

in agrarian political and economic history should also concern themselves with the kind of cultural and intellectual analysis that Jones has offered here.

The book's first chapter looks at four intellectual traditions that came together to form the Agricultural Enlightenment: physiocracy, cameralism, political economy, and agronomy; chapter 2 then turns to the role of the state in eighteenth-century agrarian reform. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 examine the complex pathways along which ideas and agricultural technology circulated in the eighteenth century, while chapter 6 examines the effect that all this communication and exchange had (or sometimes did not have) on agricultural production. The final two chapters consider agricultural improvement's relationship to science and its environmental implications.

Though Jones gives careful attention to the specific regional dynamics of agrarian change, he is also interested in speaking to global historians' debates about the comparative development of Western Europe and Asia. In his chapter "Nature and Landscape," for example, he argues convincingly that there is little evidence that European food production had reached its ecological limits by the late eighteenth century; there was still plenty of new land left to integrate into production, and opportunities to raise yields through more intensive production techniques also abounded. Jones's ability to bring the cultural history of the Enlightenment into conversation with these debates in global and economic history is admirable. Throughout the work, Jones is quick to point out the limits of quantitative analysis, especially in a period for which reliable numbers are hard to come by, but he also does not shy away from attempting to assess the material causes and effects of agricultural improvement. As a result, the book, in addition to painting an effective portrait of a cultural network with a shared set of interests, is also able to give some indication of how all this cultural work changed European food production and European landscapes.

There are a few points on which one might take issue with the author's choices. The chapter on science would have benefited from more attention to the natural historical disciplines; Jones gives pride of place to chemistry in this chapter, but fields like botany and entomology deserve more space than they get. There are also a few passages in which Jones's interest in the "Little Divergence" theory, which posits a differential rate of development for late medieval and early modern northwestern Europe, seems to pull him away from his main agenda of sketching out a shared eighteenth-century European Agricultural Enlightenment. But these are minor criticisms of an extremely valuable and well-executed book. Given the importance of agricultural improvement in eighteenth-century elite culture, a broad range of people working in eighteenth-century studies, literary scholars as well as historians, should find this book of interest.

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Rechtstrieb: Schulden und Vollstreckung im liberalen Kapitalismus, 1800–1900.

By *Mischa Suter*.

Konstanz: Konstanz University Press, 2016. Pp. 328. €32.90.

Rechtstrieb explores changes in the legal and cultural meaning of debt and bankruptcy over the course of the nineteenth century. Taking the case of Switzerland, Mischa Suter offers insights into a crucial aspect of modern economic life and into the emerging economic relations of liberal capitalism. More than simply a regional study in legal and economic history, the book aspires to contribute to a broader debate about the history of capitalism as an economic and social system. Suter's book reflects a growing interest in economic matters among

cultural historians who are enriching the field of economic history with their focus on the everyday practices of economic actors and the cultural meaning attached to them. *Rechtstrib* furthermore adds to a recently revived discussion about the transformations and continuities of “moral economies” in the emergence of modern capitalism.

Suter, however, is less interested in more traditional structural approaches to the history of capitalism or in histories of commodification. Instead, he seeks to unearth the epistemic foundations of the new liberal capitalist order and the cultural construction of the very categories of property, debt, and of the economic self on which it was built. His starting point therefore is a change in legal conceptions of debt and the path toward the Swiss federal bankruptcy law of 1892 (“*Rechtstrib*” is the Swiss legal term for the execution of delinquent debt). The law provided a nationally unifying framework replacing a slew of regional regulations derived from local, agricultural economies. New provisions regarding the liquidation or seizure of assets in case of bankruptcy, by contrast, fit the needs of global capitalism as they could be reliably enforced and allowed for a distinction between commercial traders and “other” debtors. Over the course of the nineteenth century, debt in Switzerland had been a contested concept as it became both increasingly moralized and abstract. Closely intertwined with specific objects and social entanglements in premodern village economies, debt obligations became more ubiquitous, formalized, and contractual over the decades under investigation.

Suter’s study is most engaging and insightful when he discusses the changing social practices surrounding debt and bankruptcy. This includes, on the one hand, efforts by the state and local authorities to categorize and keep track of debt obligations and related economic regulations by means of registers and investigative techniques. On the other hand, we learn much about the various effects of bankruptcy on individuals which could carry the price of social stigmatization and “civic death.” Delinquent debtors forfeited their civic rights and suffered a series of potential consequences from loss of residency to the shame of being called out in church or being denied the right to frequent taverns. Debt could also upend family and gender relations within households, as the study shows, in particular, with regard to conflicts over the wife’s property within bankrupt households (the dowry long received special consideration among household assets to be distributed in liquidation proceedings). While the use of the debtor’s prison disappeared by the 1870s as in most liberal states, debt delinquency became increasingly portrayed as an individual moral failure while pawnshops providing credit to the working classes were eyed with particular moral concern. As Suter shows, however, debt remained morally muddled and, depending on circumstances, many “failed” debtors managed to maintain or regain some semblance of social respectability.

The state managed the liberal economic order with surprisingly little intervention when it came to bankruptcy or foreclosures in Switzerland. Whereas debt became more calculable for debtors and lenders alike over the course of the nineteenth century, economic crises continued to wreak havoc with new waves of bankruptcies. Some debtors gained in leeway, but others, including women and industrial laborers, lost out against the older social networks of credit and debt. Under the new legal order they found themselves adjudicated with less leniency than in the older local procedures in which many communalities were concerned with ensuring the financial survival of indebted households lest they would become a burden on the communal purse.

To demonstrate the multifaceted nature of nineteenth-century debt relations, the study draws on a diverse set of contemporary sources from judicial documents and political tracts to popular literature and diaries. Moreover, Suter develops a theoretical framework to understand credit in terms of cultural anthropology, which seeks to reconcile Marcel Mauss’s gifting economy with Marxian analysis and more contemporary efforts to write a history

of economic knowledge. As property became increasingly disentangled from social relations and debt became individualized, debtors and other economic actors found themselves bound to a new set of social and legal rules under liberal capitalism. To some, Suter's theoretical focus will undoubtedly be a strength of the study, but other readers will experience it as a weakness. Especially in the early, more conceptual chapters of the book the prose is analytically so overwrought that it sometimes obscures more than it clarifies. Even in key passages the meaning of sentences remains vague or downright unintelligible to mere mortals uninitiated to the jargon of cultural theory. This all but precludes *Rechtstrieb* from being appreciated by anyone with less than full fluency in German.

This is unfortunate because Suter actually has an important story to tell about changing legal definitions, social practices, and cultural constructions of credit relationships in an emerging liberal order. The study's many insights, however, might be lost on other social and economic historians interested in similar questions. Quantitative economic historians have (justly) been critiqued for an inaccessible focus on methodological approach and theoretical framework, and cultural historians should not fall into this same trap. In the interest of cross-disciplinary collaboration it would be most useful if they presented their analysis in a manner that is both accessible and not dismissive of more structural histories of capitalism. After all, Suter's approach to delve deep into the concrete experiences of nineteenth-century debtors and of those who adjudicated their cases can help us understand capitalism as more than an economic system or an institutional sociopolitical order, but as an "uneven" and contested set of everyday practices.

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Science in the Archives: Pasts, Presents, Futures. Edited by *Lorraine Daston*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017. Pp. viii+398. \$112.50 (cloth); \$37.50 (paper and e-book).

Historians remain as committed as ever to archival research as the standard of original scholarship. But what is an archive? For Leopold von Ranke and his generation, it referred first of all to records of state and of state-like institutions, notably the Vatican. These documents were not preserved for the sake of professional historians, but as working records and as a basis of institutional continuity and legitimacy. Historians nowadays are privileged to do much of our research in archival documents maintained and curated for our own use, some of which had never before been part of an institutional repository. Meanwhile, *the archive*, having become unexpectedly fashionable, is slipping from our grasp. *Science in the Archives*, created by a research group linked to the Max Planck Institute for History of Science in Berlin, includes just one paper specifically on historical archives. That one, by Suzanne Marchand, is about the relative paucity of archival materials on the ancient world, which, she argues, has a lot to do with the odd circumstance that the ancient world is typically taught and researched in departments of classical studies rather than of history. The figurative sense conferred on *archive* by Derrida and especially by Foucault is no longer the driving force of its reconsideration. Rather, the archive is now often identified with the *database*, which, in an age that yearns to become digital, has coaxed many planets into revolving around it.

Lorraine Daston, editor of the volume, has turned her department of the Max Planck Institute into a distinguished site for collaborative work reaching well beyond the world of specialists in history of natural science to include almost anyone engaged in thinking