

- ⁵² Barão de Pati do Alferes, *Memória sobre a fundação de uma fazenda*, 96–8.
- ⁵³ Gilson Roberto de Souza, *Florística do estrato arbustivo-arbóreo em um trecho de floresta atlântica, no médio Paraíba do Sul, município de Volta Redonda, Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro, 2002).
- ⁵⁴ Verena Winiewarter, 'Prolegomena to a History of soil knowledge in Europe', in John McNeill and Verena Winiewarter (eds.), *Soil and Societies: Perspectives from Environmental History* (Cambridge: White Horse Press, 2006): 177–215.
- ⁵⁵ The authors that used this or a similar system were: Taunay, *Manual do Agricultor brasileiro*, 1839; Barão de Pati do Alferes, *Memória sobre a fundação de uma fazenda*, 1847; Almeida, *Ensaio sobre o fabrico do açúcar*, 1834; Taunay and Fonseca, *Tratado da cultura do algodoeiro*, 1862.

Book Reviews

Mark Cioc

The Game of Conservation: International Treaties to Protect the World's Migratory Animals

Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009

ISBN 978-0821418666 (HB) £44.50; 978-0821418673 (PB) £22.50. 232 pp.

It is a commonplace among environmental historians that ecological phenomena transcend political borders and that histories that account for such phenomena must be equally transgressive. That principle has rarely been put into practice as well as in Mark Cioc's previous monograph, *The Rhine: An Eco-Biography, 1815–2000* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), which showed how that quintessentially European river was transformed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries along its entire multinational length, from its sources in the Swiss Alps to its outlet in the Netherlands. One of Cioc's conclusions in *The Rhine* was that, with the exception of border wars between France and Germany and even then only to a limited extent, rivalries among nation-states had little to do with the river's transformations. Transnational ideologies, technologies, and economic developments were far more important.

Cioc's most recent monograph is similarly focused on the relationship or lack thereof between political institutions and ecological phenomena, but it takes a very different approach. Instead of a multifaceted account of a single ecological entity over nearly two centuries – an 'eco-biography' – *The Game of Conservation* offers three case studies of a novel phenomenon that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century: international treaty-making for the protection of commercially important migratory species. The case studies focus on big game in Africa, migratory birds in North America, and whales in Antarctic waters. From them Cioc draws a simple but significant conclusion: that 'the major animal-protection treaties of the early twentieth century are best understood as international *hunting* treaties rather than as *conservation* treaties' (p. 1).

By this Cioc means that treaties such as the Convention for the Preservation of Wild Animals, Birds and Fish in Africa, signed in London in 1900, were initially intended to regulate the pace, methods and opportunities for hunting of particular species rather than to preserve habitats, ecosystems or biodiversity. The treaties were also limited to certain geographical regions or groups of nations, usually those with particularly acute economic interests. Only later did conservationists attempt, with varying success, to repurpose or replace these treaties in order to accomplish goals we would recognise as 'conservationist' or 'environmental' and to apply them on a truly global scale.

Although none of the three cases studies chosen by Cioc have been neglected by scholars, his focus on international treaty-making generates new insights. There is a large literature on African big game conservation, for example, which

can be roughly divided into three kinds of accounts: triumphalist narratives of the salvation of wildlife from the threats of poachers, pastoralists, and the international market for ivory; critiques of the ideology of European big game hunting and the conservatism that succeeded it; and studies of the economic and social impact of conservation on indigenous Africans, usually very locally focused. Such works often nod to the significance of international treaties such as the unratified 1900 London convention and its 1933 successor, but none dissects the debates that led to those treaties and the provisions of the treaties themselves with as much care as Cioc does in his chapter on 'Africa's Apartheid Parks'.

As Cioc shows, the 1933 London convention responded directly to the perceived failures of the 1900 convention, whose principles had been implemented throughout much of colonial Africa even though it never came into force as an international treaty. Restricting the time, place and method of hunting had proved ineffective for controlling 'poaching' by local people, for dealing with the transmission of the trypanosome that causes sleeping sickness from wild animals to humans and cattle, or for reducing crop predation by elephants and other large herbivores. The framers of the 1933 convention sought to short-circuit these problems of implementation by geographically separating wild animals and human populations through national parks and game reserves – an 'apartheid' that echoed and reinforced the segregation of whites and blacks. Even though this new approach produced its own set of profound difficulties and injustices, Cioc reminds us that it also 'did much to conserve Africa's wildlife in the face of relentless development and demographic growth' (p. 55).

Given its well-justified focus on diplomatic negotiations, *The Game of Conservation* is only able to hint at the economic ideologies, incentives, opportunities and institutional frameworks that shaped the work of treaty negotiators. In the book's conclusion, Cioc suggests that European and North American governments in the early twentieth century 'would have found it politically impossible to impose a total trade ban on elephant ivory and whale oil, so strong was the faith in free enterprise, free trade and the 'free goods' of nature' (p. 151). This claim receives some empirical support from the book, but the coevolution of conservation and government regulation of international trade that eventually culminated in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora of 1973 deserves fuller study. Not accidentally, Cioc deals most thoroughly with economic factors in the chapter on Antarctic whaling, an industry that effectively hunted itself out of existence in search of short-term profits. Even here, however, the account of changing ideologies of international trade is thin. What relation, if any, did efforts to regulate whaling have with efforts to regulate other international fisheries or with early discussions of the international law of the sea? To what extent was it similar to or influenced by concurrent efforts to regulate international trade in other kinds of goods – for instance, in weapons or drugs? One of the virtues of *The Game of Conservation*

is that it raises these questions and suggests how useful an account that tackled them directly could be.

The book's expository prose style is in tune with its overall design: clarity and utility are foremost. Each succinct chapter includes a few biological paragraphs for readers who may need to be reminded of the differences between ruminant and nonruminant ungulates, shorebirds and waterfowl, or *Mysticeti* and *Odontoceti*. Subheadings flag key stages in the development of each treaty. Charts and tables of trade figures in ivory and whale oil are complemented by maps of migratory paths and protected areas and by timelines of relevant treaties, national laws and legal decisions. Appendices comprising nearly a quarter of the book's length give the full text of the treaties that are discussed. Finally, the notes and bibliography provide a useful guide to key sources on international wildlife conservation. *The Game of Conservation* will be a valuable resource for any scholar of conservation, colonialism or international treaty-making.

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Harriet Ritvo

The Dawn of Green: Manchester, Thirlmere and Modern Environmentalism
Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2009
ISBN 978-0-226-72082-1 (HB) £18.00/\$26.00. 248 pp.

If William Wordsworth's opposition to the Windermere railway is discounted, the roots of the conservation movement in the English Lake District are usually seen to lie in the controversy which erupted in the 1870s over Manchester Corporation's plan to raise the level of Thirlmere and convert the whole valley into a water-gathering ground to supply the ever-rising demands of a growing conurbation. The arguments put forward by the Thirlmere Defence Association – that the scheme was a threat to the aesthetic and spiritual value of mountain landscapes and to recreational access – presaged the debates which culminated in the designation of the Lake District National Park in 1951. It is therefore surprising that, until now, no full-length study has been devoted to this iconic episode in early environmentalism. This welcome, highly readable and attractively designed book ably fills the gap.

Harriet Ritvo's account is a detailed, thoroughly researched and painstaking reconstruction of the Thirlmere scheme. As is to be expected from a distinguished environmental historian, it reaches behind the twists and turns of the story to capture the meaning and motives driving the actions of the protagonists. The argument is framed within a straightforward chronological structure. The first two chapters lay out the context, beginning with a portrait of the Thirlmere valley before Manchester, encompassing both the character of its landscape and local economy and the cultural value assigned to it as one of the English Lakes.