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Review of Adriana Novoa and Alex Levine, From Man to Ape: Darwinism in Argentina, 1870-1920

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mens, cromlechs, and barrows—and we witness botanical discoveries like the seaweed *Schizosiphon warreniae*, named after one of Cornwall's botanist-heroines, Elizabeth Warren.

But amid the exciting discoveries and triumphs, Naylor spares us none of the tragedies. Warren's carefully orchestrated lifework, the botanical *Hortus Siccus*, met ultimate rejection owing to its localized method of recording species, as opposed to application of the common system of nomenclature introduced—and insisted upon—by London's Hewett Cottrell Watson. Other projects met their demise owing to more personal drama—for instance, the unfinished mammoth study of Cornwall's prehistoric cromlechs, necessarily abandoned after its author, John Thomas Blight, went mad. Yet amid the downfalls phoenixes arose, and we encounter redirections of earlier, pioneering efforts. Thus, although metropolitan authorities mandated the closure of Falmouth's first meteorological observatory, where landscape-induced perturbations precluded representative weather recordings, a groundswell of local scientific support won further state sponsorship of a new, better-designed, better-placed observatory. The rhythm of such crests and ebbs in Naylor's narrative of Cornwall's natural history not only achieves authenticity in a "biography of a scientific region" (p. 10) but also exposes critical tensions between local and national contexts in "placing knowledges in Victorian England."

The central problem Naylor addresses is the "making of the Cornish region and, in the process, the making of the Cornish naturalist" (p. 84). Regionalizing, in this sense, is an analytical category for examining the twinning of geography and science in the construction of space and identity, but at a scale more moderate than is typically attempted. Joining a wave of scholarship on the geography of science, Naylor's is a pioneering analysis of regional scale in the wake of preoccupations with more macroscopic, national scales or, at the other extreme, more microscopic, experimental sites. Among the valuable lessons, Naylor demonstrates the inextricability of the local from the distant, the rural from the urban, and the intrinsic from the utilitarian in the making of knowledge. Challenging historiographical tendencies to pit peripheries against centers, he claims that regional scales and their making move us toward an understanding of how center/periphery dichotomies are historically made, as opposed to historically assumed.

Regionalizing Science aligns well with recent trends in the historiography of Victorian science. Specialists in this area will find Naylor's analysis of the social organization of provincial science particularly rewarding. He convincingly analyzes an English countryside immersed within rich traditions of organized scientific inquiry, promoted and sustained by county societies modeled after metropolitan forerunners and yet constituting elements of local culture—pastoral in some places, seafaring in others. He illuminates distinctive country-science activities like drawing-room conversaziones, field rambles, and seaside excursions. Rightly positioning his book as a corrective to historians' earlier neglect of nonindustrial areas, Naylor successfully problematizes the status of provincial science within Victorian science more generally. Given the subject's scope, in a few places the book only scratches the surface on tantalizing points, such as the critical role of gentlemen naturalists in positioning Cornish science within national discourses. The successful acquisition of royal patronage by various local scientific bodies like the Geological Society, the Polytechnic Society, and the Horticultural Society—all earning the "Royal" designation—seems to hint at these deeper interconnections. Nevertheless, other facets of the politics of knowledge making are beautifully handled, such as the complex social dynamics within Elizabeth Warren's botanical network, guided as they were by class and gender norms.

In sum, *Regionalizing Science* offers groundbreaking insights into provincial science in Victorian Britain and a fruitful method for studying the intersection of geography and science in history. Carefully researched and nicely illustrated, it is a must-read for scholars who study Victorian science.

DONALD L. OPITZ

Adriana Novoa; Alex Levine. *From Man to Ape: Darwinism in Argentina, 1870–1920.* xi + 281 pp., bibl., index. Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 2010. $49 (cloth).

This book is a welcome, and distinctive, addition to the vast literature on the historical impact of Darwinism. It stands on its merits, not just as a time- and space-bound, culturally specific examination of an influential scientific and intellectual trend, but also as a study of natural and social science conversations about the tenets of evolutionary theory. *From Man to Ape*, with its excellent mapping and situating of Argentine Darwinism, should increase awareness of the important and consequential playing out of scientific ideas in social milieus not typically con-

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sidered—that is, beyond Western Europe and the United States.

From Man to Ape looks at Darwinian ideas in Argentina through the lenses of two important analytical concepts: first, in terms of the search for and use of analogy; and, second, in terms of "peripheral" science (more on this below). These two concepts are related, as Adriana Novoa and Alex Levine point out, since cultural context influences and shapes scientific analogies. After an introduction that smartly and concisely frames the study, the book is organized into two parts, each with three chapters. Part 1 examines the general debates about Darwinian ideas in Argentina, seen in transnational context. Part 2 focuses on three specific Darwinian ideas (extinction, sexual selection, and evolutionary psychology) and their elaboration in various scientific and disciplinary spheres. A conclusion follows, addressing the impact of these ideas and pointing to eventual transformations in the decades-long debates over Darwinism in Argentina.

Part 1 closely examines the roots of evolutionary ideas in Argentina, including scientific expeditions and rich local studies of fauna and flora in the early nineteenth century. It uncovers the conversation Argentine natural scientists had with the ideas of their British colleague, Charles Darwin, and their close following of his work on their soil. Here we also find a look at the structural factors that allowed this interest in Darwinian ideas to flourish in Argentina, including a large foreign (European) population, government investment in science, and the growth of the university. Overall, despite differences in approach among the Argentine scientists, *From Man to Ape* uncovers a collective search for universal truths that many believed were necessary for the nation to overcome its heterogeneous past and present to achieve the heights of civilization.

Part 2 takes on specific Darwinian concepts. First, Chapter 4 looks at the "culture of extinction," demonstrating how scientists placed their nation in a naturalistic evolutionary scheme. Specifically, it argues that concepts of cultural and biological annihilation drove Argentine thought. Only by extinguishing "weaker" branches of the evolutionary tree could the trunk grow. Losses of ancient cultures, carried out via genocide or immigration, were necessary steps toward civilization: "death and waste were now the signs of progress" (p. 152). Chapter 5 looks at the unique spin on Darwin's theory of sexual selection. In Argentina, sexual selection was of the highest concern in a country perceived to be "empty" and in need of population: "the politics of mate choice were seen to be essential to the fate of the modern nation" (p. 159). In addition, in Argentina there was an unusual emphasis on aesthetics and beauty, which was moreover heavily informed by notions of gender roles. Argentine women, supposedly above average in looks, would attract mates but would be passive participants in the selection process (a reversal of Darwin's observations in animals). Finally, Chapter 6 examines the influence of Darwinian thought on evolutionary psychology, an increasingly central and influential field in early twentieth-century Argentina that was seen by many as a promising and tailor-made tool against social degeneration. Characteristic of science in this phase, if not earlier, was a desire for theoretical synthesis, which many believed was necessary to reconcile Darwinian thought with Argentine society. Overall, the authors trace the larger trajectory of the Darwinian debates, as interpreters moved between ideals of progress (or "faith in a universal civilizatory principle" [p. 230]) and more pessimistic and splintered views.

This book will make fascinating reading for historians and philosophers of science. It successfully builds on existing literature on Darwin's influence, yet offers a new and largely unknown dimension. I would, however, raise two small objections. First, while I understand the authors' meaning, the use of the term "peripheral science" strikes me as dated; recent literature on science in Latin America moves away from a center/periphery dichotomy toward a transnational, multinodal circulation of knowledge. Second, some readers might wish for more attention to the details of social and historical context—as written, the book assumes a fair amount of prior knowledge of Argentine history. These two quibbles are but footnotes to a fine and fascinating contribution to the literature on Darwinian thought that will undoubtedly stand as the standard text on the subject for years to come.

JULIA RODRIGUEZ

David Pantalony. *Altered Sensations: Rudolph Koenig's Acoustical Workshop in Nineteenth-Century Paris.* (Archimedes: New Studies in the History of Science and Technology, 24.) xxxvi + 372 pp., illus., tables, bibls., index. Dordrecht: Springer, 2009. $189 (cloth).

Rudolph Koenig (1832–1901) turned the skills of a luthier to the science of sound and came to play a significant role in this rapidly evolving

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