Jerram shows how women, completely outside the legal, political, and economic realm, claimed access to more and more spaces. In his chapter on sexuality Jerram follows more or less the same line of thought. He analyses the places where homosexuals were able to meet, and shows the fluctuating freedom of gay practices in the course of the twentieth century. His leading argument is that, influenced by the varying spatial possibilities, sexuality changed from being something people did to something they were, from a practice to an identity.

The last chapter of the book is dedicated to the city itself. "Building Utopia" describes the origins and outcomes of town planning, and of planning as a general tendency in the twentieth century. Jerram elaborates on the various consequences of the idea that all problems in society could be solved by the government. For the city, he claims, the vision of modern planners to provide all residents with a warm and well-constructed house delivered great results. More than in the other chapters, Jerram takes a clear position, especially when he defends the postwar high-rise estates built across Europe. From the 1970s onward, he claims, the suburbs had a bad reputation among intellectuals and in the media. But it was not the estates that formed the problem; it was the policy of the city that allocated the houses almost exclusively to poor people, underinvested in education, and neglected health care. For decades, Jerram claims, residents were happy to live in the suburbs. His defence of suburbs contrasts with a large discourse on city planning that originates with the work of Jane Jacobs. She claimed that a high concentration of residents and the unplanned nature of older city neighbourhoods were essential to creating a successful city, with entrepreneurship, social control, and social contact.[2] Jerram criticizes this idea, without mentioning Jacobs's work.

Leif Jerram has written an outstanding book on the street level of European history, and convincingly showed its importance for the course and understanding of the twentieth century. Especially in the last few chapters, he has adopted a very personal style and showed his deep affection for the modern metropolis. This makes his book a joy to read, but it will also raise some eyebrows concerning the academic basis for some of his statements. As an argument for his idea that poverty is not necessarily synonymous with disintegration, he mentions the nicely decorated alleys of the poorer residents in his home city, Manchester, contrasting them with the alleys of the wealthy yuppies. But is every space that easy to interpret? On the whole, however, this personal approach is not at all problematic; indeed, it challenges us to look more closely at our own surroundings. With his ability to combine many different themes and subjects in a clear and comprehensive way, Jerram has written both an important historical study and a real page turner.

Diederick Klein Kranenburg

FINK, LEON. Sweatshops at Sea. Merchant Seamen in the World's First Globalized Industry, from 1812 to the Present. The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill 2011. 278 pp. Ill. $34.95; doi:10.1017/S0020859012000260

For most of the past 200 years, the regulation of maritime labor has tended to reflect the prevailing political ideologies of the world's commercial centers, but always, Leon Fink insists, with a distinctly maritime twist. On the one hand, as even Adam Smith recognized, deep-sea shipping plays too important a role in creating and sustaining the global

2. Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York, 1961).

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commodity market as a physical reality for any government to leave seafaring labor wholly unregulated. On the other hand, no single nation or even hegemonic empire can hope to exercise exclusive regulatory control over an industry that stretches around the globe and operates, by definition, beyond and between national boundaries. As a result, from the era of classical liberalism in the mid-nineteenth century through the high point of welfare statism in the early twentieth century, state-led, nationalist efforts to regulate maritime labor – be they coercive or corporatist – all failed. By contrast, in our own era of neoliberal resurgence, efforts led by international labor unions and organizations dedicated to improving working conditions at sea rather than managing a critical national industry abroad have fared rather better. Indeed, the success of these efforts even suggest "the possibilities of humane governance in a globalized world economy" (p. 6). Thus, the surprising and perhaps a touch optimistic conclusion of Leon Fink's new book on the history of maritime labor regulation in the eras of British and American imperial hegemony.

Maritime history is going through a period of creative revival. Thanks to the foundational work of Marcus Rediker, Daniel Vickers, Jeffrey Bolster, Tim LeGoff, Alain Cabantous, Pablo E. Pèrez-Mallaína, and others, we can now be fairly confident in our knowledge about work at sea and the functioning of the maritime labor market in the early modern period. Recently, scholars who had hitherto focused primarily on the Atlantic world have extended their horizons and joined fruitful conversations with historians of Indian Ocean, South China Seas, Pacific, even Arctic and Antarctic seafaring. Piracy on all the seven seas continues to enjoy extraordinary popularity among experts and lay people alike. There have been important studies on gender, racial, national, and other identities especially among North American maritime communities, work that has benefited immensely from the help of literary scholars. Despite this thematic and geographic broadening of the field, however, few studies have stretched their chronological reach beyond the early nineteenth century, a failure that makes this new work by one of North America's most distinguished, most transnationally-minded labor historians all the more welcome.

Sweatshops at Sea is organized chronologically into three parts, beginning in the early nineteenth century. In Part 1 ("Mastered and Commanded"), Fink suggests that contrary to the general spirit of the age, which saw many coercive labor relations abolished on land, especially among white men, and even though the United States made "sailors' rights" a *casus belli* in 1812, seafaring workers continued to find themselves subject to paternalist control, high levels of disciplinary violence, limited physical mobility, and severely restricted freedom of contract. British authorities in particular were loath to relinquish their hold on workers who had long been considered a strategic national resource. The rising capital intensity and geographic reach of steam-powered shipping meanwhile added further arguments against reforms that might have destabilized the industry or given a competing nation's fleet a cost advantage in the post-mercantilist era of free trade. Thus, even as Britain moved full steam ahead into a period of liberal reforms, in this context crowned by the 1849 repeal of the Navigation Acts, followed in 1854 by the Merchant Shipping Act, the law continued to sanction harsh penalties for ill-discipline and especially for desertion. In the antebellum United States, where Jolly Jack Tar had emerged during the War of 1812 as a nationalist and implicitly white symbol of plucky republicanism, parallel legislation subjected sailors to treatment that was uncomfortably reminiscent of southern slavery. And yet, as in the United Kingdom, it took until the rise of welfare statism at the turn of the twentieth century for public outrage at the seamen's plight to translate into serious reform efforts.

Fink analyzes those reform efforts in the next three chapters, which together comprise Part 2 ("Strategies of Reform") and are focused in turn on the British parliamentary reformer

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Samuel Plimsoll, the ship-jumping Norwegian-American labor leader Andrew Furuseth – with a visage, allegedly, like the "prow of a Viking ship" (p. 95) –, and finally the pioneering British labor internationalist Havelock Wilson. Plimsoll, a crusading Member of Parliament working in the proud British tradition of morally outraged middle-class reform, by sheer force of will and a skillful leveraging of public anger, pushed the government to abandon its laissez-faire attitude to shipboard working conditions and instead begin to regulate out of existence those unseaworthy coffin ships that every year killed hundreds if not thousands of British seamen. The United States in 1915 went one step further and imposed improved shipboard working conditions, not just on its own merchant fleet but on every vessel calling on its ports, thus utilizing the nation's bulging economic might to attempt the creation of a uniform maritime labor market across the world's oceans. This apparent internationalism, however, was primarily designed to prevent the post-reform US merchant fleet from becoming utterly uncompetitive by forcing up the cost of low-wage foreign laborers and replacing them, preferably with racially white native-born sailors. Across the North Atlantic, meanwhile, seamen's unions were beginning to reach beyond national boundaries to agitate for further improvements to shipboard working conditions, an effort that remained limited first by the attempt to sideline African and Asian maritime workers and, secondly, by the radical nationalist fragmentation of World War I.

In Part 3 ("A World Fit for Seafarers?"), Fink finally discovers the slow emergence of a functioning international regulatory regime that takes account of the various imbalances and the fluidity of the global maritime labor market. The first push came with the creation of the International Labor Organization (ILO) in the immediate aftermath of World War I, a "reformers' redoubt" (p. 149) that sought to avert the threat of lower-deck militancy by bringing together labor leaders, governments, and capitalists from across the industrialized world. The Great Depression and World War II, however, soon undermined the progress of the early interwar years, and once again replaced international cooperation with nationalist protectionism. In the postwar decades, marked by an upswing in seamen's union strength and followed by the full denationalization of maritime capital with the rise of flags of convenience, cross-border cooperation was renewed, but this time under the leadership of maritime unions and without the racist exclusionism that had accompanied such efforts in the past. At the turn of the twenty-first century, we find the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), an umbrella organization for 201 affiliated unions and 720,000 seafarers worldwide, in a position strong enough effectively to impose minimum standards across the global maritime labor market, thus preventing the "race to the bottom" (p. 193) usually associated with unmoored, globalized capital.

As this brief summary suggests, *Sweatshops at Sea* is a study of chronologically deep and geographically impressive scope, yet at the same time it remains curiously limited. Fink rarely steps below deck – in fact, hardly goes to sea at all – and haunts parliamentary sessions, public meetings, and international standard-setting conferences instead. As he freely admits in the Introduction (though his title is a different matter), seafarers themselves at most appear as objects of his story, not as agents whose resistance, collaboration, mobility, and collective organization make the global maritime labor market so unique in the first place. Without an exploration of the dynamics of this labor market, an exploration of the struggles over working conditions that take place on each ship, neither the repeated failures of reform nor its eventual, unlikely success in the context of neoliberal deregulation is fully explicable.

Even so, *Sweatshops at Sea* will prove an indispensable, deeply researched companion to anyone who wishes to understand these matters, as well as an inspiration to anyone

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who has not yet given up hope of the possibility of fair-minded, inclusive labor regulation in an age of globalized capital. The book is handsomely produced, contains endnotes, an index, and a very detailed and usefully organized "Works Cited" section. It is also reasonably priced.

Niklas Frykman

Caroli, Dorena. Histoire de la protection sociale en Union soviétique (1917–1939). Préface de Roberto Sani. L'Harmattan, Paris 2010. 315 pp. € 28.50; doi:10.1017/S0020859012000272

The meeting of the history of social welfare and social history has been one of the most productive encounters in recent years. It has become an object of particular interest for historians, and social and political scientists. Therefore, an attempt to analyse the system of social welfare in a specific historical context is entirely welcome. Dorena Caroli's book is a remarkable example of in-depth research into the system of social welfare in the Soviet Union in the period between the two world wars, a period in the development of the Soviet state that is not fully represented in English and French literature. Caroli's book demonstrates a careful study of the archives of the former Soviet Union and a deep understanding of the political and social factors influencing the system of social welfare. Caroli proposes a complex approach based on political and institutional history on one hand, and social history and knowledge of cultural processes on the other.

A few words must be said about the author's choice of the key expression "*protection sociale*". Caroli notes that in European historiography "generally no distinction may be found between the expressions *welfare state*, *Etat providence*, *Stato sociale*, *social insurance*, and *social assistance*" (p. 19). When choosing a relevant expression for describing the Soviet system of social welfare, Caroli takes the historical context into consideration. She has chosen the expression *protection sociale* in French (*social'noe obespechenie* in Russian), which was born in the Soviet Union with the adoption of a law protecting workers from industrial accidents, whereas in Europe this notion took hold later.

The author explains the genesis of social welfare in European countries by noting the fact that the social insurance system was invented by Bismarck in Germany in order to protect and at the same time to control labour movements. Thus, the state provided workers and their families with social assistance in case of accidents, illness, disability, and unemployment. Bismarck's model formed the basis of European systems of social welfare (for example, the British welfare state) as well as the social welfare of the Russian tsarist monarchy, which in turn constituted the basis of the Soviet social welfare system. Nevertheless, despite the common roots, the expression "welfare state" is used by English-speaking authors mostly to describe the period after World War II, while Caroli emphasizes the importance of the expression *protection sociale* when speaking about the 1920s and 1930s in the Soviet Union. Caroli argues that it is paradoxical to use the expression welfare state or *Etat du bien-etre* in regard to the Soviet government's transformation of the social assistance system developed by the tsarist monarchy before the Revolution, and then the violent regime of Joseph Stalin. In fact, one of the aims of this research is to demonstrate the reasons why the Soviet system of social welfare could not provide workers with the security and social assistance promised by the October

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