

clusion as social, political, cultural, emotional, and humanitarian and as mechanisms arising from the ideologies of the Cold War.

As individual as each case of adoption is, adoption reflects, confirms, and repeats structures. These include individual social and economic inequalities, usually between the families of origin and the adoptive families but no less between the countries and the societies from which both families come. The stigma attached to biological mothers can be traced back to global phenomena, and the self-perception of nations as supposedly racially homogeneous can also be examined in transnational contexts. In any case, as the volume makes clear, race is “the mobilising factor” (p. 6).

The case studies and research trends show which social groups were disadvantaged at the time and which are still under-researched. This makes it all the more urgent and significant that the volume devotes a great deal of attention to the adoption of Black children and, in the same context, to Black American couples who wanted to adopt. *Discrimination* is a term that runs like a red thread through the sources in this context. Therefore, it is not surprising that the traditional principles of adoption – humanity, care, and love – are evoked on the one side but are also met with little sympathy on the other side, where adoption is associated with neo-liberal neo-colonialism, old-fashioned privileges, and a Western world-historical continuity of self-sufficiency.

Ultimately, these many areas of tension point to a core element of the history of adoption, which, since its beginnings, has revealed highly emotional, fragile, and vul-

nerable aspects of human life. Legal and political frameworks cannot conceal these aspects because the individuality of each adoption case, which is also highlighted in many individual examples in this volume, contributes to the sum of individualities, which in turn form the basis for the definitions of *belonging*, *identity*, and, in the broadest sense, *citizenship*. By highlighting these points, this very valuable volume emphasizes the importance of adoption studies for interdisciplinary research undertaken by historians, anthropologists, sociologists, and many others. It makes clear where the deficits have been and where the opportunities and scientific challenges still lie. Finally, it demonstrates the richness of the questions associated with the history of adoption. To have brought them to the fore across race and nation is certainly one of the most engaging aspects of the volume.

Simon Godard: *Le laboratoire de l'internationalisme. Le CAEM et la construction du bloc socialiste*, Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2021, 325 pp.

Reviewed by
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Le laboratoire de l'internationalisme, by Simon Godard, is a fine account of the life of a too-neglected institution, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA or COMECON). It is a splendid example of institutional history, describing the objectives, the policies, the infrastructures,

and the people who inhabit such structures. Recently, the history of international organizations has attracted particular attention in Cold War history. Multilateral arenas have emerged as the place where the Cold War was not only a story of superpower competition but also a place of exchange and shared practices.¹ Godard's book is an excellent example of this way of studying the Cold War.

Literature on the CMEA is scarce and tends to portray the institution as a failed experiment in cooperation.² Godard argues that this traditional (Western) view of the CMEA as a meaningless affair is flawed. Criticism is based on the premise that the organization for economic coordination in Eastern Europe was intended to become a socialist common market, born as a rival to the European Economic Community (pp. 45–46). However, this was never its aim. Born out of the reorganization of pre-existing interwar links, the CMEA lacked a proper institutional structure in its early stages. The structural weakness between its birth in 1949 and 1954, when institutionalization took hold, “is not a symptom of the communists’ inability to build their own organization”. Rather, Godard says, it proves that the CMEA “was not originally intended to be another Europe” (p. 51).

In this book, CMEA is a unique socialist community with an organizational structure so weak that it deserves the expression “an ectoplasmic and marginal organization in external relations” (p. 59). Common policies were a tedious exercise, and the CMEA seems to fit in well with another ephemeral institution, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). Godard describes the link between the two as an interested alliance between

weak bodies. However, the CMEA soon became the place to oppose Soviet domination of international economic relations and a centre for alternative international socialist cooperation – a place for freedom rather than coercion. Although it was intended to serve global purposes and eventually to include non-European members in the worldwide socialist project, the CMEA was throughout a very European establishment. Unfortunately, the global projection through trade and technical cooperation with developing countries is not specifically addressed in Godard's work, which is dismissive of the CMEA's inclusive ambitions.³ His narrative revolves around regional rather than global governance, with a limited role for non-European members (Cuba, Mongolia, and Vietnam), described as “a little-known driving force behind the Council's reforms” (p. 67).

It is not easy to write a gripping history of institutions that are now dead, but Godard's book does just that: it paints a fascinating picture of the CMEA, with captivating pages devoted to the social life of its administrators. International mobility was a privilege of the socialist elites, Godard explains. Because the CMEA was perceived as a peripheral institution, it offered several advantages to those who worked there. It was not just about money. CMEA bureaucrats became members of a cosmopolitan elite. Godard, whose work is based on an incredible wealth of archival sources from East German party archives, focuses on East Germans. He looks at different generations (people who had first spent their exile in the Soviet Union or students in Moscow who returned as professionals) and goes on to paint a complete picture of their everyday life – including marriages,

education, and professional associations – with trade unions as socializing arenas (pp. 107–132).

This social history of the CMEA is illuminating and offers a striking parallel with the European Community. In both cases, and notwithstanding the higher pay, service as an officer in the international organization was a secondary option to national service, which carried a higher degree of responsibility and visibility. International officers working for the CMEA, Godard argues, had a fluid identity, national and international, and a dual loyalty. After the 1960s, the international socialist technocracy around the CMEA included economic actors in specialized subcommissions and new professional elites engaged in the evaluation of international programmes. Fluency in Russian was a *sine qua non*. A delightful part of the book is the sketch of Moscow as a model city for the communist revolution (pp. 79–105). Like Brussels, Vienna, or The Hague, since 1969 it was the national capital and an international city. Architects – working on the CMEA buildings (hotel and tower) – contributed to advancing its dimension as a global hub. Very well written and superbly structured, Godard's work is a delightful read for people interested in studying socialist internationalism through an institution that is often misunderstood and too little known.

Notes

- 1 S. Kott, *Organiser le monde: une autre histoire de la guerre froide*, Paris 2021; M. Christian, S. Kott, and O. Matejka, *Planning in Cold War Europe: Competition, Cooperation, Circulations (1950s–1970s)*, Berlin 2018.
- 2 The most interesting collective effort appeared in this journal, U. Müller/D. Jajeśniak-Quast (eds.), *Comecon Revisited: Integration in the Eastern Bloc and Entanglements with the Global Economy*, in: *Comparativ* 27 (2017) 5/6. See

also S. Kansikas, *Socialist Countries Face the European Community: Soviet-Bloc Controversies over East–West Trade*, Frankfurt am Main 2014.

- 3 See instead S. Lorenzini, *The Socialist Camp and the Challenge of Economic Modernization in the Third World*, in: N. Naimark, S. Pons, and S. Quinn-Judge (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Communism*, vol. 2, Cambridge 2017, pp. 341–363.

Jie-Hyun Lim: *Global Easts: Remembering, Imagining, Mobilizing*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2022, 344 pp.

Reviewed by
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Cet ouvrage propose une réflexion stimulante sur l'imaginaire national et la façon dont celui-ci a façonné plusieurs idéologies politiques influentes dans différentes régions du monde, tout particulièrement en Europe de l'Est et en Asie. Convaincu par la méthode marxiste à la fin des années 1980 qui inspira ses premiers travaux, l'auteur en est arrivé à une critique assez radicale de celui-ci, le considérant comme une forme particulière de l'orientalisme (le marxisme est ainsi qualifié à de nombreuses reprises dans cet ouvrage de « red orientalism ») peu efficace pour comprendre les multiples réalités et voies de l'histoire mondiale. Cet ensemble d'articles réunis sous la forme d'ouvrage mêle des développements sur des exemples précis et des réflexions d'ordre plus général sur l'histoire et l'historiographie. L'auteur ne s'interdit pas également des remarques plus politiques, tout en