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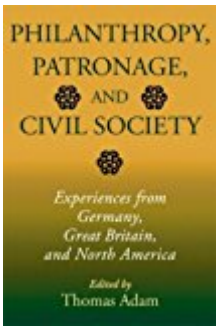

Thomas Adam, ed.. *Philanthropy, Patronage and Civil Society: Experiences from Germany, Great Britain and North America.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004. 228 pp. $37.95, cloth, ISBN 978-0-253-34313-0.

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For a long time scholars have concentrated on migration and in particular on people when thinking about the interrelations between America and Europe. Immigrants have figured prominently, while other groups such as travelers, soldiers or business people have come into view only in specialized disciplines such as art, economic or literary history. In fact, the exchange between the two continents has always been much more multifaceted, including people as well as "goods, ideas, and aspirations," as Daniel Rodgers has put it.[1] Social and cultural models, constructed from values, norms, ideas and perceptions, were as likely to be transferred from the "Old World" to the "New" or vice versa as machines, goods or individuals willing to start anew in another part of the world. As a result, more and more varied links between North American and European cultures, and not only between the Anglo-Saxon cultures, have been created than has been hitherto assumed. While this statement may seem like a well-accepted fact, transatlantic transfers and in particular the transfers of practices, ideas and social modes have only recently become a topic of closer study. During the nineteenth century the middle classes became the dominant social group and the emergence of a shared bourgeois culture stands out among all other factors. How did it come about? Which of the social models of the other national context were of interest? Which of them were transferred, transformed or integrated into the developing civil society on the other side of the Atlantic? To answer one or all of these questions is an undertaking awe-inspiring in its breadth. Progress toward such a goal is only conceivable by placement of a strict limitation on the significant elements of bourgeois culture. This collection of ten reworked papers from a conference at the University of Toronto in 2001 has found a workable limitation in the concepts and practices of philanthropy and patronage in an era when bourgeois identity came into its own.

In his introductory paper on philanthropy and social distinctions in North American and German cities Thomas Adam brings up the matter of definition. Not only have sociologists, economists, political scientists and historians put forth a number of competing definitions of these terms, but a considerable variety of synonyms were used

in everyday language to describe philanthropic activities as voluntarism, charity and patronage. Adam suggests an understanding of philanthropy as "providing financial, material, and intellectual resources for cultural, social, and educational institutions by upper-class citizens" (p. 16). As such, philanthropy is always connected to resources and to the upper classes, mainly to the middling ranks or bourgeoisie, which was defined by its wealth and the use made of it, the term being used in the sense of the German "Bürgertum." Though one might argue about the omission of all working-class activities, perhaps most notably cooperatives for better housing or education, if not initiated or financed by middle-class reformers, the restriction itself is useful for the closer study of national peculiarities and the transfer of some of their elements across the Atlantic. Since philanthropy is not understood as a static phenomenon but one constantly changing over the last two hundred years, the important business of defining philanthropy seems anything but settled. Susannah Morris is one of the contributors who brings up this question again in her paper on voluntary housing in nineteenth- and twentieth-century London. Since no consensus has been reached among historians on a clear analytical framework, it becomes essential for each scholar to articulate his or her understanding of the matter at hand explicitly. Though some of the papers go some way in this direction, it will be a matter of further study to design such a framework and to come to a definition acceptable to all.

The contributions fall into three categories: four deal with transatlantic transfers of philanthropy and patronage (by Thomas Adam, Karsten Borgmann, Brett Fairbairn and David C. Hammack); three with the role of social elites in a particular city or nation (Eckhardt Fuchs and Dieter Hoffmann; Margaret Eleanor Menninger; and Susannah Morris); and three specifically with Jewish philanthropy and the process of embourgeoisement in Germany (and in one case in German and U.S. cities) in comparison (Benjamin Maria Baader, Tobias Brinkmann and Simone Lässig). At first glance one might wonder what connections might be found between the Gewandhaus Orchestra in Leipzig (Menninger), the British reformer Robert Owen (Fairbarin), the scope of action of German Jewish women within their community (Baader) and American *nouveaux riches* in Europe after the Civil War (Adam). Connections are present, although some are stronger or more obvious than others. European and in particular German models of philanthropic action often served as blueprints for similar American undertakings. On both sides of the Atlantic, members of the urban middle classes turned philanthropy into an instrument of social definition and enhancement of prestige. Since this process is inherent in bourgeois culture, it would be interesting to learn more about the transatlantic influences on it in the nineteenth century. Adam in his overview of parallels and differences in philanthropic cultures; Borgmann in his paper on art museums; Fairbairn in his account of early cooperatives in Britain, Germany and North America; and Fuchs and Hoffmann in their exposition of institutionalized scientific exchange between Germany and the United States all expound upon this matter. Yet, they cannot but scratch the surface of this difficult, still largely unexplored and nonetheless intriguing business of transfer processes. As the papers in the third section with their focus on Germany imply, the question of exchange between the North American and European bourgeoisie is even more blurred when one focuses on the Jewish community. Leopold Koppel (whose foundation played a decisive role in the creation of the America Institute in Berlin, a sponsor of German-American cultural and scientific relations, and whose activities are described by Fuchs and Hoffmann) and Imre Kiralfy (an impresario active in organization of industrial exhibitions and world's fairs in Europe and America) are only two examples of many more individuals with a Jewish background who promoted transatlantic transfers.

Because of the need for much more research in this area, a collection such as this one cannot offer definitive answers or even in-depth analyses of the ways social or cultural models crossed the Atlantic and became part of middle-class lifestyle. It is more likely to point to matters for further study and the necessity and the possibilities for defining the phenomenon or terms used to describe it. In effect, this is exactly what the papers do: they point to an important field of study as yet largely unexplored and use case studies to demonstrate the results to be expected from a broader and more systematic analysis of the matter of transnational dimensions in bourgeois society and culture. To view philanthropy not as an American but a European or even German invention (p. 3) is one of the major insights to be gained from this collection.