provide. I am afraid the authors wanted to cover and explain too much with too little, and too hastily. So, the problems discussed did not receive the clear, methodical, and systematic analysis they deserve and require. That is regrettable. When they plead for "thoughtful political leadership and policy making based on the best expertise available", that "involves a wide array of policy tools and the authority to use them" for policymakers who "respond flexibly", and for "relatively hegemonic power willing to provide international leadership" (p. 201), I am afraid no one can object since their plea lacks any specific content.

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De Dijn, Annelien. Freedom. An Unruly History. Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA) 2020. 426 pp. Ill. $35.00; £28.95; € 31.50.

At the heart of Annelien de Dijn's book is the idea that there are two distinct – and, indeed, conflicting – ways of conceiving of freedom in the West. The original understanding was first developed by ancient Greeks and Romans, subsequently revived by Renaissance Humanists, and went on to provide the ideology and energy behind the Atlantic Revolutions of the late eighteenth century. This linked freedom to democracy equating it with popular self-government. According to De Dijn, while there were, of course, many opponents of freedom over this period, this basic understanding of what was meant by freedom remained largely consistent for more than 2,000 years. However, this all changed in the aftermath of the late eighteenth-century revolutions. In seeking to overthrow the ancien régime, the revolutionaries provoked a backlash, which resulted in the development of a new understanding of freedom. According to De Dijn, this new conception was linked not to popular self-government, but rather to the protection of property, personal security, and individual rights. Where the original, ancient, understanding of freedom focused on *who* governed and placed emphasis on exercising control over the way in which one is governed, the modern version prioritized instead the *extent* of government, suggesting that freedom is negatively correlated with state intervention in one's life.

In some ways, De Dijn's account is not new. After all, as she notes herself, it is reflected in Benjamin Constant's famous speech at the Athenée Royal in 1819, which contrasted the liberty of the ancients with that of the moderns. Yet, De Dijn tells the story in much greater detail than Constant, building a compelling and comprehensive argument, which she also carries through into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Moreover, De Dijn challenges the tendency of earlier accounts (including that of Constant) to draw a distinction between the collectivism of ancient freedom as compared with the individualism of its modern counterpart. She insists that, among the ancients, individual and collective freedom were closely intertwined, since participating in government was seen as the best way of protecting one's individual security and interests.

The argument is forcefully made and certainly made me think more deeply about a topic I already know well. Of course, it is inevitable that painting on such a broad canvas results in a

telescoping of events and occasional lack of precision. I was most conscious of this in relation to my own period of expertise – the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The events of the English, American, and French Revolutions are necessarily compressed in her account, with the result that important nuances are lost. In particular, it is striking that neither the Levellers, who were active during the English Revolution in the 1640s, nor the members of the Cordeliers Club that was established during the French Revolution, feature at all in this book. Yet, both of these groups drew on the languages of individual rights and popular self-government and some attention to the ways in which they weaved the two together would undoubtedly have both complicated and illuminated the grand narrative that De Dijn develops here.

I also wondered whether the difference between the revolutionary and counterrevolutionary movements was quite as clear cut as De Dijn suggests when it comes to the role of the people and their right to participation in government. Even leading seventeenth-century republican authors such as Marchamont Nedham and James Harrington expressed some concern about giving the people political power. Nedham was clear that when he referred to "the People" he did not mean "the confused promiscuous body of the People", in other words those who had "forfeited their Rights by *Delinquency,* or *Neutrality*" in the recent wars.[1] Harrington's position was a little different, since he insisted that even former royalists should be allowed to vote.[2] But he also claimed that there was a natural aristocracy in every society whose members were "wiser, or at least less foolish than all the rest" and he insisted that these men should take on a leadership role within the commonwealth, not least by making up the senate, whose task it was to *propose* laws while the popular assembly would only have the right to *accept* or *reject* those proposals by a yes/no vote.[3] While I have made the case for Harrington as a democrat elsewhere, there were important limits to his willingness to embrace the popular will.[4] Similar misgivings about the political capabilities of the people were expressed by American Revolutionaries. John Adams, who was an ardent discipline of Harrington, insisted that the popular will in any government had to be balanced by an aristocratic and a monarchical element.[5] And James Madison in *Federalist X* argues the case for purifying the views of the vulgar public, insisting that it is necessary to "refine and enlarge the public views by passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens, whose wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations".[6] This suggests that at least some revolutionaries distrusted the views of the people, yet, according to De Dijn's account, this distrust was the preserve of their opponents.

More surprising and curious is the omission of any reference to a recent, significant, and seemingly relevant historiographical intervention. Though she analyses Isaiah Berlin's

1. Marchamont Nedham, *The Excellencie of a Free-State: or, The Right Constitution of a Common-Wealth* (London, 1656), p. 71.
2. James Harrington, *The Commonwealth of Oceana* (London, 1656), p. 46.
3. *Ibid*., p. 13.
4. Rachel Hammersley, *James Harrington: An Intellectual Biography* (Oxford, 2019), pp. 109–121.
5. John Adams, *A Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America* (London, 1787).
6. James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay, *The Federalist Papers*, ed. Isaac Kramnick (Harmondsworth, 1987), p. 126.

famous essay "Two Concepts of Liberty", De Dijn does not address Quentin Skinner's work on the neo-Roman concept of liberty, which he presented as a response to Berlin's conception and which forms the basis of the republican theory of the influential contemporary political philosopher Philip Pettit. Skinner is thanked in the acknowledgements and his name appears twice in the book, but in neither case is any mention made of the neo-Roman theory of liberty and Pettit is not cited at all. This is surprising since, like Skinner, De Dijn argues that freedom/liberty in the ancient world probably emerged as an antonym for slavery and that this informed the ancient concept. Where Skinner has demonstrated this in relation to Romanf law, De Dijn suggests that it was also true in Greek thought. The implications of this linking of Greek and Roman ideology is itself worthy of further investigation, not least since Eric Nelson's account of the Greek origins of republican thought has taken a different route in placing less emphasis on liberty and more on equality.[7] I cannot be the only scholar working in this field who would have been interested to learn how De Dijn understands the connection between her account of freedom and the neo-Roman conception of liberty.

Despite the difficulties of providing depth and coverage there are undoubtedly advantages to adopting a *longue durée* approach. In the case of De Dijn's book, there are certainly benefits to be gained from contrasting these two concepts of freedom, thinking about how they relate to each other, and tracing the centuries-long process by which we reached the situation in which we find ourselves today. In the end, I was convinced that this ambitious and exciting book succeeds in making the case for big intellectual history that De Dijn sets out in her introduction.

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General Labour History of Africa. Workers, Employers and Governments, 20th–21st Centuries. Ed. by Stefano Bellucci and Andreas Eckert. Boydell & Brewer, Woodbridge 2019. xx, 761 pp. Maps. £95.00. (Paper: £30.00.)

Although it may be in my self-interest to identify a modest revival in African labour history, this weighty volume is an unambiguous indication of such. Stefano Bellucci and Andreas Eckert have assembled an impressive collection of contributions on a wide array on topics in this collection, which is one of a number of books on labour supported by the ILO and published to tie in with its centenary in 2019. The book contains twenty-three chapters divided across six sections dealing with free and unfree labour, labour in key economic sectors, international dimensions and mobility, entrepreneurs and self-employment, and the trade unions and the state. These chapters cover the whole continent, gratifyingly eschewing the artificial divide between North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa.

A brisk introduction from the editors promises that the book is "a history of all working people" that will both bring labour back into Africanist history and imbue labour history

7. Eric Nelson, *The Greek Tradition in Republican Thought* (Cambridge, 2004).