

chronological one liable to disruption by lengthy digressions. It is rather too close to its subject: although Champ is not blind to Ullathorne's faults, she is too prone automatically to rally to his defence. Moreover, despite the significant merits of this book, one is left feeling that it misses an opportunity to use the life of so central and neglected a figure to develop a sustained and convincing critical reassessment of Victorian Roman Catholicism as a whole. Nevertheless, Champ has done a fine service to Ullathorne's own reputation, and provided an invaluable resource for scholarship.

The Open University

JOHN WOLFFE

***From the Corn Laws to Free Trade: Interests, Ideas and Institutions in Historical Perspective.* By Cheryl Schonhardt-Bailey. MIT Press. 2006. xiii + 426pp. \$30.95.**

In the opening pages of her book Cheryl Schonhardt-Bailey presents the transition from agricultural protection to free trade in Britain as a puzzle. Why did the British parliament repeal the Corn Laws in 1846? Her book is an exhaustive attempt to resolve this conundrum. Undoubtedly there is a puzzle to examine. The Corn Laws buttressed the economic and political power of Britain's landowning aristocracy and their retention was a cornerstone of the policy of the Tory administration that had been elected with a hefty majority in 1841. The *volte-face* by the Tory premier, Sir Robert Peel, a few short years later, which split his party and transformed British economic policy, requires an explanation.

Schonhardt-Bailey explores several possible answers in considerable detail; specifically by measuring 'empirically' the importance of ideas, interests and institutions. The 'three Is', as she calls them, are not an original contribution: as she notes, previous scholars have sought to resolve the puzzle by emphasizing one or more of them in various combinations. In pursuit of her own solution Schonhardt-Bailey brings to bear a diverse and impressive range of methodologies from descriptive statistics and 'linear, logistic and multinomial logistic regressions' to computer-assisted content analysis. Some of the results are impressive. In chapters 7–9, for example, Schonhardt-Bailey subjects more than a million words of parliamentary debate to content analysis. This produces some significant insights and much food for thought. Of particular interest is the comparison between the debates in the Houses of Commons (chapter 7) and Lords (chapter 9).

Overall, however, the result of the multi-pronged approach is a book that is both brilliantly innovative and revealing and almost unintelligible and inaccessible to all but a relatively small group of disciplinary specialists. It is they, and only they, who will be moved to nod approvingly by the conclusion that the 'Lancashire dummy slope co-efficient in both dynamic and static regressions provides statistical confirmation that Lancashire residents contributed substantially more to the League than non-Lancashire residents' (p. 68). The book is full of such observations. No non-specialist reader, no matter how hard they strive to follow the arguments, will succeed in penetrating the wall of jargon, formidable equations and baffling diagrams (included, ironically, to make the numbers less 'boring', p. xi–xii).

The most accessible part of the book is its conclusion (described somewhat self-consciously by Schonhardt-Bailey as the 'unadulterated' version of the argument, p. 283). Here political historians are rightly chided for

over-emphasizing ideas; political scientists are judiciously rebuked for a preoccupation with economic interests; and both are properly encouraged to give more attention to the institutional change that both drove and was driven by the campaign for repeal. For all its depth, creativity and erudition, Schonhardt-Bailey's argument thus has a slightly circular feel to it. She begins by seeking to weigh the importance of the 'three Is' and having pulled and pushed in a myriad of ways, ends up by suggesting that the answer to the puzzle is a combination of all three.

The Australian National University

PAUL A. PICKERING

***The British and the Hellenes: Struggles for Mastery in the Eastern Mediterranean 1850–1960.* By Robert Holland and Diana Markides. Oxford University Press. 2006. xiv + 266pp. £55.00.**

This interesting and solidly researched account of Anglo-Greek relations focuses on Britain's role in both obstructing and, in the end, reluctantly facilitating the union of Greek-majority islands with the Greek nation-state. In the Ionian Islands, Crete, the Dodecanese Islands and Cyprus British administration of these territories, whether a long-standing, sole commitment (the Ionian Islands and Cyprus), a joint international occupation (Crete) or a purely interim stewardship (the Dodecanese after the Second World War), was undertaken for strategic reasons such as control of the route to India, support for the Ottoman empire and influence in the Levant generally. As a consequence British interests ran athwart the Greeks' own nation-building aspirations and the *Megali Idea*, and policy-makers in Whitehall showed a tenacious and (the authors argue) frequently Jesuitical dexterity in justifying Britain's continued denial of *enosis*, or union with Greece. In the case of the Ionian Islands, Crete and the Dodecanese, the British presence ultimately proved untenable, and *enosis* was achieved. In the case of Cyprus, the legacy of British rule has been not *enosis* but independence and *de facto* partition, as Turkey assumed an increasingly prominent role in the protection of the Turkish Cypriot minority. A recurrent theme in the book is Britain's professed solicitude for the fate of the Muslim minority in each case, a concern which, the authors suggest, was not entirely synthetic, let alone baseless, but which the subsequent Muslim experience demonstrated to be little more than a convenient tool for delay. In the case of Crete, arguably, it was the insistence of the great powers, led by Britain, on 'internationalizing' the island, and preventing its union with Greece down to 1913, that fed inter-communal tensions and conflict. In the Protectorate of the Ionian Islands, the famous liberal and philhellene, W. E. Gladstone, briefly Extraordinary High Commissioner in 1858–9, argued root-and-branch, and with characteristic Gladstonian casuistry, that Britain had a higher responsibility to the 'public law of Europe', and preserving the Vienna settlement of 1815, than it could possibly have for the principle of popular sovereignty. Even in the Dodecanese Islands, formerly held by defeated Italy and seemingly an open-and-shut case for *enosis*, withdrawal of the post-war British occupation was delayed by fears of the possible left-wing proclivities of a Greece torn by civil war, and the rival attraction of ceding the islands to Turkey. It is a saga that would have its amusing side, were it not for the human misery hanging upon this prolongation of empire.

Grant MacEwan College, Edmonton

IAN D. ARMOUR