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are differences between the two cases of political ideology in relation to women, where these differences manifest themselves and where similarities might be drawn could be analysed in a more refined manner.

Another problematic area relates to methodology. Sarıaslan discusses her positionality at the start of the book and acknowledges her own positionality as a Western-educated woman, which is expected to influence her perspective and interactions during fieldwork. However, while her positionality is acknowledged, one might expect in a feminist ethnography more of an analysis about how her positionality is perceived in the field, the impact of her presence in the field, and the implications of her departure from the field. Except on two occasions where she speaks about her potential association with the central government and the state because of her hometown Ankara (p. 24), the capital of Turkey, and the ethical issues concerning the anonymity of the participants (p. 25), Sarıaslan fails to problematize the encounters in the field and ignores the analytical explorations of feminist methodology.

Sarıaslan finds another opportunity to problematize her positionality in the Conclusion, when she reflects on the aftermath of her research. Yet, her positionality is not evident in the conclusions she draws, as she acknowledges at the beginning of the study. Like Oya, a UN local coordinator, Sarıaslan had left the region before the political situation changed in 2014. The adverse political and social conditions created by the absence of peace were exacerbated by disasters such as the COVID-19 pandemic and earthquakes, as Sarıaslan mentions. The women who remained in the region faced a difficult period, including armed conflict, so much so that a female tutor that Sarıaslan met during her fieldwork was killed, as Oya informed her after they had left the region. Nevertheless, Sarıaslan does not provide a feminist reflexive perspective on the "privilege" of leaving the field (both a research field and battlefield). It would have been beneficial if the Conclusion had included more about the author's positionality and the anthropology of development, topics touched on in the introduction.

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WICKRAMASINGHE, NIRA. Slave in a Palanquin. Colonial Servitude and Resistance in Sri Lanka. Columbia University Press, New York 2020. xi, 299 pp. Ill. Maps. $140.00; £117.00. (Paper, E-book: $35.00; £30.00.)

Reckoning with over 300 years of Sri Lankan history requires engaging with overlapping legacies of European colonization. Upon arriving in Colombo in 1518, the Portuguese were the first Europeans to augment and manage local practices of enslavement. After seizing control of the island from the Dutch in the early

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nineteenth century, British colonial officials abolished slavery in Sri Lanka in 1844. Sri Lankan slavery also implicates the island's timeless role as a conduit for migration and trade in the Indian Ocean. For some time, enslaved people from Dutch outposts such as Batavia and the Cape worked alongside enslaved laborers who arrived from British ports in South India.

These intertwined histories of slavery in Sri Lanka and questions of labor, memory, and freedom are at the heart of Nira Wickramasinghe's masterful reconstruction of "fugitive lives" (p. 3). Wickramasinghe argues that, in Sri Lanka, today, enslaved pasts are partially or completely unknown. In response, Wickramasinghe has written an "engaged history of the present" that focuses on the social lives of unfree laborers across the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Dutch and British empires (p. 3). Beginning with the murder of a Dutch fiscal in Colombo in 1723, Wickramasinghe draws upon slave registers, census records, guidebooks, legal cases, colonial petitions, and ecclesiastical records in an approach "that interlaces the past and the present and braids archival traces with their echoes" (p. 189).

Wickramasinghe's exploration of individual social lives through colonial court records brings to the fore fundamental shortcomings of the liberal historical idea of an "unfreedom-to-freedom continuum" (p. 88). For instance, Chapter Two focuses on the individual experiences of four enslaved people in Galle and Colombo during the first decades of British rule. The trial of an enslaved woman named Selestina in Galle sheds light on infanticide as resistance amidst an archive of violence. The murder trial of an enslaved man named Valentine hints at the social realities of enslaved Malay laborers in eighteenth-century Ceylon. Wickramasinghe even studies the "voice of a frightened nine-year old child under colonial rule" through the records of a kidnapping case (p. 84). The trial of Ameensa trying to assert her and her daughter's freedom supports Wickramasinghe's assertion that enslaved people in eighteenth-century Ceylon tended not to invoke universal principles of justice. Rather, Wickramasinghe argues that "notions of justice and injustice born out of societal religious and ethical values of the limits of permissibility permeated enslaved people's attempts to deal with their condition" (p. 83).

The limits of an "unfreedom-to-freedom continuum" are doubly evident in Chapter Four, which focuses on a remarkable and unexplored event in the history of South Asian labor. Beginning in 1820, British colonial officials launched an "experiment" in slave emancipation in which they actively sought the emancipation of caste-enslaved people in the northern Jaffna district in exchange for labor in public works in the southeastern Chilaw district. The contours and terms of such an arrangement, Wickramasinghe points out, predate any comparable slavery amelioration efforts anywhere else in the British Empire. Wickramasinghe argues that the responses of emancipated slaves to the dehumanizing conditions of work in the Chilaw experiment underscore the brutality of "free" wage labor in a post-emancipation society. This chapter also challenges dominant understandings of the onset of modernity in Sri Lanka, which have, until this work, been tied to the island-wide implementation of the Colebrook–Cameron Reforms of 1833. In response, Wickramasinghe suggests that the onset of colonial modernity is evident in the liberal free market ideas and concepts of universal reason underlying the Chilaw experiment.

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This book addresses important historical questions about caste and respectability. In Chapter Three, Wickramasinghe focuses on three enslaved castes – the Coviyar, Nalavar, and Pallar – and their resistance to Vellalar-caste domination in Jaffna amidst British stirrings about abolition. This chapter demonstrates the political ambiguities of liberal modernity on the island. Whereas the Chilaw experiment in "free" labor served to further limit the autonomy of caste-enslaved people, Wickramasinghe suggests that liberal governmentality and British liberalism's aversion to slavery also "gave enslaved peoples the psychological thrust to act" (p. 90). This chapter draws upon colonial regulations in 1806, 1818, and 1821 regarding the registration and emancipation of enslaved peoples to study the effects of government action on people's desires and practices. But most significantly, Wickramasinghe explores modern resistance to caste oppression through the lenses of the 1819 whipping of a Coviyar slave named Cander Wayreven. The government-sanctioned punishment of a slave who traveled in the palanquin of his master reveals a caste-enslaved person's idea of social autonomy. We glean further historical insight into the social resistance of the unfree through legal battles around material cultures. Chapter Three also studies the petition of a group of Nalavars who sought to obtain the right for women to wear earrings in opposition to caste-based prohibitions. Wickramasinghe argues that the petition of this group constituted "coercive subordination" in reaching beyond Vellalar masters and appealing to the colonial state (p. 116).

Petitions and the colonial state are also a central part of Chapter Five, which centers Wickramasinghe's fortuitous archival discovery of the plaint of an emancipated Muslim slave in Colombo. In 1826, Packer Pulle Rowathan applied to the headman of his Muslim community for permission to circumcise his son. Wickramasinghe uses the records of the Muslim community's resistance to this circumcision to explore the politics of respectability and belonging that inhere in the Sri Lankan Muslim community. In early-nineteenth-century Jaffna and Colombo, enslaved and emancipated people utilized liberal modes of colonial governmentality to assert their rights to respectability. Focusing on symbols and petitions permits Wickramasinghe to paint a rich portrait of how the unfree resisted and subverted dominant norms of social hierarchy.

This work conjointly studies identity, history, and slavery in ways that will inform themes and scholarship in parallel fields of social and labor history. Chapter One takes as its example the historical memory of Slave Island in Colombo, which is popularly known as the site of the 1723 murder of a Dutch fiscal. Wickramasinghe considers the fact that whereas historical evidence suggests that an Indonesian slave is responsible for this murder, popular memory has enshrined the murderer as an enslaved African. Wickramasinghe suggests that a gradual "blackening" of slavery has occurred in which Sri Lankans over time have merged two initially distinct categories – "slave" and "black" – to obfuscate the island's multilayered histories of slavery. This chapter also engages with the literature on census technologies to suggest that census administration took an inconsistent approach to reifying caste and thus aided in the "blackening" of slavery over the centuries. Chapter Six leaves readers with two significant points about the invisibility of slavery in contemporary Sri Lanka. Wickramasinghe argues that among the dominant ethic group, the Sinhalese, "there is a repressed fear of any hint of creole pasts that disturb the comforting certainty of

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being and belonging and query the idea of unique roots" (p. 189). Within the Tamil minority, Wickramasinghe suggests that slavery's "invisibility is a symptom of a refusal to face the difficult past of enslavement of one's own people" (p. 189). The last chapter carries heightened significance for Sri Lanka's postcolonial realities, where Sinhalese ethno-nationalists seek to discredit Tamil claims to political autonomy while simultaneously denying Sinhalese creolized pasts.

As a social history of slavery, this book is distinguished in its "decolonial reading of the archive" and its "challenging of the authority of records produced under conditions of domination" (p. 52). In order to capture the lived realities of unfree people at a dynamic conjuncture in Sri Lankan history, *Slaves in a Palanquin* charts noteworthy modes of historicizing the relationships between labor, memory, and freedom. This work is highly recommended for scholars in all fields interested in the nexus of these subjects.

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Mobility and Coercion in an Age of Wars and Revolutions: A Global History, c. 1750–1830. Ed. by Jan C. Jansen and Kirsten McKenzie. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge [etc.] 2024. xii, 303 pp. Ill. Maps. £85.00. (E-book: $110.00.)

The histories of migration, unfreedom, and incarceration now enjoy well-developed historiographies thanks to a recent expansion of research into these fields. Accordingly, *Mobility and Coercion in an Age of Wars and Revolutions* proposes not to add its eleven case studies to this existing literature, but rather to challenge what its editors call "disciplinary compartmentalization and containment" (p. 13). Instead of perceiving a series of discrete categories of mobile people – free, unfree, indentured, convicted, exiled, or displaced – the authors look beyond the historical labels and categories claimed by migrants or imposed upon them by the law or by structures of class, race, gender, and nationality.

This thesis is established with clarity in Jan Jansen and Kirsten McKenzie's stimulating introduction. Social historians will be particularly interested in this section for its discussion of the fluidity of migrant identification. Not only could coercively mobile people move or be moved between categories – from transported convicts into settlers, for example – so, too, they could fit into "grey zones" (p. 15) between them. Migrants also had the agency to at least attempt to shape their categorization in pursuit of being recognized as belonging to one that afforded them greater freedom. In doing so, they could move along a "continuum of varying degrees of coercion" (p. 6) rather than between binary states of freedom and unfreedom. When it came to the categorization of migrants by imperial and local authorities, "social practice complemented – and complicated – the law" (p. 22).

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