

UC BERKELEY DEPARTMENT *of* HISTORY



WINTER 2021 NEWSLETTER



CONTENTS

03	CHAIR'S MESSAGE	13	FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS
04	DEPARTMENT NEWS	15	BOOK REVIEW
05	IN MEMORIAM	17	SAVE THE DATES
07	FACULTY UPDATES	18	GIVE TO HISTORY

Berkeley Department of History

Department of History
University of California, Berkeley
3229 Dwinelle Hall
Berkeley, CA 94720-2550

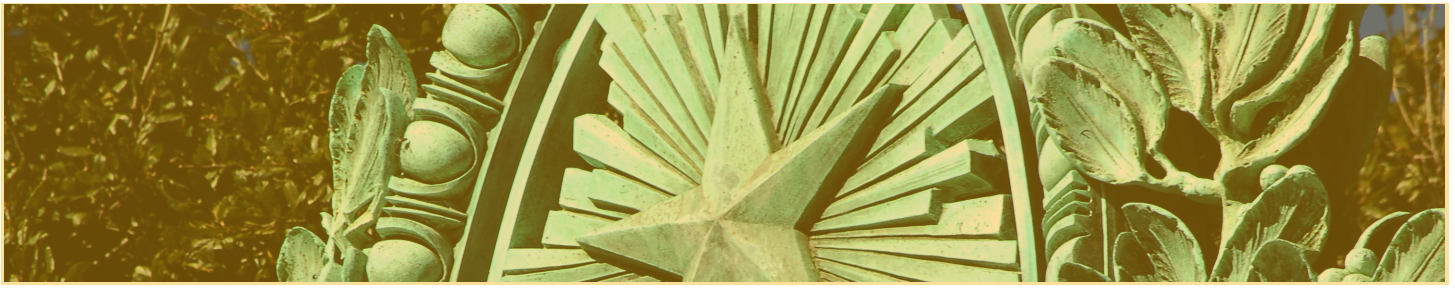
Phone: (510) 642-1971
Fax: (510) 643-5323
Email: history@berkeley.edu
Web: history.berkeley.edu



FOLLOW BERKELEY HISTORY:

Facebook & Instagram @BerkeleyHistory
Twitter @UCBHistory

Campus images courtesy of
UC Berkeley Public Affairs © 2021



Dear Friends of Berkeley History,

The days are growing shorter, and we're heading into winter, that season of both darkness and festivals of light. At this time for end-of-year reflections, it's good to share with you, our extended Cal History community, the news from Dwinelle Hall.

In the months since August, when the department excitedly opened up again for in-person teaching, it's felt so right to drop back into the welcome rhythm of seeing students and colleagues. We've mostly settled into face-to-face instruction, even with masks, and especially treasured our wonderful array of seminars. Yet we're not entirely back to normal. Sometimes we get a glimpse that there may not be a return to what we once took for granted. This is a department in the midst of renewal and change.

Our Winter Newsletter typically highlights the faculty of the department. Since I last wrote to you, it's been a profoundly challenging fall. In a few short months, our cherished colleagues Leon Litwack, Charles G. Sellers, and, just last week, Tyler Stovall have passed away. These losses have hit us hard. You may know from your own memories just how much each of them contributed to the Cal History community, to our students and their education, and to our department writ large. Leon Litwack, Charlie Sellers, and Tyler Stovall each brought compelling new insights about race and class into our histories of America and France. Each of them fought for social justice, recovering the experiences of ordinary people and probing the convenient stories that nations tell. In this issue of the newsletter you will find memorials to Leon Litwack and Charlie Sellers. In a future issue we will have an opportunity to pay tribute to Tyler Stovall.

Changes unfold in multiple directions at once. Astonishingly, since 2014 the Berkeley History Department has added fifteen new faculty members. This is nearly a third of our strength, and our new colleagues have brought with them incredible new energy in teach-

ing and research. As you may have read about in earlier newsletters, many of our new faculty members are strongly linked to other programs on campus, including Art History, Jewish Studies, Berkeley Law, and that unique Berkeley center, the Othering and Belonging Institute. Our most recent recruit, Hidetaka Hirota, is a historian of U.S. immigration who studies the history of immigration restriction, contract labor, and transnational connections and flows. You can read more about him in the mini-profile later in these pages.



Looking backward and forward, we can start to make out the shape of change. This year we're in the midst of searching for our next cohort of new faculty in two thrillingly exciting fields, Native North American history (jointly with the program in Native American Studies) and twentieth-century Russia. Please stay tuned! In this newsletter you can see what our current and emeritus faculty are up to, read exciting updates from Elena Schneider and Susanna Elm, and dive into Thomas Laqueur's review of Martin Jay's new book.

Even as our department keeps evolving, some things are passed from generation to generation: unequalled respect for pathbreaking scholarship, a commitment to teaching the historian's craft in undergraduate and graduate education, the driving desire to bring the stories to light of those who have been written out of past narratives and to open the doors wide to all who wish to enter and learn.

—Cathryn Carson, Department Chair

MEET THE NEW FACULTY

HIDETAKA HIROTA, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR (HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN WEST)



Hidetaka Hirota

The history department is delighted to welcome Hidetaka Hirota to Berkeley! Hirota will join the department as Associate Professor, coming to us from Sophia University in Tokyo, Japan. His first book, *Expelling the Poor*, traced the early history of immigration control in the United States, identifying cases of deportation significantly earlier than previously understood. He used these cases to describe the early history of immigration restriction, unearthing numerous cases where Irish immigrants were deported based on economic, religious and cultural prejudice. This previously unknown history would eventually come to shape Chinese exclusion policy. *Expelling the Poor* won numerous awards, including from the Ethnic History Society, the New England American Studies Association, and the Irish Association for American Studies.

Hirota is now at work on a pathbreaking study of contract labor. In this new project, Hirota will explore a deep tension in American history: the relationship between nativism against immigrants and the insatiable demand for their labor. In a study that crosses national boundaries, Hirota follows workers from their home countries to the United States and back again. Mining archives in Latin America, Asia, Europe, and the Caribbean, he explores how the nation crafted immigration policies that exploited workers' labor while simultaneously denying them basic rights.

Professor Hirota will arrive later this spring and will begin teaching in Fall 2022. Joining him will be his wife, Megumi, and their three children, Haruhisa (age 6), Manami (age 4), and Mei (age 2). Please join us in welcoming all of them to California!

—Caitlin Rosenthal

LEON LITWACK

Professor of History Emeritus

Leon Frank Litwack (1929-2021) contributed immeasurably to the department's stellar reputation. In his forty-three years on the department's faculty, he taught over 30,000 undergraduates in his legendary course on the U.S. from the Civil War to the Present (History 7B). A masterful lecturer, Litwack offered a riveting understanding of the nation's recent past, from the ground up, centering the experiences of those typically excluded: especially Blacks; workers and unions; women; the poor and dispossessed; radicals and dissidents. Litwack offered a perceptive and critical view of our nation's past as the best way not only to understand that past, but also to understand the connections across the nation's past, present, and future.

A Guggenheim Fellow, former President of the Organization of American Historians and the Southern Historical Association, and member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Litwack was "a scholar's scholar." His extraordinary body of work is at once trailblazing, insightful, highly readable, and deeply influential. That extraordinary work helped transform the fields of African American, Southern, and Modern U.S. History. *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860*, is a pathbreaking study that perceptively probed the antebellum tension between the Black freedom struggle

and northern-style anti-Black racism. *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery* (1979) — a magisterial exploration of emancipation during the Civil War and Reconstruction—is his best received and best-known work. It was awarded the Pulitzer Prize, National Book Award, and Francis Parkman Prize. *Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow* (1998) is a complex and compelling examination of "freedom's first generation" in the "heart of darkness" of Jim Crow. *How Free is Free: The Long Death of Jim Crow* (2009) is an astute series of essays on the early Modern Black Freedom Struggle. In an unfinished work, Litwack was grappling with the role of Black activism during World War II in shaping the Modern Black Freedom Insurgency.

Litwack trained several dozen graduate students, many with noteworthy careers within and outside the academy. Leon and Rhoda, his amazing wife of sixty-nine years, often spoke affectionately of their extended "academic family," especially their former graduate students. To be a part of that "academic family" is both an honor and a joy.

Leon — the only son of Minnie, a seamstress, and Julius Litwack, a gardener — came of age in a largely Mexican-American, working class community in Santa Barbara. As a Berkeley undergraduate (1947-1951) and graduate student (M.A. 1952: Ph.D. 1958), he battled the Red Scare orthodoxy and modeled activism in a time of conformity. After a short stint teaching at the University of Wisconsin, Litwack returned to his beloved Berkeley in the fall of 1964, during the Free Speech Movement. As he often observed: "When I hear UC Berkeley denounced for lawlessness, debauchery, free thinking, subversion, harboring communists and radicals, exposing students to radical ideas— whenever I hear those charges made, that's when you'll hear me, wherever I am, shout: Go Bears!"

Litwack is survived by Rhoda; his son John and daughter-in-law Nadia; daughter Ann; grandson Evan; and granddaughter Reva and grand-son-in-law Jonathan.

— Waldo E. Martin

CHARLIE SELLERS

Professor of History Emeritus

Charlie Sellers was a highly distinctive member of the Berkeley History Department from the time of his arrival in 1958 through his retirement in 1990. His publications made him one of the profession's premier historians of nineteenth-century America, properly celebrated for his *James K. Polk: Jacksonian, 1795-1843* (1957) and *James K. Polk: Continentalist, 1843-1846* (1966). Charlie soon established himself as a teacher of legendary skills and conscientious devotion to both his graduate and undergraduate students. He worked closely with his Teaching Assistants in his survey course in US History before 1865. His teaching commitments extended to his editing of the *Berkeley Series in American History*, dozens of pamphlets containing primary sources designed for use in undergraduate courses. With his colleague, Henry F. May, he wrote *A Synopsis of American History*, a mini-textbook intended to be used in connection with primary sources and thematic lectures.

Charlie's passionate political commitments and accompanying activism contributed to the distinctive figure he cut in the Department and on Campus. He was among the leaders of the local chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality, volunteered as a Mississippi Freedom Rider and was arrested in 1961 at the Jackson Airport with a group of black and white protesters for refusing to leave the 'white's only' waiting room. Sellers was an early supporter of the Free Speech Movement in 1964 and an eloquent critic of the Vietnam War.

Although he had originally planned a third volume on Polk, Charlie put that project aside in the 1980s to work on the book for which he is now the most remembered, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846*, completed just as he retired and then published the following year, in 1991. By the time he retired, however, Charlie made no secret of his annoyance with what he took to be academia's slow



and tepid response to the social injustices in American society. He cut back sharply on his involvement in teaching and service, and became increasingly engaged with politics. People who came to know him in these later years were often surprised to learn from me and others of my generation what strong institutional and professional commitments Charlie displayed in the 1960s.

Twenty-three years after he retired, in 2013, his wife, the environmental historian Carolyn Merchant, organized a 90th birthday party at which she creatively brought together Charlie's two communities, the political activists of his later years and the academics with whom he had only episodic contacts since the 1980s. As one of the latter, I was moved to be again in contact with him. I was able to remind all assembled of what a privilege it had been to hear Charles Grier Sellers, Jr., lecture on the panic of 1819 and other favorite topics of his.

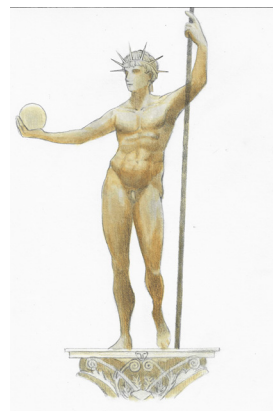
For a more detailed account of Charlie's professional career, I recommend the [excellent obituary](#) in *The New York Times*.

—David Hollinger

FACULTY UPDATES

Emeritus **ANTHONY ADAMTHWAITE** writes: “Great news to hear that in December 2021, Routledge’s Revivals series is republishing my *France and the Coming of the Second World War* (1977). This first monograph, based on privileged access to French archives, took a fresh look at France’s role. In a recent article in *Revue d’histoire diplomatique* (2021/4)—“Administrations publiques et relations franco-britanniques, 1945-1969”—I re-visit the post-1945 *entente discordiale*. The article challenges received wisdom that old rivalries and great power ambitions squashed ‘the unshakable, constant, and effective alliance’ promised by prime minister Winston Churchill in November 1944. In fact, the Franco-British couple, I argue, had a real chance of partnership- a potential game-changer in the Cold War era. Explanations of post-1945 cross-Channel quarrels have largely ignored the decisive role played by state policy engines. I also discuss in *Francia recensio* (2021/2) the post-World War I rise of an influential French school of international relations. Currently I’m taking advantage of the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions to launch a new archival based project—“The Selling of Britain since 1945.” It will investigate how the neglect of soft power impacted UK global influence.

DILIANA ANGELOVA received support for her second monograph in the form of a Townsend Center Fellowship and a Dumbarton Oaks project grant. The former provides teaching relief and an intellectually stimulating environment to discuss work in progress, the latter will help her continue building a digital catalogue of the largest category of



secular objects that survive from Byzantium: ivory boxes with Greco-Roman myths. She just published a substantial [article on Constantine’s radiate statue](#), a moment that dominated Constantinople’s cityscape for eight hundred years.

ANDREW BARSHAY writes: “Last summer I completed a three-year term on the Budget Committee. On sabbatical, 2021-22, and hoping to wrap up a book on the making of postwar Japan through the prism of the national railways (five of seven chapters done). Japanese translation of *The Gods Left First: The Captivity and Repatriation of Japanese POWs in Northeast Asia* was published last year, and the Russian translation of an earlier book on the Japanese social sciences is due out in 2022.”

For 2021-2022, **MARK BRILLIANT** is a W. Glenn Campbell and Rita Ricardo-Campbell National Fellowship at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution. He is working on the draft of a book tentatively entitled *Gilded State: California and the Origins of America’s New Gilded Age, 1966-1983*. It examines the formative years of the relationship between the

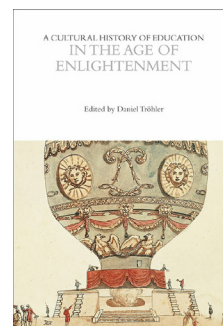


new high tech economy, new post-New Deal Democratic political culture, and the New Gilded Age, all of which emerged first in California in the late 1960s and early 1970s. How and why, *Gilded State* seeks to answer, did California's explosion in income inequality since the 1970s – its becoming America's "richest and poorest state" as Governor Gavin Newsom has brooded – coincide with the rise of Silicon Valley and the transformation of the Democratic Party from the New Deal liberalism of Governor Pat Brown (1959-1967) to the "post liberal ideology" of his son Jerry Brown (1975-1982)?

SUSANNA ELM writes: "I am trying to continue to work on my recent manuscript, currently entitled (tentatively) *The Emperors' Eunuch: Queer Masculinities and Imperial Representation in the Early Theodosian Age*. I have also submitted an article on an edict by the emperor Theodosius usually read as imposing orthodox Christianity on the Roman empire to argue that it is rather an invitation to debate and discussion; this will appear in a volume on tolerance and toleration co-edited by Karen Barkey."



PAULA FASS has been professionally active in her retirement, publishing a long article on "Children

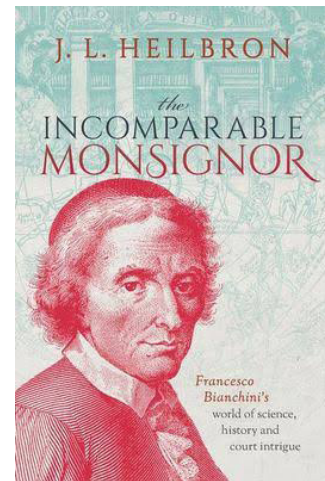
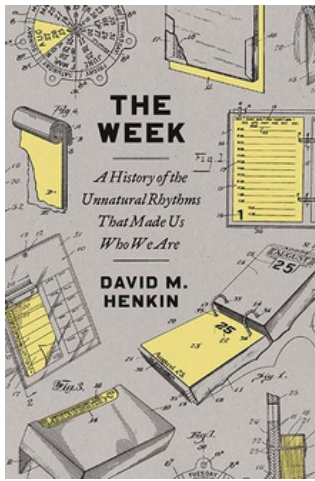


and Children in the Age of Enlightenment" in *A Cultural History of Education In the Age of Enlightenment*, Daniel Tröhler (ed); and "Jewish Children in the Twentieth Century," an introduction to the volume *No Small Matter: Features of Jewish Childhood*, special volume of *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, Anat Helman (ed.). She has also engaged in several Zoom conferences, organizing A Conference on the Current State and Future Directions in the History of Children in August 2021. She presented a Zoom talk "How to Understand Children's Rights in the United States," at the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum in June 2021. Her short biographical reflection, "Henja," will be published in the winter issue of the *Raritan Review*.

Three articles by **ERICH GRUEN** have appeared in 2021: (1) "Jewish Voices on Rome and Roman Imperialism"; (2) "Religious Pluralism in the Roman Empire"; and (3) "The Origins of the Jewish War Against Rome." Seven others are in press and should come out within the next year. Gruen also delivered lectures at Oxford, Berlin, and BYU in 2021.

This November, **DAVID HENKIN** celebrated three publications: first, a substantially revised and updated edition of *Becoming America*, which he coauthored with Rebecca McLennan; second, a new book entitled *The Week: A History of the Unnatural Rhythms that Made Us Who We Are* (Yale University and Press); and finally, an article in French (translated by Jean-Charles Khalifa), "Hétérogénéité hebdomadaire: Une taxonomie des nombreux

Clockwise from Top Left: Mark Brilliant; *A Cultural History of Education in the Age of Enlightenment*, Daniel Tröhler (Bloomsbury Press 2020) ; Paula Fass.



types de semaine dans l’Amérique du XIXe siècle” (Sociétés & Représentations). The work on the week represents the culmination of many years of reading people’s diaries, letters, and other records in an attempt to figure out whether they cared if it was Tuesday or Wednesday. The new edition of the textbook forced him to make sense of, among other troubling things, the last decade of U.S. history. His next book, a meditation on sports fandom, is providing much relief from those two projects.

REBECCA HERMAN has published a few new pieces since her last faculty update. Her article, “The Global Politics of Anti-Racism: A View from the Canal Zone” was published in the *American Historical Review* in April 2020 and was awarded Honorable Mention for the Bernath Scholarly Article Prize. She also contributed a chapter, “Social Peace in a Time of War: Labor Justice and Foreign Policy in World War II Brazil,” to a volume published in Brazil last year, co-edited by two of Brazil’s leading labor historians. Most recently, she was invited to contribute an essay to a special issue of the journal *Diplomatic History*. The issue, “Historians Writing Their Way Out of Covid-19,” appeared in June 2021 and Herman’s essay, “Covid-19: A Crash Course in Contingency” reflects on how the various crises of 2020 impacted her relationship to her work.

CARLA HESSE was featured on the podcast “Writ Large,” for their episode on Candide (November 2021). [Click here](#) to listen.

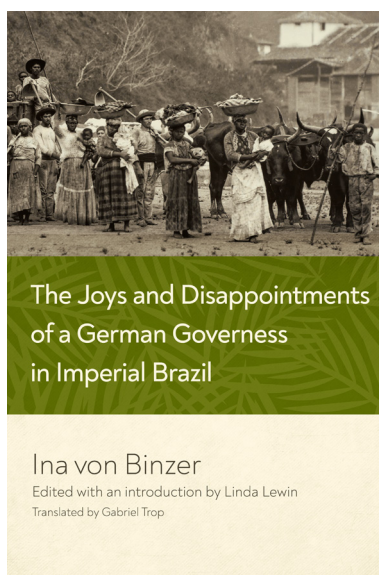
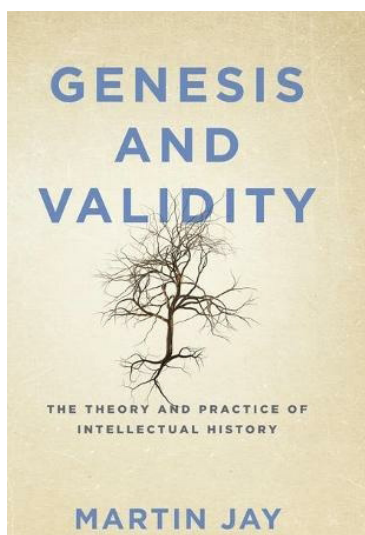
JOHN L. HEILBRON has a forthcoming book from Oxford University Press, titled *The Incomparable Monsignor: Francesco Bianchini’s World of Science, History, and Court Intrigue* (2022).

MARTIN JAY writes: “In 2021, I published two new collections of my own essays, *Trois Études sur Adorno* (Paris: Le Retrait, 2021) and *Genesis and Validity: The Theory and Practice of Intellectual History* (Philadelphia, U. of Penn, 2021), and co-edited a third, mostly of other people’s essays: *Amerika Hihan Riron* (American Critical Theory) with Masao Higurashi (Tokyo, Kobo Shoyo, 2021). I also did an introduction for Peter-Erwin Jansen, *Über Herbert den Greise und Leo den Weisen* (Springe, Germany, Zu Klampen 2021), and published several new essays: “After George Steiner: A Personal Recollection,” *Salmagundi*, 208-209 (Fall, 2020-Winter, 2021); “We, the People, and Us, the Population,” *Salmagundi*, 210-211 (Spring-Summer, 2021), and “Adorno and the Role of Sublimation in Artistic Creativity and Cultural Redemption,” *New German Critique*, 143 (August, 2021). I was the focus of two podcasts: “[Frankfurt School Today with Martin Jay: Splinters in Your Eye](#),” Zero Books You Tube (August 2, 2021); and “[The Legitimacy of the Modern Age](#),” Writ Large (October, 2021).”

Left to right: *The Incomparable Monsignor*, John L. Heilbron (Oxford U Press, 2022); *The Week: A History of the Unnatural Rhythms That Made Us Who We Are*, David Henkin (Yale Press, 2021)

DAVID JOHNSON writes: “My latest book *The Stage in the Temple*, will be published next fall in Berkeley’s Institute of East Asian Studies monograph series. Drama and ritual were completely integrated in premodern rural China, hence the title. I discuss a number of rare village opera scripts (most were destroyed or confiscated after 1949). I also provide a detailed description of village opera performances and attempt to trace the virtually invisible thousand-year history of the form.”

ETHAN KATZ was awarded a Humanities Research Fellowship from Berkeley to spend spring 2022 on-leave, when he will aim to near completion on his current monograph on the Algiers underground during World War II. An article on a related topic, “Jewish Citizens of an Imperial Nation-State: Toward a French-Algerian Frame for French Jewish History,” was awarded honorable mention for the 2021 Koren Prize, given by the Society for French Historical Studies to honor the best article of the year in French history. In April 2021, as part of the Antisemitism Education Initiative at Berkeley that Ethan continues to co-direct, he and two colleagues released an anti-bias training film “Antisemitism in Our Midst: Past and Present,” which has since been widely praised and adapted for use by numerous educators across the country. Along with several invited talks related to his research, Ethan took part in a number of major public forums on contemporary antisemitism, including a Zoom debate with Jim Zogby at the Annenberg Center in July, a panel of experts he moderated at American Public Square at Jewell in Kansas City in September, and a Zoom symposium on antisemitism at Michigan State in October, where he was invited to present the anti-bias training film.



LINDA LEWIN writes: “I have edited, written an introduction and expository notes for the first English translation of Ina von Binzer’s 1887 book: *The Joys And Disappointments Of A German Governess In Imperial Brazil*, translated by Gabriel Trop (who received his doctorate from our department), forthcoming in February 2022 by the University of Notre Dame Press. As a primary source, the book is a rare contribution to the travel literature on Latin America for being authored by a woman and employing the unique format of a series of letters written by the author to her best friend. Von Binzer’s residence with three elite families tied to the coffee export economy captured the “world the slaveholders made” just as it was about to collapse. The advance of an abolitionist movement in the early 1880s ties together letters that evoke a myriad of facets from plantation and urban life. Two dozen photographs by Marc Ferrez, Brazil’s premier photographer, illustrate the book, which is intended for a largely student readership in Latin American, Women’s, and Diaspora Studies.”

MARIA MAVROUDI is the proud recipient of the Graduate Assembly Faculty Mentorship Award (2021) which recognizes “an outstanding commitment to mentoring, advising, and supporting graduate students.” Her first article in Turkish (focusing on the translation of astrological texts from Arabic into Greek) appeared in August in the periodical *Toplumsal Tarih* (“Social History”), an academic publication that aspires to reach a wider educated readership in Turkey. In October, her article “Greek and Arabic studies in the twentieth century: the cultural implementation of political choices” appeared in the periodical “Byzantina”. In fall 2021, Mavroudi

Top to bottom: *Genesis and Validity*, Martin Jay (UPenn Press 2021); *The Joys and Disappointments of a German Governess in Imperial Brazil* (Notre Dame Press, 2022)

gave (via Zoom) a number of invited lectures at academic venues around the world: the University of Brasilia, the Greek National Research Foundation in Athens, the University of Minnesota, Bosphorus University in Istanbul, and the Gennadeios Library (part of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens). Topics included the Byzantine reception of Ptolemy's *Almagest*, Byzantine astronomy between the seventh and the ninth centuries, astronomy as a philosophical discipline within a Byzantine and Islamic intellectual context, and a Byzantinist's view on the bi-centennial anniversary of 1821, the year of the Greek revolution against the Ottoman empire that resulted in the foundation of a modern Greek state.

REBECCA MCLENNAN spent much of 2021 thinking and writing about recent American history...up to and including the events of January 6, 2021. Her thoughts on the crises, presidencies, and social movements of the last decade were published this Fall, alongside those of David Henkin, in the second edition of their book, *Becoming America: A History for the 21st Century*. Rebecca continues to work on her Bering Sea book, which explores the entangled histories of law, the sea, and survival in a globalized world.

Professor **MAUREEN MILLER** is happily on sabbatical this academic year. She is presently spending the fall term as a Member at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton (which is, indeed, a scholar's paradise). Her October lecture there in the School of Historical Studies, entitled "Why Change? Re-examining the 'Documentary Revolution' in Medieval Italy," elicited immensely stimulating questions and suggestions, while another presentation to a premodern working group on manuscripts and materiality yielded new avenues to explore the performative uses of administrative registers in the changing legal environment of the thirteenth century. In March she begins her year

as the elected President of the Medieval Academy of America, the beginning of which she'll spend as visiting professor in the Facoltà di Giurisprudenza at the Università degli Studi in Milan.

MICHAEL NYLAN writes: "I spent the first two weeks of October at the Jackman Institute for the Humanities at the University of Toronto, where I was Distinguished Visiting Fellow. It was a blast, and I was elated to discover that the previous honoree was Amitav Ghosh, one of my favorite writers! I taught undergraduates, undergraduates, gave lectures, and I even co-taught a class on Persian history with a brilliant young member of the faculty. From there I went onto Cambridge, England to celebrate the 100th birthday of my Cambridge tutor, Michael Loewe, who has just published four new essays. He is a model of productivity for us all. (Currently, I am editing

his second festschrift for *Early China* journal, having been his editor for the volume marking his eightieth birthday as well.) My last day in England I lectured in Oxford, for the China Centre (their first in-person event since Covid began). Having been asked to talk about classical learning in the early empires, I lectured on the range of classical institutions that together promoted an "Equality of a Sort" for disparate communities in the realm."

In 2021, **CHRISTINE PHILLIOU**'s new book *Turkey: A Past Against History* was released by UC Press. She also launched a collaborative Digital Humanities project to document and reconstruct the history of Greek communities of Ottoman Istanbul, 1821-1923, called [IstanPólis](#). She brought together a team of scholars in Greece and Turkey who are working closely with leaders of the community in Istanbul and Athens to develop their project.



Image: *Becoming America* authors Rebecca McLennan and David Henkin discuss what it means to teach history in—and about—contentious times.

CAITLIN ROSENTHAL is in the research phase for her second book project, on the history of Human Resources departments. While most of her work thus far has been online, she hopes to get back into the archives soon. This past year, she also wrote several articles translating insights from her 2018 book *Accounting for Slavery* for scholars and practitioners in fields beyond to history. Recent pieces have appeared in the *Harvard Data Science Review*, *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, and the *Nonprofit Quarterly*. Fall 2021 teaching has been a blur, with her largest class yet (almost 450 undergraduates enrolled in the "History of American Capitalism"!), an awesome new cohort of graduate students, and thankfully the return of in-person elementary school!

ELENA SCHNEIDER is currently on a research fellowship at the Huntington Library in Pasadena to work on her next book. *Escape by Sea* is a study of people who escaped Caribbean slavery by sea, often fleeing from one imperial jurisdiction to another on boats they had stolen or built clandestinely for the purpose. A surprisingly large number of people freed themselves along this maritime underground, and the logistics of leaving by boat enabled larger groups of people to escape together—women and men, along with children and the elderly. She recently edited a forum in the journal *Slavery & Abolition* on this topic and published an article about a case study from her book. She misses UCB but definitely enjoys that warm So Cal sunshine!

RONIT Y. STAHL earned tenure and, as of July 1, is an associate professor of history. She also earned a Greenwall Faculty Scholar Fellowship, the most significant early career award in bioethics, for her new book project, *Troubling Conscience: Religious Hospitals and Religious Freedom in Modern America*. Though much of the pandemic was spent teaching on zoom, she also has a forthcoming chapter on the history of chaplaincy across different sectors, from the mili-

tary, prisons, and hospitals to airports, workplaces, and disaster zones, in *Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care in the Twenty First Century*, which will be published in May 2022.

JAMES VERNON writes: "What a year. Pretty much all my work this year has been helping our students get through the pandemic and the strange world of online learning. None of us were trained as therapists but we have all been at the front-

line of helping students weather the massive impacts of the pandemic on their mental health. It's been wonderful to see graduate students finally able to get to the archives in the UK. As my own research was also halted I've spent that part of my life working with authors developing their manuscripts to publish in the Berkeley Series in British Studies with University of California Press that I edit. It is one of the favorite parts of my job. Lastly, I finally managed to get an article published in *Past and Present*, the first of many journals to send me a rejection back when I was a graduate student. The article, which explores the early and racialized forms of neoliberalism at Heathrow Airport, is the first piece from my new book project to see the light of day."

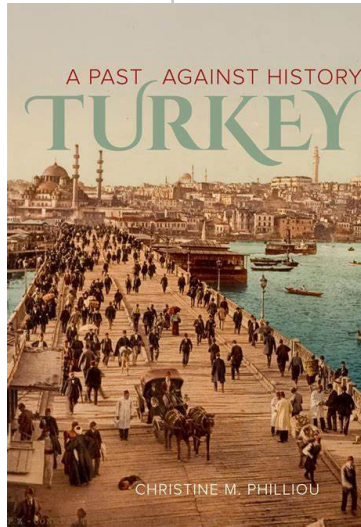


Image: *Turkey: A Past Against History*, Christine Philliou (UC Press, 2021)

The Transatlantic Slave Voyages Database

Q&A: Elena Schneider

Earlier this year, Professor [Elena Schneider](#) and [G. Ugo Nwokeji](#), Professor of African Studies, secured a grant from the Social Science Matrix to join a consortium that will direct the future of the [Slave Voyages Database](#): the most used online research tool for the history of the slave trade in the Atlantic World. Launched in 1999, the Slave Voyages Database has received renewed public attention in the wake of the U.S.'s 1619 anniversary. Professor Schneider graciously answered a few questions about her hopes for the trajectory of the Database.



Can you speak to how this resource has supported your scholarly research?

The Slave Voyages database has allowed me and other scholars of slave societies in the Americas to gain a general sense of the origins of many Africans arriving at specific locations of the Americas across four centuries of transatlantic slave trading. By knowing where people came from in Africa, we can get a better understanding of the languages they spoke, the religions they practiced, and the experiences, knowledge, and skills they brought with them from Africa into the diaspora. The database also reminds us of the staggering scale of the crime that was transatlantic slave trading, the multitude of nations that profited from it, and the long term impacts of population and human capital loss on African societies.

For scholars of various slave societies of the Americas, it's also an important tool to put areas of the Atlantic world in proportion and relation to each other. Without it, we wouldn't know that 5.5 million Africans, or approximately 44% of the 12.5 million Africans removed from their homelands on Atlantic slave ships, were taken to Brazil, or that the period of peak slave trading was actually the nineteenth century, in-



cluding the period after 1807, after the formal abolition of British slave trading, when many nations collaborated in clandestine, illegal slave trading.

What will be some of your priorities, with regards to potential next directions for the Slave Voyages Database? Have there been previous limitations to the Database, that the Consortium is hoping to tackle with its next steps?

I hope to make the process of compiling the database more transparent to a rising generation of scholars on our campus, so that they can see its strengths and weaknesses, what it already does well, where it needs improvement, and how they might shape it for the next generation. I want our graduate students and community of scholars at UCB to get directly involved in steering its future course. Many brilliant scholars have rightfully criticized the Slave Voyages database for reproducing the quantification and dehumanization that early capitalism imposed on African men, women, and children's bodies. I want my graduate students and colleagues to think together with me about what changes to its form and user interface might counteract that dehumanization. Recent iterations of the database have added additional transatlantic slave trading voyages, in order to remind us that many unfortunate souls were loaded onto slave ships again after the Middle Passage and transshipped to other areas of the Americas. The [African Names database](#), which has also been added more recently to Slave Voyages, uses the first names of enslaved Africans found

(continued from page 13) onboard slaving ships to try to locate their homelands in Africa, beyond the specific port from which the slave ship carrying them embarked. These are steps forward in adapting and improving the database, but I'd love to see us center more of the lived experiences of individuals alongside the "aggregate data" of millions of people. How might we incorporate biographies of individuals or microhistories into the website of this vast database, as a way to make it speak to the humanity and resilience of the enslaved and their descendants?

THE BRITISH ACADEMY

Faculty Highlight: Susanna Elm

This year [Susanna Elm](#) was elected Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy. Below, Professor Elm shares her reaction to this prestigious recognition.

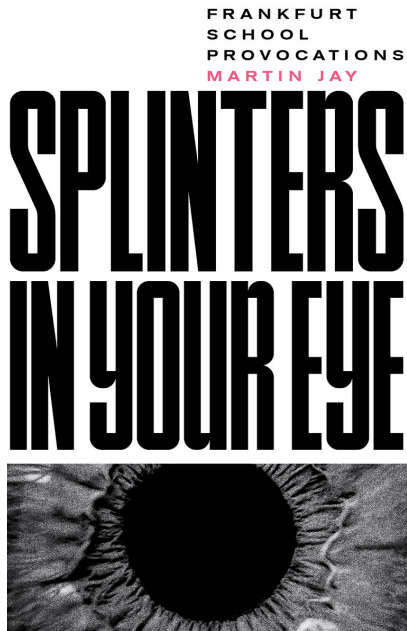


[The British Academy](#) focuses on supporting, funding and highlighting research in the Social Sciences and the Humanities with a focus that is (not entirely surprisingly) very global. Of course, much of its funding centers on the UK, but a significant proportion is aimed at the over 180 countries in which it is represented. Scholars from the US are of course among those who should keep the British Academy in mind. Until now, I was unaware of this reach and of the serious steps the BA has taken and continues to take to target underrepresented minorities and to foster diversity, equity and inclusion.

For me, those fellowships that are addressed to early career scholars, just after the Ph.D. but also on the (early) Associate Professor level, are especially interesting because I think that these are milestones that require a great deal of attention and support.

What effect my fellowship will have on my own research - probably not all that much, but...it is all pretty new and I have never been even close to the physical space of the BA in London, but I hope to remedy that in the not too distant future. But what I have learned so far in our Zoom meetings has been inspiring. For example, they have a joint research project they are calling the COVID decade - that alone makes you think.

And, I confess, I was very touched and moved when I got the nomination and then the acceptance email. It is a recognition that came entirely out of the blue, and, well, it means a lot when one's colleagues bestow such a gift.



VERSO BOOKS, 2020
REVIEW BY THOMAS W. LAQUEUR

On November 8, a little over a month ago, Cathryn Carson, our department chair, emailed to let me know that “we’re trying to review most recent books by faculty and emeriti,” for the winter “Newsletter” and to ask whether I’d write a short piece about Martin Jay’s *Splinters in Your Eye: Frankfurt School Provocations* (Verso, 2020) which, she assumed, fit into that category. It doesn’t. It is no longer his most recent book; I took on the assignment anyway. But because we historians value accuracy readers should know that another volume of his essays has since appeared—*Genesis and Validity: The Theory and Practice of Intellectual History* (University of Pennsylvania) which has a publication year of 2022 but was in fact published November 12. Yet another is promised from Verso soon. That will I think make ten.

Almost all of the essays in these collections are about members of the Frankfurt School—a group of philosophers, critics, psychologists, and sociologists. It began as the Institute for Social Research in Germany; moved to New York after Hitler came to power—most of its members were Jewish, the importance of which for their work is still debated; broadened its intellectual penumbra; and has remained a fruitful and general intellectual tradition for suc-

ceeding generations. (The “Critical Theory Graduate Emphasis” at Berkeley, named for the philosophical tradition of the Frankfurt School, enrolls more than one hundred students.) Martin Jay is the Frankfurt School’s most important interpreter beginning with his thesis, which became *The Dialectical Imagination* (1973), continuing through later books, and elaborated in essays, many written for his twice a year column in the journal *Salmagundi*, others for various academic occasions.

Why this group of German intellectuals should remain so compelling is a bit puzzling. No-one can say quite what bound them together or what defined the theory they purportedly shared. When an interviewer asked Leo Lowenthal, at the time the only surviving member of the original Institute for Social Research and an emeritus professor of sociology at Berkeley, what Critical Theory was, he said he didn’t know but that the interviewer should ask Marty Jay. The big questions that engaged them as men of the broadly Marxist left—the rise of Nazism, the failure of working-class revolutions, the dangers of mass society—seem strangely distant from those that confront us now—racism, climate change, sexism, fake information.

Splinters in Your Eye goes a long way toward explaining why their work is still exigent and why, in a sort of Wittgensteinian way, it hangs together through family resemblance. Or rather, why it remains importantly “provoking” as the sub-title has it. The phrase “splinters in your eye” is taken from Theodore Adorno, one of the Frankfurt School’s founders. It means, in one sense, a painful irritation that demands one try harder to see some larger truth, to make some sense of the pain. It also has the sense of a splinter as a shard that fractures what one sees into many pieces and challenges our capacity to see a whole, a totality. The problem becomes how one can use these splinters in the eye that fragment what we see to prompt us to try to understand and critique the pervasive systems of thought of which the bits we see are part. Jay makes the reader understand the power of Critical Theory not through doctrinal exegesis but through his hundreds of essays that explore how his subjects and their followers struggled to understand particular questions, the product of particular splinters: he offers synthesis based on a series of variations

(*continued from page 15*) upon different themes.

Almost all the eleven essays in this collection are accessible to the non-specialist; all are a pleasure to read and taken together he offers a good introduction to Critical Theory and to the delights of reading Martin Jay. My second favorite essay, and perhaps the one that speaks most powerfully to our present discontents, is about a lunatic conspiracy theory that captivated Castro in 2010. The cabal that was supposedly running the world involved the usual suspects—the Rothschilds, The Rockefellers, and Henry Kissinger—some less expected ones—Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands—and, bizarrely, the founders of the Frankfurt School, including Berkeley’s Leo Lowenthal, who, among other things, developed pop music to dull the masses. More bizarre is the alt-right’s obsession with the Frankfurt School and cultural Marxism more generally as an agent of the international Jewish conspiracy. Stephen Miller, himself Jewish, who brought this nonsense into the highest levels of government during the Trump years seems not to have noticed the virulent anti-Semitism of these fantasies.

My favorite essay is “Timbremelancholy [the melancholy of stamps]: Walter Benjamin and the Fate of Philately” a perfect exemplar of how “splinters in the eyes” of one of the twentieth century’s most original, eccentric and enigmatic critics allowed him to see stamps: a tiny piece of paper in which (or through which) to view modern life. “A mass of little digits, tiny letters, marks and spots, graphic scraps of cell tissues that lives on even when torn to shreds.” In their lives there is already death but also rebirth. Beyond their monetary value, stamps become the gateway, especially for young collectors, to far away and distant worlds, to nations some long obliterated. The essay ends with Jay’s reflections on his own stamp collecting days, on the ways in which innovation, like “forever stamps” and metered postage, have taken the place of the magical stamps of old, and of finally on the sad demise of the letter—snail mail—and of letter writing. Little colored scraps of paper may have seen their day. Hence “Timbremelancholy,” sadness at the loss of slow communication on paper whose way is paid by stamps.



SAVE THE DATES

History Homecoming

Wednesday, February 16, 2022 | 6 p.m. – 9 p.m. | Berkeley Alumni House

The 101 Circus: An Undergraduate Research Showcase

Wednesday, May 6, 2022 | 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. | Location TBA

Department of History Commencement Ceremony

Wednesday, May 18, 2022 | 9 a.m. | Zellerbach Auditorium



SUPPORT THE FUTURE *of* BERKELEY HISTORY



[**Click to Donate**](#)

Donors play a critical role in the ways we are able to sustain and enhance the teaching and research mission of the department. Friends of Cal funds are utilized in the following ways:

- Travel grants for undergraduates researching the material for their senior thesis project
- Summer grants for graduate student research travel or language study
- Conference travel for graduate students who are presenting papers or interviewing for jobs
- Prizes for the best dissertation and undergraduate thesis
- Equipment for the graduate computer lab
- Work-study positions for instructional support
- Graduate space coordinator position

Most importantly, Friends of Cal funds allow the department to direct funding to students in any field of study, so that the money can be directed where it is most needed. This unrestricted funding allows us to enhance our multi-year funding package so that we can continue to focus on maintaining the quality that is defined by a Berkeley degree.

To support the Department of History, please donate online at give.berkeley.edu or mail checks payable to UC Berkeley Foundation to the address listed on the inside cover of this newsletter. Thank you for your continued support.