successful than later ones at melding the ethnographic and the ethnological, simply because after 1860 the mass of information grows increasingly larger and more complex. After about 1900 the economy in Southern California diversifies greatly, moving from irrigated agriculture to aircraft production, tourism, oil, movies, manufacturing, steel, services, logistics, and so on. Patterson’s ability to integrate all these tendencies is admirable, but at times the complexity overwhelms the narrative. To grapple with this, at the beginning of each chapter he offers paragraph-long descriptions of shorter historical periods and economic activities, variously called “snapshots,” “vignettes,” “film clips,” and “images.” These paragraphs capture and condense some of the complexity in this story, but too often Patterson is forced to simply offer lists of world-historical forces gleaned from the literature (e.g., 209–210). While they may be accurate, it is not clear what can be learned from those schematic pronouncements. By contrast, in the cores of the chapters Patterson develops detail about proximate patterns of development that are likely recognizable to people in the Inland Empire and beyond regardless of whether they know much about the world-

historical conditions he mentions in passing. It is here, where Patterson shows how political and economic processes operating at a world-historical scale materialize in lives and landscapes, that the book succeeds.

Patterson will certainly reach many readers who will see in this book how historical political economy can cast light on their everyday experience of place, race, and class. They will gain greater understanding of how their lives have taken shape as a result of historical, material processes unfolding in the Inland Empire. Perhaps they will be stimulated by the “snapshots” to focus on particular periods and topics in California history or be compelled by passages such as that quoted above to read more extensively on the world-historical dynamics that shape their lives. Most importantly, they will see the utility of a Marxist perspective for understanding how people make their lives and livelihoods. This is a valuable book for the contribution it makes in this direction, and it would be appropriate for undergraduate courses in cultural anthropology. More advanced scholars who focus more narrowly on particular places and periods in the history of Southern California or on specific issues in political economy may find the book suggestive but lacking the density of data or the depth of discussion they are seeking.

Disenchanting Secularism

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Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report. By Saba Mahmood. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016.

Political secularism is founded on a double movement—it seeks to depoliticize religion by making the state into a neutral arbiter of religious differences but relegates religion to the private sphere and thereby “embeds it within the social life of the polity” (21). *Religious Difference in a Secular Age* explores this core paradox internal to secularism by bringing together two genealogies that are often seen as diametrically opposed to each other: that of international human rights discourses on minorities and religious freedom and the constitutional and legal history of Egypt’s governance of Christian and Baha’i groups. Both are well-known stories in their own right, one about the emergence of contemporary human rights discourses out of a particular European history of interdenominational strife, the two world wars, and the Holocaust, the other about the effects of colonial governance on postcolonial nation building and intercommunal relations. The originality of Mahmood’s contribution lies in showing connecting points between the two stories and bringing both to bear on anthropological debates about secularism and its promises.