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Review

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As Errington illustrates, the notices offer a vivid reminder of the trials of the migration experience. They especially give occasion to reflect on the limitations of early nineteenth-century technology. Missed connections, delays owing to illness, and simple misunderstandings could separate families for years. It is impossible not to empathize with bewildered women who reach new shores, young children in tow, seeking news of husbands who have disappeared into a colony far vaster than they could have imagined. We can only imagine the challenge of seeking out John Smith of no known address, and the problems inherent in making contact when the seekers themselves were on the move and had no friends or family nearby. There were, of course, those who did not want to be found, or who had died far from home and family; some of the stories were never resolved.

Errington's book provides a valuable contribution to migration history by bringing to light the untapped resource of migrant notices. But its chief merit is in its ability to paint the details of that history so vividly.

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BARBARA J. MESSAMORE

TANISHA M. FAZAL. *State Death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation*. Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007. Pp. xv, 296. \$27.95 (US), paper.

REALIST INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS theory has long assumed that the competitive pressures of international politics compel states to emulate the practices of the most successful among them, particularly in military affairs. States ignore the innovations of others at their peril because they may be conquered and eliminated from the system. Tanisha M. Fazal challenges this view in her fine new book, arguing instead that when it comes to state survival and death, location matters. According to Fazal, buffer states – countries situated between two states engaged in an enduring rivalry – are particularly likely to die. Fazal defines state death as the 'formal loss of control over foreign policy to another state' (p. 17) owing to conquest, military occupation, federation or confederation with another state, or dissolution. Although some states, such as Czechoslovakia or the Soviet Union, die peaceful deaths, Fazal focuses on cases of violent state death, which comprise the vast majority of state deaths in the historical period she studies (1816-2000).

Fazal argues that buffer states are at increased risk of violent death because the surrounding rivals, who view each other with deep suspicion, cannot credibly commit not to conquer the buffer, since 'gaining control of the buffer state would translate into a significant strategic advantage, one that cannot be passed up on the chance that one or both rivals will exercise restraint with respect to the buffer' (p. 40). Caught in a classic prisoner's dilemma, each of the rivals would be better off if the buffer were preserved, since they would not share a border with their potential

adversary, but nor can they risk standing by while their competitor absorbs the buffer. As Fazal demonstrates, states trapped between such rivals – late eighteenth-century Poland, for example – are likely to disappear. Other buffers, such as Persia, survived only because the surrounding rivals (in this case, Russia and British India) were simply unable to conquer them, owing to war involvement in other theatres and the threat posed to both by a rising Germany. Contrary to realist expectations, in other words, Fazal maintains that states do not necessarily suffer for failing to emulate best practices or balance against threats. States are punished not for what they do, but for where they are.

Interestingly, however, Fazal also contends that violent state death is now largely extinct because of the rise of a strong norm against conquest in the twentieth century. Indeed, her dataset includes only two instances of conquest after 1945 – South Vietnam (1975) and Kuwait (1990) – neither of them buffer states. This does not mean that states have given up interfering in one another's affairs, however, but rather that intervention now takes a different form: Fazal finds that, while state death has declined after 1945, intervention to change an adversary state's leaders or institutions has increased. Dead states have also become more likely to come back to life.

As with any excellent and ambitious work, this one raises several questions. First, Fazal acknowledges that buffer states account for only 40 per cent of violent state deaths (p. 82), but says little about what might explain the remaining 60 per cent of the cases. An examination of the list of state deaths (pp. 21-3) reveals many cases of good old-fashioned imperial expansion, suggesting that geography might matter in a different way: weak states on the periphery of the international system may be just as vulnerable to conquest as those caught between rivals.

A second issue concerns the extent to which Fazal's theory explains the cases of buffer state death. Many states coded as buffers indeed perished, but not because surrounding rivals feared their adversary would conquer the buffer first. Of the roughly three dozen violent and peaceful buffer deaths Fazal identifies, for example, about one-third occurred in the Italian and German wars of unification. The states that disappeared in these conflicts were located between great-power rivals, but their demise stemmed more from Italian and German state-building efforts than fears that Austria or France would absorb them first. Similarly, fourteen buffer deaths occurred during the Second World War, many of which cannot be characterized as the result of commitment problems between surrounding powers. France and the Low Countries, for instance, were technically buffer states between Britain and Germany, but the German conquest of these countries was spurred largely by Adolf Hitler's designs on Russia and the need to secure his western flank, not his rivalry with Britain. Together, wars of national unification and the Second World War account for about three-quarters of violent buffer state deaths.

In sum, Fazal outlines a plausible mechanism for state death and supports it

with a persuasive combination of statistics and well-executed case studies. Her argument applies to a minority of the overall cases, though, and the number of those cases it actually explains may be more limited than she suggests.

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ROLAND SPLIESGART. *'Verbrasilianerung' und Akkulturation: Deutsche Protestanten im brasilianischen Kaiserreich am Beispiel der Gemeinden in Rio de Janeiro und Minas Gerais (1822-1889)*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2006. Pp. 608. €48.00.

THE TITLE OF Roland Spliesgart's book translates as 'Brazilianization and Acculturation: German Protestants under the Brazilian Empire by Example of the Congregations in Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais (1822-1889)'. In keeping with the standards of the *Habilitation*, it includes a comprehensive literature review, is exhaustively rich in primary evidence, and divides each of its ten chapters rather schematically into anywhere from five to ten sub-chapters.

Spliesgart provides a compelling theoretical reason for laying out the history of his four case studies – Nova Friburgo, Petrópolis, Teófile Otoni, and Juiz de Fora – in such minute detail. He conceives of his work as a contribution to church history that employs the methodology of social history, particularly approaches closely identified with historical anthropology: microhistory, thick description, and *Alltagsgeschichte*. This methodological borrowing enables him to write a study of 'the history of Christianity' that considers 'all religious, moral, and cultural expressions of a particular group' and 'investigates their relevance to the respective theological self-understanding' (p. 545). This is particularly important because the subject is the 'history of Christianity outside Europe', which obliges the scholar, in Spliesgart's view, to analyse the respective religious culture on its own terms, rather than comparatively as a mere deviant variety of the European original.

The historiography portrays the German Protestants in Brazil primarily through the prism of their links with the German *Reich* and their ideological commitment to German nationalism. Spliesgart maintains, however, that this is a misrepresentation, as the German imperial state only adopted a policy of integrating these enclaves in Brazil into the wider German *kulturnation* in the 1890s. Spliesgart makes the case that this excessive focus on the connections with Germany imposed an artificial uniformity on the varied historical experiences of German Protestant communities, whose presence in Brazil dates back to the 1810s. He instead sets out to illustrate their specific historical trajectories for the period that preceded this strengthening of ties with Germany: 1822 to 1889, the lifespan of the Brazilian empire. The historiographical focus shifts from the international history of these immigrant communities to an approach that places them 'firmly in the context of Brazilian society and culture' (p. 544).

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