

In order to answer these questions, this study explores the whole period during which rationing was in force (the system was not abolished until a decade after World War II had ended) to reveal a complex regulatory system; a mass of contested moralities around entitlement, need, and greed; a raft of questions about rational offending; and insight into how the illegal market was grown, sustained, and combated. Roodhouse's conclusions clarify how this study contributes to our understanding of public sensibilities during times of austerity and resource scarcity.

The book is organized in three parts: a section that explores the scale of noncompliance with rationing regulations in the "grey" and the "black" markets; a section that considers the police and judicial response; and a final section that explores wider issues of how the black market was situated in its local context and how the "spiv" became a comic cultural figure in the 1950s. On that score, the *Spiv's Gazette* is a marvelous source that Roodhouse uses to good effect.

Historians of crime will also welcome more information about characters whose criminal offending transcended black market activities. "Mad" Frankie Fraser and Arthur Harding were well-known offenders who took advantage of wartime conditions to increase the scope of their offending. As Roodhouse points out, however, the black market was open not only to the established criminal fraternity, but also to "casual" offenders (those who would never have included themselves in the same bracket as Arthur Harding, in any respect). This is therefore a useful look at the middle-class offender, who is often left out of crime debates (other than the regulation of motoring). The police disliked enforcing regulations against middle-class offenders, who could be high-handed and contentious and might well have had connections to superior officers (pp. 151–152). In Birkenhead and Liverpool, blackout regulations were enforced mainly in working-class areas that did not experience heavy bombing, and for years after the last bomber had flown overhead. It would be interesting to know how the policing of black market activities overlapped with the control of other wartime regulatory breaches. The book could also have debated contemporary parallels. Britain is again experiencing austerity, and a historical commentary could have helped contextualize the renewed focus on "dole-fiddling" by the poor versus tax evasion by the rich.

BARRY GODFREY

University of Liverpool

HELENE VON BISMARCK, *British Policy in the Persian Gulf, 1961–1968: Conceptions of Informal Empire*. (Britain and the World.) New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2013. Pp. xx, 269. \$85.00.

The historiography of Britain's twentieth-century empire is strikingly uneven in its geographical coverage, and the reasons for this unevenness need to be distinguished. It is easy to see why books and articles about the events leading to Indian independence and parti-

tion, which reshaped South Asian politics and history, are now piled so high that they overshadow the literature dealing with later instances of decolonization. Elsewhere, some combination of chronological precedence, the charismatic appeal of particular nationalist leaders, resonance in metropolitan debates, and Cold War saliency may explain why Ghana, Kenya, and Guyana proved more attractive to scholars of decolonization than regionally influential countries such as Nigeria, Tanzania, and Jamaica. In the case of Britain's informal empire in Arabia, the eastern territories on the Persian Gulf have garnered more attention than Britain's ramshackle South Arabian patrimony on the Indian Ocean, even though the latter hinged on Britain's only formal colony, the city port of Aden. The reason for this disparity is easy to identify: During the 1950s and 1960s, the export of oil from Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and Abu Dhabi to the industrial societies of Western Europe and East Asia became an integral feature of the global capitalist economy. It also sustained the sterling area, the maintenance of which was an essential feature of the British government's strategy for managing imperial decline.

Helene von Bismarck's book is the third in the last decade to examine the final years of British influence in the gulf. Whereas Simon C. Smith's *Britain's Revival and Fall in the Gulf: Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and the Trucial States, 1950–71* (2004) was written from the point of view of a specialist in British decolonization, and W. Taylor Fain's *American Ascendance and British Retreat in the Persian Gulf Region* (2008) was, as the title indicates, preoccupied with analyzing the transatlantic diplomacy that accompanied British withdrawal, von Bismarck is much more concerned with the mechanisms by which British influence was sustained during the 1960s. Only six pages toward the end of the book are devoted to the impact of Britain's decision to withdraw, and this seems entirely justified on the basis that so much of the extensive literature on Britain's east-of-Suez policy has already catalogued the Wilson government's abandonment of a substantial role in the Middle East. What does interest von Bismarck is the means by which Britain was able to shape events in the region, even as the economic and political circumstances that would lead to an early exit from the Persian Gulf were gathering in ominous alignment. Despite the continuing refusal of the British government to release all the documents relating to these events, she provides the fullest and most persuasive account yet offered of British involvement in the ousting first of Sheikh Saqr of Sharjah in 1965, and then of Sheikh Shakhbut of Abu Dhabi in 1966. A propensity for overthrowing inconvenient Arabian potentates was one of the distinctive features of British postwar diplomacy on the peninsula, and von Bismarck's shrewd discussion opens the possibility for further systematic comparison between the removal of Saqr and Shakhbut and the other British-organized palace coups that disposed of Haidera of Dhala and Ali of Lahj in South Arabia in the 1940s and 1950s and ejected Sultan Said from Oman in 1970.

Von Bismarck is particularly successful in illuminating the endless dilemmas that the affairs of the gulf principalities generated for the British. In one of the most interesting chapters of the book, she details the bureaucratic tangles that ensued as the Foreign Office attempted to modernize its image. Even the apparently straightforward goal of retitling its representatives in the region in order to wash away the colonial tinge of “agents” and “residents” proved surprisingly difficult to accomplish. The analysis of these developments could have been sharpened further by consideration of the broader context offered by the growing literature in the fields of development, intelligence, and diplomatic studies. In addition, von Bismarck’s fidelity to the diplomatic record sometimes diverts her from the task of conveying a broader interpretation of events and locating her new findings in the existing historiography. In some respects, these caveats are a corollary of the great strengths of the monograph, which are that it is the product of meticulous research and demonstrates how effective careful exposition can be in re-creating the circumstances that shaped British policy. Although von Bismarck remarks at the outset on the difficulties of writing in a language not her own, the resulting unembellished prose is lucid and persuasive. As a whole, her book provides an admirable overview of the operations of informal empire in the Persian Gulf during the 1960s. Her decision to reexamine some familiar historiographical terrain proves to be fully justified.

SPENCER MAWBY
University of Nottingham

JEFFREY FREEDMAN. *Books without Borders in Enlightenment Europe: French Cosmopolitanism and German Literary Markets*. (Material Texts.) Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 2012. Pp. viii, 382. \$79.95.

During the past forty years, the field of the history of the book has been transformed by a series of important studies based on the extraordinarily rich archives of the Société Typographique de Neuchâtel (STN), most notably those of Robert Darnton. This Swiss publishing company, which specialized in inexpensive pirated editions, supplied booksellers in late-eighteenth-century France and francophone Europe with works that ranged from the *Encyclopédie* to the Bible to pornography. In *Books without Borders*, Jeffrey Freedman has returned to these archives to pose a new set of questions, asking how French-language books were sold in German markets, which books, and with what consequences.

Arguing for the importance of transnational scholarship, *Books without Borders* is framed as a challenge to the nationally bounded studies that have predominated scholarship on the book trade. Books as well as booksellers, Freedman argues, “moved back and forth across national borders” (p. 1). If the novelty of this approach is perhaps diminished by the fact that Darnton’s studies of STN sales in France are similarly transnational, Freedman’s point is no less valid. Moreover,

its value is especially evident for late-eighteenth-century “Germany,” a term Freedman uses to designate German-speaking lands in Europe, including those in the Habsburg Empire but excluding Switzerland. During this era, books in the French language made up a larger share of the German literary market than at any point before or since—nearly 10 percent of books sold, not including the many hundreds of French works translated into German. The literary exchange, he argues, was almost exclusively one-sided, and the very intensity of French literary dominance would help to catalyze a nascent German cultural nationalism.

Books without Borders is defined as much by the richness of the STN archives as by the limitations imposed by building a study around these unique sources alone. The book straddles two different registers. On the one hand, Freedman uses the firm’s correspondence with retail booksellers throughout Germany and Switzerland as a window onto the German book trade as a whole. The fact that the STN’s directors entered the German market around 1770 as novices who required instruction, and learned from their mistakes, enables Freedman to reconstruct the company’s German operations, from the choice of texts and the selection of paper to the methods of delivery and payment. Freedman also uses the orders for more than 6,000 books placed by the STN’s six principal German booksellers between 1774 and 1785 to gauge German demand for French books, analyzing the most-sought-after genres and authors. This illuminating contribution, presented in chapter four, will undoubtedly prove of interest to intellectual and cultural historians as well as literary scholars.

On the other hand, much of the book adopts what Freedman modestly describes as a “worm’s eye perspective” (p. 63) of the retail book trade, presented through numerous case studies of the colorful swindlers, earnest failures, and others with whom the STN did business. “To do justice to the documentary riches in the Neuchâtel archives,” he argues, they must be studied “both as a representative slice of the French book trade in eighteenth-century Germany and as an ensemble of individual life stories” (p. 12). Drawing on booksellers’ letters, *Books without Borders* highlights the diversity of their experiences operating in various locales. It also closely follows the fate of several editions. The firm’s disastrous attempt to offload expensive folio French Bibles in Germany using Protestant pastors as salesmen provides an opportunity to reflect on the challenges of selling religious texts across linguistic and religious boundaries. Because the STN, unlike most other firms, also engaged in several German-to-French translations, the more successful sales of a French edition of Friedrich Nicolai’s popular German novel *Das Leben und die Meinungen des Herrn Magister Sebaldu Nothanker* allow Freedman to consider how the French were exposed to the texts of the German Enlightenment.

Although engagingly written, *Books without Borders* squeezes this documentary trove so thoroughly that it