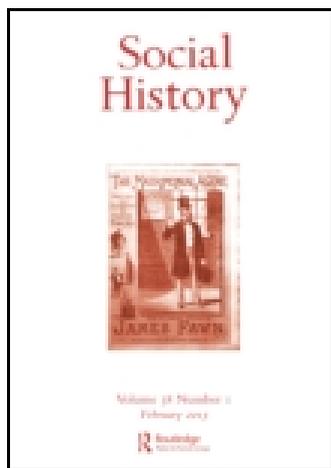


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Making Tea, Making Japan. Cultural Nationalism in Practice

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Short Notices

Kristin Surak, *Making Tea, Making Japan. Cultural Nationalism in Practice* (2013), xv + 252 (Stanford University Press, Stanford, \$24.95).

Kristin Surak's elegantly written analysis of the tea ceremony is an excellent addition to the literature on cultural nationalism. The first and major contribution of this book is the concept of 'nation-work', which is situated between nationalism and nationness, evoked in everyday practices. Surak applies this concept along the three axes of distinction, specification and differentiation. Distinction represents the 'we–they contrasts' that distinguish a nation from other nations (7). Specification examines national consciousness in relation to gender and class. Differentiation distinguishes between the members of a nation. For example, a 'good' American is patriotic; a 'good' Japanese will have knowledge of tea.

Departing from this multi-layered framework, Surak unravels the tea ceremony in five chapters. In chapter 1, the author describes the performances, places and utensils of tea in great ethnographic detail. Chapter 2 examines how the Chinese practice emerged from the confinement of temples to merchants and warriors and became a powerful political tool under Oda Nobunaga (1534–82) and Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–98). Originally restricted to men, a gender shift transformed tea into a female practice during the Meiji period (1868–1912), when knowledge of tea became part of women's education to be 'good wives and wise mothers'. Tea was elevated from a practice of displaying social status to a national symbol when the *iemoto*, the heads of tea schools, dissolved in 1871 and emerged even stronger through tracing their genealogy to Sen no Rikyu (1522–91) and building a customer base among middle- and upper-class women, which is described in chapter 3. In chapter 4, Surak investigates the influence of the *iemoto* which perpetuated the national symbolism of tea through ensuring its nationness evoked in everyday practices (156). Chapter 5 examines the media presence of tea and draws comparisons with other examples of 'embodied performance and nationalizing rhetoric' (174) such as the German gymnastics club movement during the Napoleonic Wars (174–9).

The second merit of this book is a meticulous study of tea. Surak resists the temptation of falling into clichés and offers a vibrant analysis of the practice through historical reconstruction, institutional analysis, ethnographic enquiry and phenomenological description. Some terms, such as 'elites', lack a definition. The term *Tankokai* (Urasenke membership organization) would have deserved an entry in the glossary. However, these flaws are minor. Surak's study is theoretically innovative and essential for sociologists and

anthropologists who are interested in questions of nation-building beyond the established contributions of Eric Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson.

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Rebecca Rogers, *A Frenchwoman's Imperial Story. Madame Luce in Nineteenth-Century Algeria* (2013), xviii + 267 (Stanford University Press, Stanford and London, £54.87/\$58.50; Kindle edition \$52.00).

Scholars of women and gender interested in empire have only recently turned their attention to France and its colonies, mainly prioritizing the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Rebecca Rogers's contribution to this scholarship on nineteenth-century colonial Algeria is therefore a welcome addition. It relates the professional trajectory of twice-married Eugénie Luce (née Berlau, then Allix) from her arrival in Algeria in 1832 through to her death and legacy. It is not a biography per se, as Rogers only tangentially discusses the personal dimensions of Luce's life and then in the measure relevant to her pursuits as a conscious participant in France's civilizing mission. The main argument threaded throughout the work is that knowledge of the lives of women like Luce not only sheds light on the opportunities available to indomitable women in the colonies but that such knowledge also reshapes our perception of French colonization. The book's conclusion not only wraps up the arguments of the book but also touches on issues relating to the historiography and methodology in French and Algerian women's history.

Part I is devoted to Luce's early years in France and Algeria before she acquired her public persona. Its importance lies in the descriptions of Luce's connections with the Saint-Simonians, thus highlighting the fact that the doctrine was as significant a motivator in women's colonial activities as it was to the soldier-scholars and officials who adhered to it. It was above all the Saint-Simonian emphasis on education as a means of social improvement for the underprivileged and the disciple's role as a guide to achieve those ends that seduced Luce and led to the creation of her school for Algerian girls.

Part II examines the role of women in the civilizing mission, singling out Luce as exemplary for her knowledge of Arabic, her gift for social networking, her ability to raise funds and her commitment to the education of Algerian girls and women. Rogers does not neglect educational developments in the metropole and points out that the distinctions between Christian, Muslim and Jewish education in the colony were responses to 'realities on the ground' (80). Over the course of Luce's career as colonial educator the emphasis in her school's curriculum switched from book learning to embroidery, reflecting evolving colonial sentiments about educating 'indigenous' women. Luce's Arab-French school for girls garnered especial admiration from British