

offers answers to the wider question of the American government's obsession with Cuba. Perez succeeds in showing that, for the U.S., the fate of Cuba is linked to America's self-image. Students of cultural history and diplomatic relations will find this book useful and engaging for the creative way it reintroduces a heavily studied topic. The casual reader will appreciate the liaison between American political and cultural agendas during war.

Rafael Mazon

Marc Levinson. *The Box: How the Shipping Container Made the World Smaller and the World Economy Bigger*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006. Pp. 376. Paper. \$24.95

As our commercial world increasingly connects through new technological advancements, many admirers of this trend overlook one of the most fundamental building blocks of the modern globalized economy. In *The Box*, Marc Levinson, former finance and economics editor for *The Economist*, gives a telling narrative of Malcolm Mclean, a trucker turned business magnate who first successfully implemented containerization, or cargo shipping as we now know it today. However, the book's larger narrative serves as a biography of "the box" itself, with Mclean's implementation in 1956, the years of obstacles before its general acceptance and international standardization, and the dramatic economic results of containerization. In all, Levinson argues that container shipping fundamentally changed the world by making it smaller through cheap efficient shipping, while at the same time making the worldwide economy bigger through the global opening of markets to ready companies.

With its first implementation by Mclean in April of 1956, the history of modern containerization has been fraught with obstacles nearly as great as the changes it brought. The narrative dives deeply into necessary details on Longshoremen's unions who fought tooth-and-nail against what they understood as the end of their line of work, the Interstate Commerce Commission's restrictions of the price of transport, and the international standardization of container sizes by the

International Organization for Standardization in the late 1960s. The great test of Malcolm's enterprise proved to be the Vietnam War, which presented a "logistical mess" of delivering supplies to the sole serviceable port of Vietnam. The first container shipping lane between Asia and North America emerged due to the efficiency and uniformity of containerization as well as the skills of the U.S. military. This eventually led to the acceptance of containerization as the future of international transport.

The adoption of containerization led to a shift from established and emaciated ports like New York to new modern ports like Oakland, changing the economic geography of the coastal United States. The lowered cost of shipping also freed manufacturers from having to locate near ports because of high shipping costs. In addition, containerization defined the previously unknown variable of time for transport, which in the past was a form of guesswork based on how quickly longshoremen could load and unload a ship's hold. This resulted in the development of "just in time manufacturing," a process whereby companies cut transportation and storage costs by developing global supply chains in which manufacturers receive material only when inventories run low.

Drawing on a wealth of primary sources from shipping company archives, government contracts and regulatory legislation, newspapers, documents of international trade agencies, and interviews conducted by the author, Levinson creates an excellent business history of containerization finding a limit only in its focus on the United States. The author largely ignores the later entrance and competition of European and Chinese firms who currently control the industry, exemplified by the absence of any U.S. firm among the world's top eighteen shipping companies.

For economists searching to understand trends in their field, it may surprise them to know how poorly both proponents and opponents of "the box" predicted even the near future consequences of this new mode of transport. Though Levinson himself puts the subject as having "all the romance of a tin can," he creates a clear and concise history of a major, though overlooked, contributor to modern globalization and does so in a

way that even a non-specialist can find both enjoyable and informative (1).

Marc Meehan

Adam M. McKeown. *Melancholy Order: Asian Migration and the Globalization of Borders*. New York: Columbia University Press. 2008. Pp. 472. Cloth \$32.50.

In studying the ideas and methods used to control Asian migration in the Pacific during the late nineteenth century, Adam M. McKeown seeks to correct the prevailing notion that borders have become irrelevant in a globalized world. Instead, he argues that global migration and migratory control played an integral role in defining the nation state and its borders as essential components of power and prestige in the modern world. To support this argument, he draws on official correspondence, inspection records, case files, letters, and legal documents from government archives in the United States, China, Great Britain, Canada, and Australia. By placing the exclusionary policies of individual nations in an international context, McKeown demonstrates how the principles behind modern border control and identity documentation figure into a global history that helped construct the notion of an international system made up of self-governing nation states and free and mobile individuals.

McKeown begins his study with a broad exploration of global migration and regulation up to the second half of the nineteenth century. Among the many issues covered, this section gives particular attention to the shift from private networks to state institutions in the organization of migration. This greater government involvement ultimately resulted in an emphasis on the border as the site of migratory control and individual migrants as the focus of regulation. In the next section, McKeown examines attempts by nations such as The United States, Canada, and Australia to restrict Asian migration beginning in the 1850s. He details the difficult task these nations faced in regulating the movement of migrant laborers due to the lack of international laws and contests over how to categorize different migrants. Even when nations did agree on legal status,