

esting hermenutical dilemma: What bearing does the recovery and interpretation of past practices or the religious configuration of a specific time period have on contemporary religious practice and who has the right to make these recoveries and evaluations both from within and outside of the group? This is an important consideration for ethnic studies, and while neither work solves the issue, both certainly engage actively in the question and the process of discerning and perhaps defining religious essences.

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**Hoerder, Dirk. *Cultures in Contact: World Migrations in the Second Millennium* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002). 779 pp., \$85.00 cloth.**

*Cultures in Contact* is an ambitious tome of the annotated world history of human mass migrations both within and between national boundaries. This book provides a glorious descriptive wealth of when, where, and to a lesser extent “why” mass migrations have occurred across the largest and most populous regions of the planet earth over the span of the past millennium. In this regard it may serve as a valued reference work for anyone curious about the “bigger picture” of migration flows; however, those seeking a simplistic theoretical synthesis that would account for the myriad patterns of human migrations over the past millennium will not be much gratified by Hoerder’s tome. As the author highlights in his introductory chapter, human migration flows may be either voluntary or coerced and in either case must be viewed in a socio-historically specific systems context.

Migration is here characterized as driven by a complex array of cultural, political, economic, demographic and ecological forces that converge at any one place and time in history to shape migration patterns across the globe. This fact does much to account for the great length and small font of this magnum opus. But make no mistake about it, *Cultures in Contact* is a noteworthy piece of scholarly writing summarizing as it does a millennium of intricate patterns of migratory flows. To assist the

reader in digesting these intricate migration patterns Hoerder has provided a welcome array of maps each corresponding to some specific global region at some specific century location. For example his maps encompass an array of religious expulsions (Jewish, Huguenot, Muslim, Hutterite, Bohemian, Puritan), Gypsy migrations, the trade emporia of the Indian Ocean, overseas migrations of indentured and free Asian migrants, European migrations to the Americas, African slave migrations, and many more. Throughout this encyclopedic scale work there is a wealth of astute commentary on the social dynamics pertinent to a particular migratory episode.

To the extent that the author exhibits an etiological preference in explaining the patterns of human migrations that are identified, he tends to focus on the great importance that shifting global labor market needs have played in structuring population shifts. It would be wrong, however, to infer from this that the author pays no attention to demographic, technological and ecological factors that have significant impact on world migration patterns. Nonetheless other scholars of migration history have given relatively greater weight to ecological and demographic factors in explaining why some regions of the world were notoriously prolific senders of migrants while other regions of the world produced conspicuously few migrants. These sorts of factors are dealt with more in Thomas Sowell's *Migrations and Cultures: A World View*. Of course it remains true that Sowell's insightful work focuses primarily upon the most recent past two centuries. Also, Jared Diamond's justly acclaimed *Guns, Germs and Steel* accords a relatively greater prominence to the role of demographic and ecological factors in world migration patterns. As but one example, Diamond contends that the current demographic profile of the Southern African continent can only be understood as derivative of what he describes as "a geographic accident".

Diamond observes that the Khoisan peoples indigenous to the drier parts of subequatorial Africa remained as hunter-gatherers unlike the Bantu-speaking Xhosa to their north because the plant and animal species indigenous to these regions could not sustain an agrarian lifestyle. This in turn is identified as the underlying cause of the paucity of Khoisan population in dra-

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matic contrast to the far more numerous and subsequently dominant Xhosa who gradually seized control of the traditional Khoisan homelands. Diamond informs us, though, that the Xhosa's migratory expansion stopped at the Fish River on South Africa's south coast. The reason for this being that the Bantu summer-rain crops did not grow in this region leaving the Cape's Khoisan population in control of this territory until they were later displaced by the invading Dutch settlers of the 17th Century. Overall Hoerder's work may be characterized as an eclectic blend of history, sociology and economics. Given the vast scope of his book it is understandable that he is often forced to skim over the cultural dynamics that are relevant to a fuller understanding of migratory profiles. Still the reader cannot help but to leave the work with an enlightened sense of the "inter-connectedness" of the many ethnically diverse populations of the human race.

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**Claudia Koonz. *The Nazi Conscience*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003). 362 pp., \$29.95 cloth.**

As the author observed in this engaging work, the expression "Nazi conscience" is not an oxymoron. Nazi morality, profoundly ethnic in nature, sharply defined those accepted and rejected as members of the German Volk. Claudia Koonz describes with great clarity the emergence of an "ethnic fundamentalism" supported by numerous "ethnocrats" under the Third Reich who, during the "normal years" of 1933-1939, advanced decidedly racial and biological perspectives on ethnicity (141, 217). Especially significant for our understanding of Nazi racial policy is Koonz's exploration of German public opinion, much of which reflected an abhorrence of Nazi brutality. What made the policy of genocide possible was the rationalization of anti-Jewish measures through a system of legal measures creating the "mirage of law and order" (193). Thus, Nazi actions against the racial other could be legally justified and initially accepted by