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# Editorial Foreword

***CSSH* AT FIFTY** With this issue *CSSH* enters its fiftieth year, and we have decided to celebrate the occasion by publishing several more articles than we normally do and, a very rare treat, by opening up our workshop so new and longtime readers of *CSSH* can get a better sense of how the journal is run, the intellectual conditions under which it has flourished in the past, and how it works today as a forum for new research on recurrent patterning and change in human societies. Think of this anniversary issue as a potlatch and factory tour. We will offer you a generous sampling of our goods, along with a few trade secrets, not only to show off our vitality at the half-century mark, but also to share our enthusiasm for the creative process that has sustained *CSSH* for decades and, we hope, will guide its development for many years to come.

**IN RETROSPECT** The editorship of *CSSH* is an odd blend of privilege and burden, inspiration and exhaustion. It is, quite simply, a tremendous amount of work, and it is done in a state of willful anonymity. The editors cannot publish in the journal, and they do not sign the forewords they write. Add to this the lack of any teaching release or financial remuneration, and many colleagues are left to wonder, often aloud, "Why would anyone want such a job?" The answer is provided, with insight and disarming frankness, by two former editors of *CSSH* who, together, oversaw thirty-three of the journal's fifty years.

**Raymond Grew** lays out the early history of *CSSH* and considers the formative role of its founder, Sylvia Thrupp, from whom he received the editorship. Grew was inspired by Thrupp's dynamic vision for the journal, and he remained admirably true to it. Equally apparent in this essay is the extent to which Grew's own editorial habits—his exacting standards and his generosity to authors—have shaped the ethos of *CSSH* and have, by way of his example, endured to this day. For those who want to understand what *CSSH* values in an essay, how these preferences evolved over time, and how we decide what to publish (and what to reject), Grew's reflections are the ideal guide.

**Thomas Trautmann** followed Grew as editor, and his essay captures the edgy feel of producing *CSSH*: the relentless stream of manuscripts, the challenge of sifting through dozens of excellent essays with the unfortunate task of rejecting almost all of them, the sweat and satisfaction of putting together a new issue, the lingering suspicion that a certain essay should not have been rejected, or accepted. For anyone who has done editorial work, the moments



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of recognition in Trautmann's essay will be many and acute. It is sometimes hard to explain the pleasure found in cultivating intellectual space in which others can do their best work, but Trautmann describes the sensation perfectly.

**Queuing Up** Both Grew and Trautmann stress the importance of grouping essays under rubrics, an old *CSSH* habit meant to bring out complementary or contrastive effects in our manuscripts. Trautmann likens it to arranging flowers. Grew speaks of bringing essays into conversation, into a "continuing forum" that is lively and inspiring. Whether the imagery invoked is floral or dialogical, the animating force behind this editorial tradition is a logistical beast called "the queue," the master list of essays accepted for publication in the journal. The queue is a wellspring of conversation—or, if you like, it is "the garden" from which flowers are plucked for display—and the editor of *CSSH* must develop a constructive relationship with it. Indeed, many essays are accepted because they relate to the queue in useful ways, resonating with some essays, disturbing others, or standing out from prevailing trends in ways apt to trigger new conversations. The queue is genealogical. Though it seldom consists of more than a dozen essays at any given time, its contours have been shaped by the hundreds of manuscripts that have entered and left the queue. The current range of ideas *CSSH* authors, reviewers, and editors are eager to explore is reflected in the queue; it is a product of the queue; and it influences where the queue is likely to go next.

To extend this tour of our shop floor, it is worth presenting a short account of how this issue's content has materialized out of the queue. This bit of storytelling will reveal strong tendencies in our recent submissions, and it will point to gaps in coverage we want to fill.

**CONTINUITIES OF DEVELOPMENT** The political, economic, and moral enterprise that travels under the name of "development" is made up of ideological formulas that are now quite easy to spot. More interesting are the networks that connect development ideas and practices across the globe and across historical periods. *CSSH* receives a steady flow of manuscripts on development-related topics, and the two we feature in this issue entered our review process when our queue included essays by Margherita Zanasi, "Exporting Development: The League of Nations and Republican China" (49, 1: 143–69), and Alison Bashford, "Nation, Empire, Globe: The Spaces of Population Debate in the Interwar Years" (49, 1: 170–201). The latter explore development cultures of the 1920s, and they are revealing backdrops for work focused on more recent periods.

**Alyosha Goldstein** explores American understandings of underdevelopment at the height of the Cold War. He shows how U.S. government attempts to correct this "disorder" were built on the assumption that poverty is like "another culture," one alien to democratic liberalism. Yet the architects of development policy knew there were underdeveloped areas within the United

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States that could be used as training grounds for Peace Corps workers. Goldstein studies the ideological tensions and blind spots that accompanied the desire to make underdevelopment something external to America, even as its presence within the United States was central to the construction of development programs as "foreign" policy.

**Subir Sinha**, working on Community Development in Nehru's India, shows how attempts to improve village life were historically connected to a wide array of earlier development programs, most of them transnational in origin, scope, and implementation. Establishing links between Nehruvian policies and the colonial-era work of Christian missionaries, model village designers, and U.S. charitable foundations, Sinha constructs his own portrait of "bourgeois geoculture," a durable, highly adaptable framework that has long served as a motivating ideology for development work in India and elsewhere. The work of Zanasi, Bashford, and Goldstein gives further comparative depth to Sinha's framework, and it is safe to assume that the queue will continue to grow in the directions they collectively explore.

**INFORMAL NETWORKS AND THE SYSTEM** The spread of free markets and democratic governance into post-socialist and postcolonial worlds has produced renewed interest in the informal economies and political networks that (we are told) survived the collapse of socialism and flourish everywhere in the global postcolony. The essays we feature in this issue were received and vetted when our queue contained two excellent studies of corruption and the politics of favors: Steven Pierce's "Looking Like a State: Colonialism and the Discourse of Corruption in Northern Nigeria" (48, 4: 887–914) and Douglas Rogers' "How to be a *Khoziain* in a Transforming State: State Formation and the Ethics of Governance in Post-Soviet Russia" (48, 4: 915–45). These essays focus on the often-inconsistent demands of personal morality and state discipline, and they call for even closer analysis of the mechanisms by which such demands are factored into and out of governance.

**Golfo Alexopoulos** focuses on how Stalin crushed informal networks of real and imagined opposition by targeting what he considered a primary locus and reliable medium of disloyalty: the family and kinship ties. Stalinist policing held families accountable for the crimes of their counterrevolutionary members, and this practice was extended to entire ethnoracial groups, especially those of the southern republics, who were deemed especially prone to clannishness. The urgency with which Stalin pursued the relatives of his enemies was part, Alexopoulos argues, of a political worldview in which the power of kinship rivaled that of fidelity to the state, a condition that forced Stalin to rely on family metaphors and kinship networks in his campaigns to root out "enemies of the people," their family, and friends.

**Alena Ledeneva** analyzes the adaptability of binding, non-contractual ties, which include certain modalities of kinship. She raises the comparative

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stakes, however, by juxtaposing the Russian practice of *blat*, "doing personal favors," to the Chinese practice of *guanxi*, with its emphasis on gift giving and pulling strings. These forms of beating the system, Ledeneva argues, have not responded to market reform in the same ways. While *blat* is being superseded by outright graft and social inequality, *guanxi* has become a more prominent and accepted dimension of big business and politics in mainland China. At play, Ledeneva suggests, are different localizations of the global economy. Though opposed in theory and practice to "the system," *blat* and *guanxi* are not (yet) reducible to naked illegality, or ethical dysfunction; by retaining their informality, these practices both impede and expedite systemic reforms.

**TRANSNATIONAL REVISIONS** The variants of transnationalism popular in the 1990s have recently lost much of their analytic appeal, and *CSSH* authors have been quick to develop new, more historically grounded ways of writing across and against the border fixations that pervade trans/national politics. The essays featured here advocate a careful reassessment of claims common in studies of immigrant and otherwise mobile populations, and they share this revisionist sensibility with Radhika Mongia's "Historicizing State Sovereignty: Inequality and the Form of Equivalence" (49, 2: 384–411) and Pamela Ballinger's "Borders of the Nation, Borders of Citizenship: Italian Repatriation and the Redefinition of National Identity after World War II" (49, 3: 713–41). These papers consider how national spaces change shape, and how movement across borders can produce misleading similarities and incomplete differences between populations. A critique of the privilege given to trans*national* mobility, as a key to understanding social identity shifts, is an obvious next step in this revisionist mode.

**David Fitzgerald** uses Mexican hometown associations (HTAs) to rethink the relationship between immigrant communities and their towns of origin. Many of the trends spotted by authors who write about HTAs as transnational phenomena were actually present decades earlier, when HTAs sprang up to meet the needs of small town Mexicans who traveled to Mexico City and Guadalajara to work. The apparent novelty of the hometown associations established later in the United States is illusory, and Fitzgerald maps out several historical processes that distinguish and connect HTAs in Mexico and abroad. Although transborder mobility is not the defining factor it once seemed to be, Fitzgerald argues that a palpable sense of cultural displacement has been central to the success of HTAs from the beginning. New technologies of transportation and communication can dampen that sensibility, or amplify it, depending on historically shifting conditions.

**C. J. Fuller** and **Haripriya Narasimhan** study the relationship between Tamil Brahmans, the information technology (IT) industry, and transnational cosmopolitanism. The link between the Brahman social type and the global,

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cosmopolitan elite is strong. Fuller and Narasimhan describe the pathways rural Brahmans followed on their way to becoming an urban, highly educated class disproportionately involved in IT firms in India and abroad. This rise to hyper-modern privilege, they contend, has not turned most Tamil Brahmans into "transnational cosmopolitans." Because more IT work is done now in India, fewer Tamil Brahmans go abroad for employment or schooling, and many expatriates, who never made a virtue of abandoning Brahman lifestyles, are returning to Tamilnadu. The success Brahmans have had as a mobile, highly-skilled class is allowing them, once again, to lead lives that, according to Fuller and Narasimhan, are regionally localized and less cosmopolitan.

**MODERNIZING MISSIONS** Economic and political development are not simply matters of government policy, centralized planning, and ideologies of rule. Development also depends on individual expertise; it is a kind of work done by people who are motivated and trained in highly specific ways. Often described as "missions," the projects carried out by these experts have predictably modernizing or progressive rationales, even when a strong modernist state is not on hand to back them. Recent *CSSH* essays by Paul Gootenberg, "A Forgotten Case of 'Scientific Excellence on the Periphery': The Nationalist Cocaine Science of Alfredo Bignon, 1984–1887" (49, 1: 202–32), and Ian Copland, "The Limits of Hegemony: Elite Responses to Nineteenth-Century Imperial and Missionary Acculturation Strategies in India" (49, 3: 637–65), offer closely drawn portraits of men dedicated to the advance, both scientific and moral, of societies defined as backward. Despite incessant terminological updating, modernizing missions persist, and two essays in this issue explore the role of specialists, advisors, and professionals in this endless work.

**Stephanie Cronin** studies the elaborate politics of European military missions to Qajar Iran. For over a century, Qajar rulers imported Russian, French, British, Swedish, and Austrian military advisors to train and equip a "modern" army. Almost all of these missions failed, or they created military forces that operated in the interests of foreign powers. Cronin relates the conditions under which European military advisors worked, the popular and official resistance they encountered, and the pervasive similarities between the experiences of these missions and trends now developing in Afghanistan and Iraq, where U.S. forces are involved in military development and state-building projects that are reproducing many of the circumstances that consistently undermined the efforts of foreign military advisors in Qajar Iran.

**Dafna Hirsch** focuses on a development worker of a very different kind: the public health nurse. Committed to (Western) ideas of personal hygiene, food preparation, housekeeping, and childcare, Jewish public health nurses in British Mandate Palestine carried the Zionist civilizing mission to Oriental and East European Jews, teaching them how to live more modern, hence "healthier," lives. This work was supported by the American Zionist women's

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organization, Hadassah, and Hirsch shows how this charitable venture encoded complex internalizations of Orientalist thought. As Eastern European women were trained to become public health nurses, they were removed from zones of backwardness and enlisted as educators who could reform the even more "primitive" Oriental Jews. Hirsch argues that public health nurses brought new populations into the Zionist collective and created modern, professional identities for themselves, all the while doing the "dirty work" of national progress.

**ANTI ANTI-SECULARISM** The public beating inflicted on "secularism" in recent years has been so compelling (to behold and partake in) that even secularism's necessary Other, "religion," has sustained heavy collateral damage. In the elite quarters of critical theory, the religious/secular binary has gone the way of modern and traditional, Orient and Occident, center and periphery. Yet a growing scholarly interest in the magical and monstrous, and calls for renewed attention to "enchantment," suggests that elements basic to the opposition of secular and religious sensibilities remain to be understood, in contemporary as well as historical contexts. *CSSH* essays located in this liminal space include, from our recent queue, Margaret Wiener's "Dangerous Liaisons and other Tales from the Twilight Zone: Sex, Race, and Sorcery in Colonial Java" (49, 3: 495–526), Neil Kodesh's "History from the Healer's Shrine: Genre, Historical Imagination, and Early Ganda History" (49, 3: 527–52), and Jorge Flores' "Distant Wonders: The Strange and the Marvelous between Mughal India and Habsburg Iberia in the Early Seventeenth Century" (49, 3: 553–81).

**Janaki Bakhle** speaks directly to these themes, sending out a challenge to anti-secularists without herself joining the ranks of those hostile to religious sensibilities. India is Bakhle's principal area of interest, but her suggestion that arguments against the secular and secularism have gone a bit too far, and are now taking on unintended (and unattractive) political baggage, can be applied widely. Bakhle is especially critical of Brahman elitist nostalgia, intolerant Hindu nationalism, and devotional approaches to pedagogy that function as props for authoritarianism. To nuance this position, Bakhle examines secular and religious traditions in the social construction of Indian classical music, arguing that secular approaches provide ample room for enchantment, yet also encourage the critical awareness that frees Indian music from a constricting relationship to Hindu devotionalism. This stance, which Bakhle calls "anti anti-secular," encourages further research on the sources of enchantment that pervade secular and religious experiences of music and other cultural forms.

**THE HUMAN AS SPECIMEN** It is probably not by accident that themes of enchantment and re-enchantment are vividly developed in *CSSH* essays that

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deal with secular knowledge production: specifically, with developments now occurring at the boundaries of scientific knowledge about the human body. This uncanny terrain, where magical and empirical notions of the human merge and reconfigure each other, is fertile ground for science studies. The essays that appear in this issue are in conversation with Joy Parr's "A Working Knowledge of the Insensible? Radiation Protection in Nuclear Generating Stations, 1962–1992" (48, 4: 820–51) and Stephan Palmié's "Thinking with *Ngangas*: Reflections on Embodiment and the Limits of 'Objectively Necessary Appearances'" (48, 4: 852–86). The peculiar role of the life sciences in creating and, at the same time, suppressing awareness of the body's complexity and sacred powers is a theme that continues to supply fascinating material for the queue.

**Simon J. Harrison** discusses the use of human skulls as war trophies by nineteenth-century British soldiers in Africa. Although associated with barbaric practices of headhunting and battlefield mutilation, Harrison argues that British soldiers who took skulls were engaged both in a kind psychological warfare with their enemies, showing that they could be equally "savage," and a civilizing enactment of scientific practices popular at the time, which included the collection, measuring, classification, and display of human skulls. As gruesome and atavistic as these rituals appear today, and appeared to many critics then, Harrison argues that they were compelling expressions of the growing prestige and transnational authority of scientific rationality.

**Lynn M. Morgan** examines Gertrude Stein's unsuccessful career as an embryologist. Stein's literary habit of blurring the lines between authors, subjects, and genres brought her immense fame, but its early manifestation in her scientific work was a recipe for disaster. As a medical student at Johns Hopkins University, Stein failed in her attempt to build a scientific model of an embryo brain. Morgan suggests that Stein's botched model, and reaction to it among her classmates and teachers, exposes habits that, although central to the practice of scientific anatomy, must be obscured in the interests of objective authority. The terms on which Stein's brain model was rejected, Morgan argues, point to generative gaps between the embryos we see, the embryologists who produce knowledge about them, and the stories we tell about what embryos are.

**LOOKING AHEAD** The diverse array of topics and approaches we have assembled for our fiftieth anniversary is typical of the innovative scholarship that fills every new issue of *CSSH*. Our queue is filled with impressive manuscripts. As a cumulative artifact that links conversations important to the journal's past and present, the queue continues to select for comparative work of the highest quality. It can also be inertial, and certain trends dominate it for years at a time. All *CSSH* editors have tried, on occasion, to move the queue in new directions, often with mixed results. Letting contributors decide what comparison is, and what comparisons are most worthy of study, is a longstanding tradition at *CSSH*. The editors ride waves of intellectual interest, but the extent to

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which we can generate or ignore trends is limited. Still, we think there are areas of research that are underrepresented on our pages, and we will continue to call for new work that fills these gaps.

A quick review of *CSSH* publications of the last decade (or more) reveals a journal dedicated to things modern, colonial, and postcolonial. The early modern is our ancient history, and studies of medieval societies, not to mention genuinely ancient ones, are few and far between. Deep history—what used to be called "prehistory"—is a context of study that, despite its temporal immensity and importance to human development, has no representation in our queue. We hope this will change in future, largely because topics of proven interest to our contributors—imperial politics, the state, the development of social and political complexity, religion, kinship, economy, language ideologies, and the constitution of moral systems—are greatly enriched by locating them in larger fields of spatial and temporal comparison. While maintaining our full engagement with modern worlds, especially those that grew out of the global expansion of European societies, *CSSH* is eager to build infrastructures for comparison that are inclusive of vast stretches of human history, and human evolution, that must be understood differently and can, for that very reason, reinvigorate the impulse to pose and solve problems of change and recurrent patterning in human societies that, fifty years ago, started us on this journey.

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