

growth of wolf populations. Pressures on the wolf population were relieved, shifting feeding and mating behaviors. And the success of one extermination method led to the necessity of yet another method. The narrative unfolds with a kind of inevitability when viewed through this lens.

Wise then shifts the focus to meat production, examining bison and later cattle slaughter and processing. Human predators replaced wolves in this effort, and the author makes it clear that meat production began long before white ranchers brought their cattle to the plains. In shifting native human populations like the Blackfoot Indians to reservations, settlers and agents sought to maintain their productivity and engage them in the new economic order. The shift also exposed layers of cultural complexity, including within gender roles. With cultures long adapted to predation on bison, Blackfoot men could not readily take on production duties previously performed more exclusively by women. Accounts at the time that the men would do no work failed to appreciate a division of labor that engaged men both as hunters and tenders of herds, while women had worked as butchers and preparers of meat. Assuming assimilated men would work in confined and unsanitary slaughterhouses to prepare meat for shipment east—while their families starved just outside the slaughterhouse door—exposes the utter failure of colonialism over decades of economic transition.

In a most intriguing final chapter, Wise relies on this economic account to explain wildlife conservation. As in other chapters, the argument here reverses certain long-held assumptions in environmental history. At the same time, the economic thesis cannot replace entirely the narratives that are built on those assumptions. This book, in the end, is an important contribution to an ongoing project of understanding the many threads woven together to make our past.

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*Agrarian Crossings: Reformers and the Remaking of the U.S. and Mexican Countryside.* By Tore C. Olsson. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017. 296 pp., \$35.00, hardback, ISBN 978-0-691-16520-2.

“Borders matter,” Tore Olsson reminds us at the start of *Agrarian Crossings*, a compelling narrative of agrarian reform in Mexico and the United States that shows that what matters most about borders is sometimes their porousness. In the 1930s and early 1940s, both countries witnessed significant “state-led

rural reform along with its attendant social upheaval” (3). In Mexico, the populist president Lázaro Cárdenas initiated a program of land reform that redistributed nearly fifty million acres in the pursuit of greater independence and prosperity for peasant farmers. Meanwhile, in the United States, the New Deal promised by Franklin Delano Roosevelt sought to alleviate rural poverty, particularly in the South, through a barrage of programs and policies. As Olsson convincingly demonstrates, the development and execution of these radical agrarian reform efforts involved countless cross-border comparisons. Many observers, including a few very influential ones, saw commonalities between the plight of *campesinos* in Mexico and that of tenant farmers of the southern United States and sought to learn from experiences across the border.

Although the Mexican and US programs at the center of Olsson’s analysis have been the subject of numerous historical investigations, few studies have linked the two, and never with such sustained attention. This is not because connections between them did not exist, but because—as historians well know—national borders create historiographical divisions as well as social, political, and economic ones. Overcoming this scholarly boundary so as to show “the confluence and interaction” between rural reformers in Mexico and the United States is one of two key historiographical agendas of *Agrarian Crossings* (3).

To accomplish this goal, Olsson introduces numerous influential border-crossers or cross-border observers, individuals who carried experiences, ideas, and occasionally plans from one national context to the other. For example, we meet the historian and sociologist Frank Tannenbaum whose travel and study in Mexico in the 1920s informed his assessment of the troubled cotton South and, crucially, the solutions to southern poverty he pitched with some success to US government officials in the mid-1930s. We learn of the travels of Ramón Fernández y Fernández, a Mexican agronomist who journeyed through the southern United States in the early 1940s to learn firsthand about programs such as rural credit initiatives in Arkansas and cooperative farming in the Mississippi Delta. In reconstructing such journeys and resurrecting the reflections they inspired, Olsson offers not a comparative history, but a history of the “exchange of comparisons” (4). The exception is Chapter One, which helpfully lays out the parallel though not interconnected histories of agrarian poverty and unrest in Mexico and the United States between the 1870s and 1920s.

A second significant historiographical intervention takes aim at a different

boundary line, that which lies between the Global North and Global South. Here Olsson rests his argument primarily on a new account of the Rockefeller Foundation's agricultural assistance program in Mexico. This program, launched in 1943, is typically described as the starting point of what would become the Green Revolution, the testing ground where the foundation developed a style and pattern of agricultural intervention that it infamously repeated elsewhere. Instead of tracing the story of the Green Revolution forward from Mexico, Olsson looks back to its closest inspiration and model: the US South, where the foundation's earliest agricultural reform efforts took place.

Olsson argues that his revised history of this well-known agrarian exchange supports not a just a rethinking of regional history but global history. He urges a new perspective on the history of "development," the origins of which are typically located in the immediate postwar years. As he writes, Mexico's Green Revolution, spurred on by the Rockefeller Foundation, was "born ... of far earlier efforts to address the enduring existence of an impoverished agrarian periphery within the core of the industrial United States" (8). According to Olsson, this perspective both reveals the similarities among "rural transformations of the First World and Third World" and makes it difficult to sweepingly label "development" as a project of "Americanization" (8).

*Agrarian Crossings* is an elegantly written and painstakingly researched account. Olsson leans heavily on several extraordinary individuals to make his case about the importance of cross-border comparisons, and cannot always demonstrate direct influence. However, he never stretches the evidence—and never needs to, given the gems he has recovered. Ultimately, he provides a convincing new regional history, a useful provocation to the history of development, and a brilliant reminder of the fruits of historical border crossing.

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*The Rise of the American Conservation Movement: Power, Privilege, and Environmental Protection.* By Dorceta E. Taylor. Durham: Duke University Press, 2016. 496 pp, \$29.95, paperback, ISBN 978-0-8223-6198-5.

This is an ambitious book. Perhaps in no other volume are so many of the socially exclusionary patterns of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century conservation assembled as they are in *The Rise of the American Conservation Movement*. Environmental sociologist Dorceta E. Taylor argues urban elites