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*Masters and Lords: Mid-Nineteenth Century U.S. Planters and Prussian Junkers*, by Shearer Davis Bowman

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differences in the manner in which new converts in both regions conceived the afterlife and the dead.

Part 3, titled "The Assimilated," analyzes the efforts of Creoles in the "Age of Revolution" to lead rural blacks in rebellion. Here, Mullin's interest revolves around the issues of the role of religions in slave resistance, the reasons why revolutionary leadership passed to Creole rather than African slaves, and whether or not the various stirrings and associations formed at the turn of the century were insurrectionary or for self-improvement. While acknowledging the varied nature of planters' and missionaries' ability to utilize Christianity as a mechanism for suppressing revolutionary rumblings, he suggests that if we are to appreciate fully the prevalence of religious-inspired revolts among Creole slaves, scholars ought to place greater emphasis on slaves' capacity to reinterpret missionary teachings to suit their particular local circumstances.

Ultimately, Mullin concludes that regional contrasts in acculturation affected resistance and slave conditions throughout British America. Despite variations in slave values and behavior within the four societies of Jamaica, Barbados, South Carolina, and Virginia, he argues that these societies should be collapsed into two categories: the Caribbean and the South. Given the immense complexities and differences even within a single region over time, this neat and overly simplistic categorization in Mullin's important and highly original study is bound to stimulate considerable scholarly discussion.

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SHEARER DAVIS BOWMAN. *Masters and Lords: Mid-19th-Century U.S. Planters and Prussian Junkers*. New York: Oxford University Press. 1993. Pp. ix, 357. \$45.00.

Shearer Davis Bowman's carefully crafted and judiciously argued comparative study of antebellum southern planters and *Vomaz*-era Prussian Junkers joins an impressive list of comparative works intent on clarifying the position of the Old South's planter elite in a nineteenth-century world characterized by the persistence of unfree labor systems amid the halting expansion of capitalism and political democracy. Bowman rightly admits that since planters and Junkers "functioned within very different geographic, demographic, political, and racial milieus" (p. 112), his comparison is contrast oriented, but he effectively argues that the sharp differences between the two elites shaped the nuances of the shared characteristic in which he is most interested: their ideological conservatism.

One of the many strengths of Bowman's work is his thoughtful analysis and skillful use of "contentious concepts" (p. 79) such as modernization, capitalism, paternalism, and conservatism. If his careful evaluation of these controversial concepts occasionally blurs

his focus on planters and Junkers, his sensitive handling of scholarly contretemps and his own sound judgment make these digressions into theory worthwhile.

By Bowman's yardstick, both southern planters and Prussian Junkers were profit-oriented agricultural entrepreneurs who adeptly deployed coerced labor (slaves, peasants) to seize opportunities provided by the expansion of commercial capitalism. As regional agrarian capitalists, planters and Junkers wielded staggering political and economic power and enjoyed considerable social prestige in their respective societies. But during the first half of the nineteenth century, both of these formidable landed elites saw threats to their power emerge from above as well as below. Junkers feared Prussia's reform-minded civil bureaucracy (backed by the power of a large standing army) from above and the growing pressures of democratization and peasant unrest from below. Southern planters fretted over the threat of slave insurrection from below and worried deeply about the formation of an antislavery majority in the republic as a whole. Both elites did their best to maximize their clout in national councils, but they also worked to render national authorities too weak to threaten their local authority.

Besieged, both planters and Junkers, despite their very different circumstances, fashioned coherent conservative ideologies, hinged on their presumed social beneficence as paternalistic masters and lords, to defend their power. For Junkers, this conservative ideology was monarchical corporatism, which held that a monarch advised by a powerful gentry rather than a constitutional democracy should prevail in Prussia. For planters, their conservatism was a racist republicanism which held that slavery made democracy safe for white men and that property rights were as sacrosanct as natural rights. Clearly the republican context, with its liberal suffrage laws and popular elections, prompted planters to take a less explicitly hierarchical view of society than Junkers and gave their conservatism a greater degree of popular appeal. Bowman concedes that the public face of republican planters was less openly antidemocratic than Junker monarchism, but he correctly argues that within the American South the conservative planters usually opposed liberalized suffrage laws and legislative apportionment formulas that weighted white population more than property. Although less popular, however, Junker conservatism ultimately proved the more potent and durable of the two. Junkers, whose serfs had been "emancipated" by 1810, eventually accepted a series of compromises with bourgeois democrats and followed one of their own, Otto von Bismarck, into a unified German nation-state that left much of the Junkers' local power intact and fortified the corporatist monarchy against full-blown democratic revolution with a small-dose inoculation of democratic forms. By contrast, southern planters, terrified at the prospect of emancipation in 1861, fell

on their hunting knives in a suicidal attempt to forge their own nation-state.

Junkers remained at least modestly influential in Germany until the Soviet Army occupied their estates in 1945; southern planters regained significant local power once Reconstruction ended in 1877, but their influence on national policy never again approached its antebellum level. Southern conservatism, diluted from the beginning by its republicanism and eventually overwhelmed by a liberalism based on free labor and upward social mobility, survived the defeat of the Confederacy largely as ideology of provincial intransigence and institutionalized racism. Junker conservatism arguably helped shape the policies and character of a Germany that mauled Europe and its people, and threatened Western democracy generally, twice in the first half of the twentieth century.

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DIETER RIESENBERGER. *Für Humanität in Krieg und Frieden: Das Internationale Rote Kreuz 1863–1977*. (Sammlung Vandenhoeck.) Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht. 1992. Pp. 304. DM 38.

The International Red Cross, together with the Red Crescent organizations in Islamic countries, with over 210 million members in 149 nations, is the largest nongovernmental organization in the world outside of the United Nations. Founded in 1863, it now consists of three entities: the International Committee, composed of citizens from Switzerland and headquartered in Geneva; the national Red Cross societies; and the League of Red Cross Societies, a federation that coordinates peacetime activities of the national bodies.

Since its founding, the Red Cross has taken an active part as an independent, neutral organization in humanitarian relief during armed conflicts, civil unrest, and natural disasters. It is unique in that it is a private foundation and its nongovernmental position has protected it and facilitated its work; from the time of its inception, it has also had an impact on international law. In spite of its avowed neutrality, it has been forced to develop as a political entity in world affairs as well. This was first apparent during World War I, when the Red Cross sought to serve both sides. With the coming of more fearful weapons, such as poison gas, Red Cross leaders were determined that they should play a more active role in the search for world peace. In addition, the establishment of the League of Nations required a redefinition of its aims and purposes.

Events in the 1920s and 1930s such as, for example, the taking over of the German Red Cross by the NSDAP further challenged the organization. The Nazi policy against the Jews impelled the international organization to mount rescue operations that were only partially successful. The stresses and strains

of World War II, the appearance of atomic weapons, the emergence of the United Nations, and the coming of the Cold War confronted the Red Cross with new challenges and opportunities. The organization intensified its search for world peace and enhanced its function as a peace mediator, in addition to carrying on its traditional activities.

Although the Red Cross movement cannot be separated from the history of health, military sanitation, catastrophes, and relief activities, nor from studies of international law, peace movements, and mediation initiatives, only historians of international law have given the Red Cross much attention. The organization still lacks a substantial serious history. That need has been partially met by Dieter Riesenberger in this solid, although rather brief, study of the International Red Cross from its founding in 1863 to 1977. Riesenberger emphasizes its theoretical, structural, political, and procedural development and its expanding roles in an evolving, more complex world. The work is based on extensive archival materials, much from the organization's own files, difficult to obtain because the International Committee fears that opening its archives completely would compromise the trust that it must develop with the governments with which it negotiates.

Riesenberger's book is well organized and clearly written, and it would be of interest to the general reader as well as to members of the scholarly community. He concludes that if the Red Cross hopes to play a more substantial role in the post-Cold War era, in which a hardening of ideological positions—especially along nationalist lines—is more apparent, the national organizations should sever ties with their national foundations, permitting a new emphasis on the traditional independent international orientation of the movement.

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DANIEL PICK. *War Machine: The Rationalisation of Slaughter in the Modern Age*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1993. Pp. 292. \$30.00.

To paraphrase historian Herbert Butterfield, there is a Napoleonic interpretation of war. This interpretation rests on five core beliefs. First, war can be short. Second, war can be brought to a swift conclusion through a decisive battle of annihilation. Third, only rapid offensive action can bring war to a successful conclusion. Fourth, a successful war is fought with massed conscripted armies. Fifth, regardless of how complex the military operations are, war is simply a tactical battle on a grand scale. According to a simplistic periodization of history, the epoch of modern war begins in 1789 with the French Revolution and the wars of Napoleon. In this fashion the conventional wisdom concerning modern war took on its distinct Napoleonic cast. Daniel Pick's new book is the