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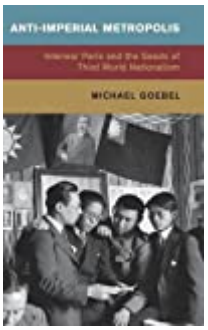

Michael Goebel. *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015. xiii, 344 S. $120.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-1-107-07305-0.

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M. Goebel: Anti-Imperial Metropolis

In this fascinating and well-researched study of non-Western expatriates in Paris between the wars, Michael Goebel combines meticulous social history with several broad claims about the significance of this experience. Building upon and at times criticizing a wide variety of historiographies, including the study of decolonization and of migration, Goebel argues for the importance of the social history of ideas in exploring decolonization and the transition from formal empires to independent nation-states in the mid-twentieth century. At the same time he gives a fresh and original portrait of an intensively studied time and place, interwar Paris. The result is an engaging and thought-provoking example of what sociologist Roland Robertson has called glocalization, the study of the interaction between the local and the global. Roland Robertson, Glocalization. Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity, in: Mike Featherstone / Scott Lash / Roland Robertson (eds.), Global Modernities, London 1995.

Goebel departs from contemporary studies of colonial migration and anti-colonial activism in several respects. He grounds his work in the perspective of alltagsgeschichte, emphasizing the importance of the everyday as key to the development of anti-imperialist ideologies. He does not so much dismiss intellectual history as insists upon connecting it to the social history of daily life. He also does not focus only on people from the French colonies but considers a wider range of exiled and expatriate communities in Paris. In particular Goebel, a historian of Latin America, looks at the presence of Latin American expatriates in the French capital. As a result, Goebel speaks of anti-imperialism rather than anti-colonialism. Finally, Goebel employs techniques of digital history, notably digitalized network analysis, effectively to explore the links between different individuals and communities.

With his analysis, Goebel reinforces a long-standing view of Paris as a city that promotes social, intellectual, and political interchange between many different types of people. He begins by noting that in the early 1920s Zhou En Lai and Ho Chi Minh were neighbors, living within a few blocks of each other in the cityâs Place dâItalie. From there he goes on to describe and analyze the many different ways in which the cityâs communi-

ties of colonial and non-European migrants interacted. Throughout Goebel argues this was not just of interest to Parisians or the French state, but had global implications. As he notes, during the interwar years the French capital had more non-European residents than any other city in Europe, including London. Over the course of eight chapters, Goebel explores both the ways in which people from the same areas interacted with each other and built expatriate communities, and the many interactions different communities established with each other. Although he portrays his work as a study in the seeds of third world nationalism, it is at the same time, perhaps even more so, a rich analysis of the non-European ethnic fabric of the French capital between the wars.

Goebel argues throughout that the presence and interaction of many different expatriates from different experiences together in Paris underscored global legal and political inequalities in ways that ultimately fostered a third world consciousness. Like many cultural historians he emphasizes difference over similarity, but at the same time explores how such differences worked to create a broader political awareness. Particularly in the first half of the book, he gives a detailed portrait of the communities established by North Africans, Indochinese, Latin Americans, and blacks of different origins. While accepting the idea that Paris lacked ethnic ghettos, Goebel nonetheless asserts that spatial urban concentrations were a reality of the cityâs expatriate life and nourished the creation of these communities. He looks at cultural practices like music and food as ways of both bringing these communities together, and at the same time marketing them to the surrounding French public.

In the bookâs second half Goebel focuses more heavily on expatriate politics, in particular on Communism and nationalism, and their contributions to developing an anti-imperial consciousness. He justifiably criticizes those transnational historians who neglect the quintessential modern transnational political movement, Communism, and in a very interesting chapter explores the ways in which the idea of nationalism in interwar Paris both differed from and contributed to the rise of independent nation-states after decolonization. Goebel challenges historians like Frederick Cooper and Gary Wilder who emphasize alternatives to the rise of postcolonial nation-states, instead re-inscribing the importance of nationalist visions, including pan-nationalist ones like pan-Africanism, in the history of modern anti-imperialism. Frederick Cooper, Citizenship Between Empire and Nation. Remaking France and French West Africa, 1945â1960, Princeton 2014; Gary Wilder, Freedom Time. Negritude, Decolonization, and the Future of the World, Durham 2015. He finishes his fine study by challenging transnational historians who (rightly) reject teleology to pay more attention to narratives of causation and historical change at the global level.

âAnti-Imperial Metropolisâ is an excellent book that builds upon the work of scholars like Jennifer Boittin and Marilyn Levine to create a masterful portrait of a unique time and place. Jennifer Boittin, Colonial Metropolis. The Urban Grounds of Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in Interwar Paris, Lincoln 2010; Marilyn Levine, The Found Generation. Chinese Communists in Europe during the Twenties, Seattle 1993. While always thought-provoking, some of its arguments succeed better than others. Goebel tends to downplay notions of race and racial difference, which I argue played a key role both in the rise of anti-imperial nationalism and in the views of these expatriate communities by Parisians in general. The attempt to integrate Latin Americans into Parisian anti-imperial life is uneven, and I wonder if many did not have as much in common with a group Goebel does not consider, the white American expatriates of the *Lost Generation*. Also, while Goebel discusses the large French Caribbean community in Paris, he does not address the fact that their Parisian experiences pushed them away from nationalism and towards a greater emphasis on equality as French citizens after the Second World War.

Such concerns do not detract from what is a major achievement. In âAnti-Imperial Metropolisâ Michael Goebel crafts an engaging portrait of a diverse group of workers and intellectuals from many different shores who developed in Paris visions of their own nations and futures that would reshape the world in the mid twentieth century. Anyone interested in the transnational history of the modern world will find this an intriguing and at times provocative study.

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