

This mechanical linkage between economic trend and utopian experiment saves Berry the trouble of having to explain the particular origins of individual efforts or even to delve into the motivations behind each general utopian episode. Everything results from "long waves," a kind of law of utopian development that enables him even to predict a new utopian surge for the 1990s. How valid is the implied claim to scientific reliability and precision? Not very. Although as expected, most utopian foundings occurred during periods of deflation, there are numerous exceptions. During a period of inflation in the early twentieth century, for instance, nine religious, eleven secular, and nine socialist communes were founded in defiance of Berry's law.

An even more formidable challenge is posed by the post-1960 explosion of communes so numerous that Berry does not try to provide a definitive listing of them. How can he explain this eruption during a period of apparent prosperity, one he admits was "not afflicted by the same kind of downwave psychology" of earlier times (215)? His answer is that government spending had replaced the cycle of deflation and inflation with one of permanent inflation broken by "a trough that was free of deflation" (236). Although this sophistry allows him to breeze through the 1960s with hardly a reference to counterculture, the Vietnam War, and other factors, one would have to believe in the medicinal value of snake oil to accept it.

*America's Utopian Experiments*, then, has some limited strengths, but its only claim to notice rests on a dubious thesis, a recasting of the obvious into the pretentious. Would I purchase this work for my library? Probably yes. Do I recommend it to the people of Iowa? Only with hesitation. Do I trust the claim on its back cover that it presents "a new tool both for interpreting America's utopian past and for predicting the consequences of our present and future economic situation?" Decidedly not.

*The Agrarian Origins of American Capitalism*, by Allan Kulikoff. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992. xiv, 341 pp. Illustrations, tables, charts, graphs, notes, bibliography, index. \$49.50 cloth, \$17.50 paper.

REVIEWED BY SUSAN E. GRAY, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

*The Agrarian Origins of American Capitalism* is a collection of eight essays. Earlier versions of four of the essays were previously published; two others have subsequently appeared elsewhere. The collection thus represents a progress report on Kulikoff's thinking, based on prodigious reading and his own meticulous research, about the his-

tory of rural America. The essays, which treat a range of subjects, are each of interest. Their great strength, however, is their collective articulation of a powerful analytical framework for a history stretching from Europe on the eve of trans-Atlantic migration into the twentieth-century United States. Kulikoff's "model of rural development" is the "capitalist transformation of rural America—the making of independent smallholding farmers and artisans and dependent women and slaves into capitalists and wage laborers" (1).

Kulikoff's essays offer the most comprehensive, challenging synthesis of the flood of work that has appeared on the capitalist transformation since the publication of seminal essays by Michael Merrill, Christopher Clark, and James Henretta in the late 1970s. *The Agrarian Origins of American Capitalism* is a worthy successor to the first major collection of essays on the subject, *The Countryside in the Age of Capitalist Transformation* (1985), edited by Steven Hahn and Jonathan Prude. Kulikoff's essays share with the older volume a concern both with the elaboration of world capitalist systems over several centuries and with regional capitalist development in the United States. He has pushed far beyond the earlier work, however, in attempting to integrate the "macroeconomics of regional, national, and world economics and the microeconomics of household, market, and ideology" (2). Moreover, Kulikoff's writing is theoretically rigorous—a blessing in a field that often resembles blind men and women disputing the nature of the elephant. He is as precise in his Marxist usage of the terms *capitalism*, *class*, and *class consciousness*, as he is adept in elucidating differences in theoretical perspectives from similarities in findings in the work of neoclassical economic historians and social historians.

*The Agrarian Origins of American Capitalism* is divided into three parts. Kulikoff extends his theoretical and historiographical framework first to a discussion in chapter two of how rural Americans were formed into yeoman and capitalist classes and how they became locked in economic, political, and ideological conflict. Chapter three traces the development of rural class languages between the Revolution and the Civil War through a fresh reading of political partisan rhetoric.

The second section treats the American Revolution as the key event of the capitalist transformation. Kulikoff argues in chapter four for the bourgeois nature of the Revolution on the basis of its role in spurring capitalist development. Chapter five addresses the ideological legacy of the Revolution, which destroyed hierarchical social relations between the yeomanry and the elite. The former, inspired by the egalitarianism of revolutionary rhetoric, demanded participation in the political arena as a way of holding at bay the designs of capitalist-minded gentlemen. The final chapter in the section is an intriguing account of military service in Virginia during the war years. The state's

policy was predicated upon the contradictory republican goals of equity and voluntarism, which ensured that most white men served as soldiers, but at the same time undercut the ability of Virginians to repel the British invasion. Equity and voluntarism presumed each individual's ability to contract for military service, and thereby promoted a "market system in enlistments, including the purchase of substitutes" (153). The result was unequal commitments to service by the rich and the poor.

The last section of the volume focuses on migration as a way of analyzing regional differences in capitalist development. Chapter seven is particularly valuable for its careful analysis of the complex relationship between class affinities and regional ethnic cultures in the North. The final chapter in the volume is an elegant exploration of the early nineteenth-century advance of the southern cotton frontier, driven by the insatiable demands of a world market, and the consequences of the forced migration of slaves for African-American families, communities, and regional cultures.

A brief review cannot do justice to the richness of these essays. There is much to digest here. Not all of Kulikoff's arguments are equally well developed. I suspect, for example, that his distinction between yeomen and small capitalists works less well at the level of individual communities than it does at the level of state and regional politics. Similarly, Kulikoff's analysis of gender lacks the nuance of, say, his treatment of Virginia militiamen. His major point, that gender conflict within households has been little explored, is surely on target, but his own argument rests largely on the attractions of bourgeois ideology for white farm women subordinated within hierarchical households. To say that Kulikoff's essays are not definitive, however, only underscores their value: they show us how much we have learned, and how much we still need to find out.

*To Sow One Acre More: Childbearing and Farm Productivity in the Antebellum North*, by Lee A. Craig. The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993. xii, 161 pp. Tables, notes, appendixes, bibliographical essay, index. \$28.50 cloth.

REVIEWED BY DANIEL SCOTT SMITH, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

Major intellectual figures of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries anticipated later historians and social scientists in their emphasis on the importance of the ratio of people to land. In nineteenth-century American history this factor translated into pronounced regional dif-

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