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Peter Becker and Richard F. Wetzell, Eds., *Criminals and Their Scientists: The History of Criminology in International Perspective*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. xiii + 492 pp. Index. \$85.00 U.S. (hb). ISBN 0-521-81012-4.

Review by Allyson J. Delnore, Marquette University.

In October 1998, the German Historical Institute and the European University Institute sponsored an international conference on the history of criminology. *Criminals and Their Scientists: The History of Criminology in International Perspective* is a by-product of that conference and an excellent example of the kind of fruitful, elucidating, and exciting ideas that can result from international scholarly exchanges. The conference organizers, Peter Becker and Richard F. Wetzell, who also edited this volume, are to be commended for assembling such a varied and yet surprisingly focused collection of writings that will provide historians with new methods and models for thinking about the history of crime and punishment in world-historical perspective.

Truly international in its scope, *Criminals and Their Scientists* covers a broad geographical range: from the United States to Japan, from Argentina to Australia. Nevertheless, the majority of the chapters focus on central and western Europe, including Italy, France, and Germany. Two themes unite the various chapters in the volume: the generation and international reception of Cesare Lombroso's criminal-anthropological ideas and, more broadly, the relationship between those who committed crimes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the emerging field of experts who claimed to be able—at some level—both to identify and understand them.

As Becker and Wetzell establish in the introduction, the twenty-one contributors to *Criminals and Their Scientists* have mapped out a novel interpretive agenda, looking at “the history of criminology as discourse and practice” (p. 1). The editors employ Michel Foucault's archeological method as a means to explore the formation of knowledge about criminals in the nineteenth century. In the subsequent chapters each author guides the reader through a “highly polyphonic discourse about crime and criminals” to uncover a “binary relationship in which criminals were confronted by their ‘scientists’ within a system of power and knowledge” (p. 5). The result is that readers will appreciate the slow, and at times unsteady, gathering, dissemination, and redaction of criminological knowledge that led to a shift from a moral to a medical definition of crime over the course of the long nineteenth century. More importantly from an historiographical perspective, this work explores the interactions between criminals and those who claimed expert knowledge of their mental and physical properties as a means to understanding the interrelation between criminology, social values, and the wider political field.

The organization of the chapters serves the larger interpretive agenda well, moving the reader from the early nineteenth-century and a moral definition of crime and into the twentieth century when professionals had reclassified the criminal as a predominantly medical case study. The editors have divided the book into four parts. The first part identifies a variety of nonacademic sites of criminological discourse in the nineteenth century and includes essays on the revolutionary origins of French criminology, the mental world of the nineteenth century English judiciary, Jewish responses to gentile associations of Jews with criminal behavior, the contributions of German middle class religious conservatives and scholars to the discourse on urbanization, and the ways criminologists of the late nineteenth century mined the writings of earlier generations of “experts” to draw new conclusions. Historians of France will likely find Marc Renneville's chapter on the French Revolution useful, as it

complements previous scholarship on crime, policing, and penal reform during the period, establishing the Revolution as a foundational moment in the history of French criminology, as well. [1] It serves to fill in the gaps left by historiographical concentrations on either political theory or judicial reform and provides a model for reintegrating the two. In addition, Andrew Lees' chapter, "Moral Discourse and Reform in Urban Germany, 1880s-1914" investigates the backgrounds of middle class spokesman for urban reform, providing a glimpse into the lives and ideals of bourgeois social reformers. As a historian of France, I found myself drawing comparisons between these German reformers and the intellectuals, experts, and administrators whom Janet Horne describes in her work on the Musée social. [2] Though not explicit in the text, such moments of comparative possibility suggest one of the principle advantages a reader of a volume of this geographic scope might enjoy.

This aspect of the work is explored more fully in part two. Taken together, the essays in this section highlight a growing international community of scholars who learned about Lombroso's theories of atavism, appropriated them, and recast them to apply to the specific social, political, and intellectual climate in which they lived. Contributors introduce the theory and politics of Cesare Lombroso and then provide examples of how Lombroso's ideas reverberated around the world leading to the birth of criminology. In Stephen Garton's chapter on Australia, for example, the author shows how Lombroso's biological theory of crime led prison officials and penal reformers to distinguish between curable and incurable criminals, thus leading to a diversification of institutions for confinement. Ricardo Salvatore, meanwhile, focuses on the uses that the Argentinean state made of the new, medical description of criminal behavior in order to extend its powers into new areas of private and public life. Additional chapters on the United States (by Nicole Rafter), Germany (by Mariacarla Gadebusch Bondio), and Japan (by Yoji Nakatani), further establish that criminologists were products of the political culture in which they lived and worked. Thus, these experts borrowed selectively from Lombroso (and others) as they established their authority in their respective states. Laurent Mucchielli's chapter is of particular interest here, as he speculates that French preoccupation with human rights and belief in education may in part explain why France never embraced eugenics and calls for sterilization with the same enthusiasm as governments in many Anglophone countries in the *fin-de-siècle* (p. 229). Though Mucchielli suggests that these aspects of French cultural history need to be further investigated before more definitive conclusions can be made, his own reading of scientific sources does reveal an interesting tension between environmental and biological explanatory models and their effects on public policy.

The third part of the book delves further into the professionalization of criminology and the ways in which these men (primarily) fashioned themselves as experts with knowledge valuable to society and the state. Again, the contributors highlight the growth of an international community of scholars interested in criminology on the eve of World War I. But in this section, the most rewarding chapters are those that remind the reader of the physical presence of both criminals and victims during the period. Jane Caplan's investigation of tattoos as a part of criminological discourse adds to the recent body of scholarship (no pun intended) on tattooing and its social, cultural, and political implications. [3] Peter Fritzsche's essay, "Talk of the Town: The Murder of Lucie Berlin and the Production of Local Knowledge," brings to mind Vanessa Schwartz's discussion of Parisians viewing the corpses of drowned children and shows how the murder of this little girl from a working-class suburb of Berlin provided readers of Berlin's newspapers with a new insight into the proletarian neighborhoods and the lives of pimps and prostitutes. [4]

Finally, in part four, the contributors focus on Weimar and Nazi Germany and reveal how fluid and contested the medical definition of crime could be. Like part two, this section of the book integrates the various themes of the essays and reaffirms the authors' goals of understanding the interrelation between criminological theory and political and social practice. Essays by Wetzell, Oliver Liang, Gabriel N. Finder, and Geoffrey J. Giles present a far more narrow--both geographically and chronologically--window in which to view the effects of political culture on criminologists and vice versa.

Though each essay in this volume is solid, one chapter deserves to be singled out for its contributions to the historiography. Peter Becker's "The Criminologists' Gaze at the Underworld" shows how criminologists of the late nineteenth century drew upon the writings of their predecessors, the medical experts (criminalists) of the first two-thirds of the century, as sources of evidence in the construction of more modern theories of criminality. The early experts employed a biographical method, describing the environment, activities, and language of criminals to construct what Becker identifies as a master narrative of "fallen men." As the professionalization of the criminologist advanced in the latter third of the century, however, scientists became more confined within an institutional setting, and thus relied on the writings of the earlier criminalists to uncover genetic and/or environmental factors leading to criminal behavior. This new approach resulted in a new master narrative, that of "impaired men." In thus categorizing the strategies of those who observed and described criminals in the course of the nineteenth century, Becker manages to highlight similarities of method and approach among criminologists that are often obscured in historical writings that focus on the distinctions among particular schools of thought.

Finally, both Mary S. Gibson and David G. Horn contribute chapters that would be excellent for use in an advanced undergraduate course on the history of crime and punishment. Gibson's "Cesare Lombroso and Italian Criminology" is an excellent review of Lombroso's career that goes beyond the usual summaries describing his theory of the "born criminal" by showing how his ideas evolved over time and in response to social currents and other scholars. Meanwhile, Horn's "Making Criminologists: Tools, Techniques, and the Production of Scientific Authority" picks up where Gibson's essay leaves off, showing how experts developed new methods for reading the bodies of criminals.

In the end, readers might find themselves wishing for a more comparative framework uniting the chapters. While the international perspective suggests interesting possibilities, they are rarely drawn out to any satisfactory degree. This is not necessarily the fault either of the contributors or of the editors. *Criminals and Their Scientists* makes few claims to presenting comparative history, but scholars may find that more questions are raised than are ultimately answered. Then again, perhaps that is also the strength of the work. Throughout this volume, the strongest chapters engage the other contributors in a conversation within the text. Just as many of the essays stress the transnational communication of professionals exchanging ideas about criminology in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the authors included in this volume have also clearly benefited from such scholarly exchange. We readers are thus obliged to Wetzell and Becker for bringing them all together.

LIST OF ESSAYS

Peter Becker and Richard F. Wetzell, "Introduction"
Part One: Nonacademic Sites of Nineteenth-Century Criminological Discourse

Marc Renneville, "The French Revolution and the Origins of French Criminology"

Martin J. Wiener, "Murderers and 'Reasonable Men': The 'Criminology' of the Victorian Judiciary"

Michael Berkowitz, "Unmasking Counterhistory: An Introductory Exploration of Criminality and the Jewish Question"

Andrew Lees, "Moral Discourse and Reform in Urban Germany, 1880s-1914"

Peter Becker, "The Criminologists' Gaze at the Underworld: Toward an Archaeology of Criminological Writing"

Part Two: Criminology as Scientific and Political Practice in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

Mary S. Gibson, "Cesare Lombroso and Italian Criminology: Theory and Politics"

Nicole Hahn Rafter, "Criminal Anthropology: Its Reception in the United States and the Nature of Its Appeal"

Mariacarla Gadebusch Bondio, "From the 'Atavistic' to the 'Inferior' Criminal Type: The Impact of the Lombrosian Theory of the Born Criminal on German Psychiatry"

Laurent Mucchielli, "Criminology, Hygienism, and Eugenics in France, 1870-1914: The Medical Debates on the Elimination of 'Incorrigible' Criminals"

Stephen Garton, "Crime, Prisons, and Psychiatry: Reconsidering Problem Populations in Australia, 1890-1930"

Ricardo D. Salvatore, "Positivist Criminology and State Formation in Modern Argentina, 1890-1940"

Yoji Nakatani, "The Birth of Criminology in Modern Japan"

Part Three: The Making of the Criminologist

Martine Kaluszynski, "The International Congresses of Criminal Anthropology: Shaping the French and International Criminological Movement, 1886-1914"

David G. Horn, "Making Criminologists: Tools, Techniques, and the Production of Scientific Authority"

Jane Caplan, "'One of the Strangest Relics of a Former State': Tattoos and the Discourses of Criminality in Europe, 1880-1920"

Philippe Artières, "What Criminals Think about Criminology: French Criminals and Criminological Knowledge at the End of the Nineteenth Century"

Peter Fritzsche, "Talk of the Town: The Murder of Lucie Berlin and the Production of Local Knowledge"

Part Four: Criminology in the First Half of the Twentieth Century: The Case of Weimar and Nazi Germany

Richard F. Wetzell, "Criminology in Weimar and Nazi Germany"

Oliver Liang, "The Biology of Morality: Criminal Biology in Bavaria, 1924-1933"

Gabriel N. Finder, "Criminals and Their Analysts: Psychoanalytic Criminology in Weimar Germany and the First Austrian Republic"

Geoffrey J. Giles, "Drinking and Crime in Modern Germany"

NOTES

[1] Antoinette Wills, *Crime and Punishment in Revolutionary Paris* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981); Howard G. Brown, "From Organic Society to Security State: The War on Brigandage in France, 1797-1802" *Journal of Modern History* 69 (1997): 661-695; Jacques-Guy Petit, *Ces peines obscures: la prison pénale en France (1780-1875)* (Paris: Fayard, 1990); Jacques-Guy Petit, Claude Faugeron, and Michel Pierre, *Histoire des prisons en France, 1789-2000* (Toulouse: Editions Privat, 2002).

[2] Janet Horne, *A Social Laboratory for Modern France: The Musée Social and the Rise of the Welfare State* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002).

[3] For example, Jane Caplan, ed., *Written on the Body: The Tattoo in European and American History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000); Clare Anderson, *Legible Bodies: Race, Criminality, and Colonialism in South Asia* (Oxford: Berg, 2004); and Nicholas Thomas, Anna Cole, and Bronwen Douglas, eds., *Tattoo: Bodies, Art, and Exchange in the Pacific and the West* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2005).

[4] Vanessa Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in Fin-de-Siècle Paris* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

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