

is not the crucial point. The point lies rather in the basic proposition of explaining the historical emergence of representative democracy as the result of the two mentioned components of the 'double helix'. This idea is brilliant, advancing research all the more because it is supported by solid, broad-based evidence.

The author expresses it as follows: 'While readers acquainted with any particular state will not (and should not) be much surprised by the respective chapter, they will nevertheless – or so it is hoped – profit from the overall comparative framework. It permits to contrast states within a coherent analytical framework, from the same vantage point and with the same concepts, and also allows cross-state comparisons of a number of specific features. Last but not least, it will put individual states' histories into perspective – in particular the claims made, in one way or another, for almost every one of them to have been the most precocious forerunner of democracy.' (pp. 68-69)

The book is clearly very topical. It begins with the observation that democracy is in a major crisis and ends with a discussion of some contemporary theoretical diagnoses, but it is cautious about offering its own advice. For the author, it is only clear that in further developing democracy, both components – participation and equality – must be kept in mind in terms of their tension and potential contradictions. Populist challenges to democracy can be countered if both the pluralism afforded by participation and the genuine equal representation of interests, views, and aspirations are taken into account (pp. 301-306).

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Bernhard C. Schär and Mikko Toivanen (eds), *Integrative and Collaborative Imperialism in Modern Europe. At the Margins of Empire, 1800-1950* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2025). 238 pp. ISBN 9781350377332.

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*Integrative and Collaborative Imperialism in Modern Europe* examines the entanglements of supposedly marginal European regions to shed new light on imperial history and the process of European integration. Written by historians, literary scholars, and anthropologists, this rich and often rewarding collection is thus devoted to the "colonialism

without colonies” of smaller powers and is especially interested in the ambiguities and colonial complicity of previously understudied groups and individuals. The introduction by Bernhard C. Schär and Mikko Toivanen makes a rather bold promise: that the study of such entanglements of Northern, Central, and Eastern Europe in a coherent analytical framework can help us reconceptualize empire on a European level. As they rightly insist, the continent’s margins have long been central to defining both the “internal order” of the idea of Europe and its external relations. In other words, so called marginal phenomena are employed here as tools to dissect Europe’s colonial origins and rethink the construction of pan-European identities.

These insights yield a highly promising volume, not least because they enable a historical study of hierarchies both inside and outside Europe, in addition to fostering original examinations of the violent incorporation of resources, labor, and ideas and the simultaneous exclusion of regions and peoples. Individual chapters focus either on economic and professional networks to thereby analyze the construction of Europe “from the outside in” (part I), or on the construction of identities along Europe’s margins and the negotiation of their place in global hierarchies (part II). They variously explore structures and networks of transimperial collaboration, European integration through colonial entanglements, and the construction of European identities through such entanglements.

In my estimation, Corinne Geering’s chapter on museums, colonial ethnography, and the European countryside, “Collections of a Rural Empire” belongs among the clear highlights. This thought-provoking contribution on ethnographic collections convincingly shows how the European countryside was embedded in the wider history of imperial domination and colonialism extending far beyond the European continent. Such structural connections and intertwined processes have, however, hardly featured in recent studies on colonial history, Geering rightly complains. This is the case even though materials from both were integrated in the same repositories in the nineteenth century, indicating that museums did not deploy clear-cut territorial notions of Europe at the time – and they were integrated in the most varied European realms irrespective of whether they possessed overseas colonies or not. As the author insightfully adds, this curious recent absence of the rural margins from colonial history has much to do with the separation of Europe from other world regions that twentieth-century museal reorganizations accomplished. They made European margins fall between two stools:

they have come to be seen as representative neither of the national and the imperial, nor of the colonies.

Kristín Loftsdóttir's 'Three Days from Civilization' on the transnational scientific imagination of the nineteenth century draws on the analytical concept of contact points to show how ambiguously Icelandic people tended to be depicted. They were viewed as "primitives" who supposedly belonged to Europe's past but also as at a "higher level of civilization" than people from more distant parts of the globe. Iceland was thus constructed, Loftsdóttir convincingly argues, as a place that was meant to further understanding of human differences and the meaning of being European.

Szabolcs László's 'Orientalist Knowledge from the Margins' amounts to another excellent contribution. László demonstrates with great erudition that Hungarian orientalist scholarship has in fact been – very much contrary to its flattering self-image of having engaged in a special form of "fraternal Orientalism" – deeply entangled with European imperialism and colonialism. This nuanced revisionist article shows through the instructive example of Antal Reguly that scholarly knowledge production about "the East" in nineteenth-century Hungary was intricately linked to national identity construction and integration into a 'European paradigm'. The age of empire and the age of liberal nationalism were intimately conjoined, László emphasizes, and Hungary's national liberal elites aimed to counter exclusionary discourses prevalent in Western centers through utilizing closely comparable ones.

John L. Hennessey's opening 'Preacher, Trader, Soldier, Spy' underlines just how common and significant border-crossing individuals were to the modern colonial project around the world. Hennessey studies such individuals midway between micro- and macrohistory: he does so through occupational categories, which may indeed be more relevant than countries of origin and more precise than broad class categories. Tomasz Ewertowski's 'Imperial Entanglements' deserves special mention, too, both for the impressive scope of the research it is based on (the author analyzes over a hundred travelogues) and the substantial comparison it offers between Poles and Serbs in the nineteenth century. Ewertowski succeeds at painting a splendid panorama of individuals affiliated with these nations who acted as missionaries, mercenaries, and experts in colonial East and Southeast Asia, and concludes by reflecting on the factors that facilitated their surprisingly widespread participation.

*Integrative and Collaborative Imperialism in Modern Europe* is a refreshing, inspiring, if somewhat heterogeneous volume both in terms of the complexity of intellectual ambition and quality of the resulting scholarship; most chapters develop intriguing arguments while some others yield fewer original insights. The overall agenda the volume proposes is certainly worthwhile and could be extended further in several relevant directions (as the editors themselves briefly note, religious, gender, and environmental histories are among the obvious candidates in this regard). What would require further reflection in the case of such extensions is whether the ambiguous positionality and complicit practices of many of the protagonists studied here are sufficiently captured by the concept of marginality: what this volume has aptly demonstrated, at least to me, is that phenomena and actors that tend not to fit into “the sanitized notion of Europe” (Manuela Boatcă) may in fact have been far from marginal in imperial history and the *longue durée* history of European integration.

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Josephine Hoegaerts, *Speaking, Stammering, Singing, Shouting. A Social History of the Modern Voice* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2025). 264 pp. ISBN 9781512827736.

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Featuring stammerers, singers, speakers, and shouters, Josephine Hoegaerts’s social history of the voice in the nineteenth century highlights how the voice can be studied as part of the history of the body, identity, and exclusion. Based on sources such as scientific treatises, singing manuals, self-help therapies and visual representations of the voice (mostly from Britain, France and Germany), this book aims to show, firstly, how the relationship between the voice and the body, as viewed by different experts, changed in the nineteenth century. Between 1790 and 1860, physicians searched for those body parts in which the voice is located, such as the larynx, the tongue, and the lungs, culminating in the invention of the laryngoscope around 1855. This instrument, developed by physicians and canto teachers, relied on the use of mirrors in combination with natural and artificial light sources to detect the vocal folds, thus exposing the voice to observe it as a living thing.