

ABOUT THE SERIES

HISTORY, AS radical historians have long observed, cannot be severed from authorial subjectivity, indeed from politics. Political concerns animate the questions we ask, the subjects on which we write. For over thirty years the *Radical History Review* has led in nurturing and advancing politically engaged historical research. Radical Perspectives seeks to further the journal's mission: any author wishing to be in the series makes a self-conscious decision to associate her or his work with a radical perspective. To be sure, many of us are currently struggling with what it means to be a radical historian in the early twenty-first century, and this series is intended to provide some signposts for what we would judge to be radical history. It will offer innovative ways of telling stories from multiple perspectives; comparative, transnational, and global histories that transcend conventional boundaries of region and nation; works that elaborate on the implications of the postcolonial move to "provincialize Europe"; studies of the public in and of the past, including those that consider the commodification of the past; histories that explore the intersection of identities such as gender, race, class, and sexuality with an eye to their political implications and complications. Above all, this book series seeks to create an important intellectual space and discursive community to explore the very issue of what constitutes radical history. Within this context, some of the books published in the series may privilege alternative and oppositional political cultures, but all will be concerned with the way power is constituted, contested, used, and abused.

We are pleased to inaugurate the series with Herman Lebovics's intriguing and challenging study of postcolonial France and the roots of contemporary anti-globalization movements. *Bringing the Empire Back Home* demonstrates how the colonial heritage—both that of overseas colonies and of exploited regions within the colonizing nations—is still alive in the practice of the great powers. Focusing on the sharp political and cultural struggles during the last fifty years over what was, or should be, the French national heritage, Lebovics traces how postcolonial globalization continued (and continues) the drive

for empire in other forms. Among the different episodes of postcolonial struggle highlighted in the text, Lebovics writes about the Peasants of Larzac, the movement in southwestern France that defeated a conservative government's effort to expropriate farmers' land for a military base on which to train a new postcolonial strike force. The Larzadians owed their victory in large part to a heterogeneous coalition of supporters, including left regionalists in other parts of France, post-'68 radical groups, members of the American Indian Movement, New Caledonian freedom fighters, and José Bové, now a prominent figure in the international movement against neoliberalism.

Lebovics also considers the debates about the place of immigrants from the former colonies in French society, the rise of organized racist politics under Jean Marie Le Pen, and the impact on popular attitudes about French heritage and identity of the victory in the World Cup in 1998 by an ethnically diverse French national team. Yet this (rare) national moment of multicultural celebration and anti-racist affirmation, however inspiring, is hardly a "happy end" to Lebovics's story. New museums of immigration, popular culture, and the art of the once-colonized are going up, but historians—including radical historians—continue to struggle with the meanings of the past for the present and the challenge that an increasingly diverse French population poses for any unified vision of a national or (increasingly) international heritage.