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WORD PROCESSING: LAURIE GEORGE & VALERIE HAMIL
The author of this study has taken on a project that, as with all aspects of Palestinian history, could easily be read for its political implications. He has instead chosen to retain a tight, narrow focus, reading the evidence available to him in ways to build a specific argument about the economic history of rural Palestine over the course of the mandate. In doing so, he draws a picture of the material circumstances as well as peasant and governmental decision making that helped determine the possibilities for agricultural development. Although recognizing the context of the mandate, including Jewish settlement and Palestinian-Arab political resistance to it, Amos Nadan chooses not to elaborate on these factors. He states clearly in his introduction that he hopes “readers will consider my analysis in the light of the actual evidence, as this is what guided me during the research, and not any political agenda” (xxxv).

The argument that Nadan makes can be summarized as challenging earlier work, which claimed that the mandate was characterized by economic gains for the Palestinian peasantry. Instead, using detailed evidence (often reanalyzing data used to support alternative interpretations as well as archival documentation and new sources such as interviews), Nadan concludes that in the years 1922 to 1939 the peasant economy showed “little or no economic growth, and when this is combined with the relatively strong demographic growth during this period, a pattern of continual deterioration per capita becomes apparent” (337). During the 1940s, wartime conditions contributed to improvements such as price rises for agricultural products and increased employment for villagers, but these cannot be attributed to government policies under the mandate.

In addition to detailing the history of trends in the Arab rural economy, Nadan investigates the efforts at “reform” initiated by the British. He recognizes that these measures were undertaken primarily in hopes that economic benefits and development would induce peaceful acquiescence in British control. Nadan therefore examines carefully not only British assumptions of fellahin irrationality, but the specific policies with regard to provision of credit, land settlement, and agricultural services that were undertaken. His conclusion here is critical of claims that British reforms were significantly beneficial and shows that colonialist assumptions largely impeded recognition of the ways in which traditional institutions functioned effectively and the identification of real needs (such as
investment in infrastructure and irrigation), as well as any efforts to meet them.

This study makes a contribution to the economic history of Palestine, and notes areas that need further investigation. It is, however, limited by the author’s reluctance to develop his understanding of even those dynamics to which he refers. Thus, although he notes the effects of land transfer, the ineffectiveness (as well as unanticipated consequences) of government ordinances in this arena, and inequality within the peasant economy, he does not develop these points. Similarly, he recognizes that government reforms were usually a response to “disturbances,” but does not elaborate on the implications of this pattern. References to “Marxist-style reforms” are not developed in any theoretical discussion (339). Although still showing signs of its origins as a doctoral dissertation, this book contributes precisely because of its careful effort to evaluate relevant evidence and to challenge earlier assumptions.

*Duke University*  
Ylana N. Miller


In March 2004, a heavily armed force of British, South African, and Zimbabwean mercenaries attempted to overthrow the government of Equatorial Guinea, a small, impoverished country on Africa’s Atlantic coast. Sandwiched between Cameroon and Gabon, the former Spanish colony was known for its corrupt and tyrannical government and for its vast but largely untapped oil and natural gas reserves. Although claiming to liberate the Equatorial Guinean people from a brutal dictator, the coup-plotters hoped to install a puppet government and secure for themselves lucrative oil and natural gas contracts. After the plot was thwarted by the South African, Angolan, Zimbabwean, and Equatorial Guinean intelligence services, Adam Roberts, *The Economist’s* South Africa bureau chief, set out to unravel the exceedingly complex story.

Arguing that the 2004 coup attempt was modeled on a failed 1973 plot made famous by Frederick Forsyth’s 1974 novel *The Dogs of War*, Roberts combines the style of a fast-paced thriller with a historical account based on media and archival documents, scores of interviews, and secondary sources. Leading readers through a maze of names, dates, and places, he shows how playboy businessmen, wealthy thrill-seekers, and unemployed mercenaries from
the Cold War’s African battlegrounds came together in this ill-conceived and poorly implemented plot.

“Wonga” is British slang for money. Roberts makes it clear that the plot was about opportunism and greed, the new “scramble for Africa” by foreign countries and corporations, rather than the liberation of an oppressed people. One of the great ironies of modern Africa is the fact that some of the poorest, least developed countries are the richest in natural resources. These resources generally are concentrated in the hands of corrupt local elites and foreign companies and are protected by brutal military and security forces. They provide little if any benefit to local populations. In fact, their presence often leads to increased impoverishment and oppression.

In the case of Equatorial Guinea, foreign companies, dominated by the American giant, ExxonMobil, have been exploiting rich oil and natural gas reserves since the late 1990s. Equatorial Guinea currently exports more than six billion dollars worth of oil a year. The profits are absorbed by a handful of politicians, their family members, and their cronies, while the rest of the population languishes in unimaginable poverty. Although American oil companies have bribed their way to lucrative contracts, American banks, such as Riggs in Washington, D.C., have willingly laundered the funds stashed away by corrupt politicians. All of this has made holding power quite appealing to an assortment of unscrupulous plotters and their financial backers.

Although a general reading public might appreciate the rapid-fire “whodunit” style, historians might be frustrated by the book’s lack of coherent organization and source citations. The argument is often lost in the mass of detail, and the list of characters at the beginning of the book makes the plot only slightly easier to follow. Nonetheless, The Wonga Coup is an important case study of what has been called the “recolonization of Africa.” As such, it should be included in the collections of college and university libraries.

Loyola College, Maryland

Elizabeth Schmidt


In the early 1970s, the reviewer was present at a small, elegant dinner in Parktown, a suburb of Johannesburg. Late that night, there was a light tapping on the door of the apartment, and two young Africans were ushered into the dining room. The home belonged to a member of the faculty of the University of the Witwatersrand, and it was a part of a complex underground railroad that made
it possible for Africans to move stealthily out of and back into South Africa. The two African men were on their way to Botswana, thence to Tanzania, and to the Soviet Union where they would receive combat training. Because they were clearly shaken and could not yet sleep, they told us of their lives in the urban ghettos of South Africa. Their stories resonated in the reviewer’s memory as he read Lynda Schuster’s account of one family’s struggle against apartheid.

The sixteenth of June 1976 was a watershed in the history of apartheid in South Africa. With the Sharpeville massacre of 21 March 1960, it was an event that dramatically exposed the struggles that had been burning in that country for 350 years. Schuster, a reporter for *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Christian Science Monitor*, has written a compelling story of a South African family that became deeply involved in this deadly, seemingly unending battle between black Africans and whites. She focuses on one family, that of Nomkhitha and Joseph Mashinini of Soweto and their children, Mokete (Rocks), Tsietsi, Mpho, Lebakkeng (Dee), and Tshepiso, and chronicles the family’s growth and the movement of the contrasting children into the youth struggle at a precipitous time.

Written in a spare style and in considerable detail, Schuster attempts to place the family into the wider history of the period; she follows the young men as they become active in South Africa, then, because of the perilous situation in that country, their movements to other countries in Africa and elsewhere. This is a reporter’s story, not that of a historian. Schuster conducted interviews with the Mashinini family and had many telephone conversations, and she also consulted material from a variety of newspapers and secondary sources. The matter-of-fact writing style is most effective when she describes emotionally potent events and relationships.

Many stories like that of the Mashinini family, are now being recorded, in biography, fiction, history, reportage, and the daunting archives of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Schuster’s book contributes a solid chapter to this developing history of a largely unknown South Africa. She organizes her story in such a way that it regularly shifts from one member of the family to another, with the effect that each of their stories complements and gives resonance to the others. In the end, the accounts impressively combine to form one intensely felt narrative of life in apartheid South Africa. The reader becomes a member of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, hearing stories that are slowly beginning to emerge from South Africans who for centuries were not given the freedom to tell their stories.

*University of Wisconsin-Madison*  
Harold Scheub
In this book, the author describes the background and campaign experiences of the Rhodesia Native Regiment (RNR), an imperial force recruited and officered by white Rhodesians and composed of approximately three thousand men recruited in Southern Rhodesia during the First World War. They fought against German-led forces in the German East Africa campaign. The author positions his work as one of reclamation, acknowledging African participation in the forces of Rhodesia and, by extrapolation, the British Empire. White Rhodesians, he suggests, accepted the recruitment, training, and arming of African forces (despite racist attitudes and nervousness about the social implications of military training for Africans) because they lacked enough white men to meet their imperial obligations. And they disbanded, abandoned, and forgot the regiment as quickly as possible once the war ended, as its veterans’ very existence undermined characterizations of the war as a white man’s war of white Britons’ sacrifices for the empire and civilization.

Within this overarching frame, Timothy Stapleton pulls together a good many details. He notes from where the soldiers of the RNR came, pointing to the high proportion originating in Nyasaland, rather than exclusively in Southern Rhodesia. Acknowledging the possibility of some coercive recruitment through pressures from chiefs, he nevertheless emphasizes the relatively good pay the force offered to uneducated men already tied to the region’s migrant labor system.

The bulk of this study, though, unlike recent social histories of African soldiers, is a narrative campaign history. Much of it rests (somewhat uncritically) on the writing of one commander, A.J. Tomlinson, whose unpublished diaries and published reports offered description of the campaign that detailed each march, clash, and eventual medal, as well as his surprises, statements of what he “knew,” and when he was “perplexed” or “angry,” all the while assessing troops’ success or failure in terms of their “spirits” (e.g., 74, 87, 100). Stapleton notes conflict between other sources and Tomlinson in reporting inconsistencies over whether Tomlinson was dismissed for his incompetence, but he does not use these multiple versions to question the descriptions or interpretations offered in diaries and narratives by Tomlinson and other officers such as C.L. Carbutt (100–101).

Instead, Stapleton’s narrative is rich in names of specific officers and men and very detailed as to places (providing a map) and weapons. This focus suggests several observations: the clashes were small, machine guns jammed,
communications were rudimentary, food was scarce, and soldiers often were undernourished and unsupplied.

The book ends with a quick sketch of the RNR’s abandonment to epidemic influenza and oblivion. Carbutt, fleeing the epidemic as his men died and returning to an influential post in Southern Rhodesia’s Native Affairs Department, thus enacted the forgetting that Stapleton seeks to overturn. This study is narrow and descriptive, offering a very specific regimental history.

University of Richmond

Carol Summers

THE AMERICAS


If you ask most Americans what they know about Alexander Hamilton, they might know three facts. He is depicted on the ten dollar bill. He died in a duel with Aaron Burr. He was the first Secretary of the Treasury. One reason for such obloquy is that, until very recently, historians have paid less attention to Hamilton than any other Founding Father. This book, based on a rare symposium on the man at the college named for him, takes a commendable first step toward correcting this oversight. It follows the Year of Hamilton, bicentennial of his death, celebrated in a glitzy, superficial show at the New York Historical Society. The popular year-long exhibit opened with nine historians reading papers on aspects of Hamilton’s life. This book, written more for scholars by scholars, goes further, achieving a badly needed analysis of Hamilton’s impact on his and later times.

As Stephen Knott’s essay points out, Hamilton is today most often depicted as the anti-Jefferson. It is as if the American pantheon has only one pedestal. Hamilton was the hero of capitalism, appearing on its first greenbacks during the Civil War and ensconced on the ten dollar bill by Calvin Coolidge. Franklin Delano Roosevelt deposed Hamilton, blaming him for the Great Depression, when he dedicated the Jefferson Memorial in 1943. Jefferson’s fall from sainthood in the Sally Hemings controversy left the pedestal vacant briefly, but now Hamilton is undergoing reconstruction.

Knott explains that, in real time, differences over questions of banking and commerce, constitutional interpretations, federalism, and American foreign policy drove the two men apart. Knott concludes that “our neglect” of Hamilton can “be
attributed to the fact that he made us what we are, while Jefferson’s malleable legacy appeals to visionaries seeking a new and better world” (26).

One point deftly delineated is how two political factions coalesced and then “morphed” into political parties. Parties were considered anathema by the Founders, but as their policies diverged and they attacked each other, especially once each faction launched a newspaper to bash the other thrice weekly, supporters of each antagonist gathered around their champion.

Several essayists comment helpfully on Hamilton’s contradictory role in the early struggle for press liberty and how he swung from the most extreme interpretation of the Alien and Sedition Acts to advocating truth as a defense against libel in his last court case, defending Federalist printer Harry Croswell. Robert W. T. Martin asserts that Hamilton was “far more repressive than the Republicans” of the 1790s who brought off “the Jeffersonian ‘Revolution of 1800’ ” (128).

Colleen Sheehan addresses Madison’s break with Hamilton after they collaborated on The Federalist, blaming the rupture on Hamilton’s four Reports to Congress. She cites Madison’s little-known “Party Press Essays” as his drumroll contention that “it is reason, not passion, which ought to prevail over legislative decisions,” which led him to reject the French notion of the value of l’opinion publique. In the process, she argues, Madison cast aside “the British model of corporate political conflict” so admired by Montesquieu, Hamilton, and Adams. If this book has a flaw, it is its overreliance on secondary works. Ironically, this is a result of decades of neglect of Hamilton research (186, 187).

Champlain College

Willard Sterne Randall


In the summer of 1947, a small group of young African-Americans launched a campaign of nonviolent civil disobedience to protest the segregation of recreation facilities at Palisades Park. The protesters experienced harassment, racial epithets, and beatings by park security guards, many of whom were off-duty police. Racial confrontations of this type were common throughout the South in the mid-twentieth century. In this case, however, the incident occurred in New Jersey, across the river from Harlem. Furthermore, this was not an isolated event. As Martha Biondi documents in her provocative study, African-Americans in post-World War II New York City and its suburbs confronted discrimination, segregation, and police brutality in their daily lives. They were excluded from buying
or renting homes in white neighborhoods and public housing projects, denied access to high-paying jobs by racist union and management practices, segregated in inferior schools, and beaten and even killed by the local police.

Biondi argues that the modern civil rights movement emerged out of the struggle against this racism and discrimination in postwar New York City, and that the radical left—Communists, radical elements in the labor movement, and their allies on the progressive left—spearheaded this early battle for racial justice. She details the racial conditions that blacks confronted in New York from the end of the Second World War to the 1954 Brown decision. She focuses on four areas: job discrimination, residential discrimination, racial violence, and school segregation. She describes the efforts of blacks and their white allies to address these problems through political and legal action. The author is at her best discussing the complexity of political and racial alignments as the country shifts from post-New Deal/World War II radicalism to Cold War anticommunism. She presents the story of struggle, where successes were limited, setbacks were as common as victories, and the victories in the courts and legislature frequently were undermined by the lack of implementation and enforcement. As a result, racial conditions in New York City did not improve markedly between 1945 and 1954.

Biondi’s discussion of the racial problems in midcentury New York are clearly and convincingly presented and carefully documented. In this area, the author makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the history of the early civil rights movement. The author’s arguments about the significance of the struggle in New York and the centrality of the Communist/radical left in this struggle are less convincing. New York’s experiences were significant, but not unique; the modern civil rights movement had numerous antecedents and drew from a number of sources and locations. The roles of the NAACP, the black churches, and even the black universities were at least as important as that of the Communist and labor radicals. Nevertheless, Biondi’s valuable study reminds us that racism was a national problem, not one confined to the South, and that its history must be explored by examining events in a number of communities across the country.

Texas Southern University

Cary D. Wintz


This author’s examination of environmental practice in nineteenth-century America is the latest in a long and reputable series of books recording “Daily Life
Through History.” There is no subtitle to Brian Black’s work, although he might have considered paraphrasing a Neil Young lyric: “Look at Mother Nature on the run, in the nineteenth century.” Black’s focus is essentially utilitarian, a tracing of a country’s commercial and industrial development, transforming nature from resources to cold hard cash.

Black begins by offering Niagara Falls as a metaphor for the story he determines to tell. Niagara, one of the nation’s most beautiful and powerful expressions of elemental nature, became the target of ever more intrusive attempts to harness its energy. Eventually, the falls became so obscured by turbines, powerhouses, bridges, and dams that the underlying essence was wholly lost to view. This is the imagery he wishes to relate on a scale writ large, a story emphasizing actions rather than values.

Nature is one of those tricky words, and Black does not offer an operating definition. By inference, he seems to allow considerable scope: nature is the far-flung eastern forest, the endless waves of prairie grass; it is also the field planted in winter rye, the factory burning coal, the river dammed for hydroelectric power. Wherever people—primarily Euro-American peoples—encounter and in some way utilize the landscape, there historical nature is found. Black establishes his pattern through a brief sketch of colonial economic expansion and then proceeds to examine agricultural growth, territorial expansion, the transportation revolution, and industrialization in keen detail. The author is at his best exploring America’s use of the abundant natural resources available. A profound sense of the breakneck pace of all this natural change is inescapable.

The ethics of the matter are another question. Just why did the Euro-Americans, confronted with a cornucopia of goodies, launch themselves on such a utilitarian course? Black seems to take this behavior as a granted given—natural perhaps—and pays little attention to root causes. His discussion of Native Americans is limited to their removal from the landscape; there is no attempt to contrast their kinds of utilitarianism with those of Euro-Americans. The author does acknowledge the troubled dissent of George Perkins Marsh, John Wesley Powell, and Gifford Pinchot—managers who sought to rationalize the consumption process and use those resources more wisely. But Henry David Thoreau and John Muir are lonely voices crying from a fast vanishing wilderness, easily mentioned and dismissed. Black’s is an action story, and most of the action is economic.

Environmental history is unusual in that it is the story of humanity conversing with the rest of nature. Black allows humanity to do almost all the talking. The one quality of nature that seems missing especially from his approach is nature as an actor. The “go ahead” approach to transforming nature suffered some
devastating consequences during the nineteenth century, when nature struck back in the form of exhausted soils, disastrous erosion, polluted waters, and urban waste. Black has little to say about such subjects and nothing at all concerning the development of Darwin’s ecological science. Americans began to put the brakes on willy-nilly utilitarianism when they recognized that every action in Darwinian nature had a reaction—often unfortunate and unanticipated. Yet Black speaks only of Social Darwinism, which is a different animal altogether.

Readers will want to take on this book for the overview of American development, told with an eye to our resources. Black also provides a wide-ranging sampler of first-person documents, pointing an array of directions for continued inquiry. How did the new Americans use the bounty they encountered everywhere? This work provides the foundation for an answer.

University of Illinois-Springfield

Robert McGregor


In this study, the author examines the life of a small East Texas town between the end of Reconstruction and the eve of World War I, centering on the execution there of a black man, Jim Buchanan, in 1902. The story of Buchanan’s hanging originally appeared as a series of newspaper articles written in 1999 by the author, who was then the editor and publisher of the town’s local newspaper, the Nacogdoches Daily Sentinel. In this work, the author seeks to explain the Buchanan incident by looking at the broader social, economic, and political issues that existed in Nacogdoches leading up to and at the time of the event.

The author concludes that the hanging of Buchanan was not an extraordinary occurrence. He sees it as growing out of a culture that during this era was violent, with killings, cuttings, and lynchings being commonplace occurrences. He observes that this characteristic was an outgrowth of class tensions, lousy economic conditions, and the vestiges of a frontier mentality, all combined with the pervasiveness of booze and gambling in the community. Violence was particularly common when connected to issues of race, with any perceived affront by blacks to white senses about acceptable behavior easily turning into a bloody conflict. In all of this, Gary B. Borders believes, Nacogdoches was arguably similar to other Southern towns at the time, no more racist nor violent than others.

While the author’s conclusions may be true, the story that is told here does not provide strong support for them. His investigation of the culture of Nacogdoches
covers a great variety of topics, beginning with an examination of the Reconstruction era that includes information on the economic impact of the war based largely on the diary of James Harper Starr, a prominent local physician and planter; relations between whites and blacks derived from the papers of the Freedmen’s bureau; and a story concerning the arrest of two state policemen that comes from Democratic newspapers and the memory of local whites. Other subjects covered by Borders include a history of the Populist Party in Nacogdoches and local political feuds such as that between long-time sheriff A.J. Spradley and Bill Haltom, a local newspaper editor. The connection between any of these stories and the author’s conclusions is never made clear. Indeed, the generalizations concerning violence and the forces that created it offered in this book appear to be based on assessments of the broader Southern culture made by other historians rather than the evidence offered.

In the end, was Nacogdoches similar to other Southern communities? With the basic analysis of the character of local culture and its causation flawed, the author’s conclusion that the town was like others is a tenuous one. It is weakened further by the failure to offer any similar communities against which it could be compared or the presence of any effort to fit this work into the framework of recent historiography on postbellum Southern communities. Ultimately the reader will find in this book an interesting tale, but scholars will find little that further enlightens understanding of local culture in the South.

University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Carl H. Moneyhon

After Pinochet: The Chilean Road to Democracy and the Market. Edited by Silvia Borzutzky and Lois Hecht Oppenheim. (Gainsville, Fla.: University of Florida Press, 2006. Pp. xxvi, 186. $55.00.)

Pinochet’s 1980 constitution “legalized” the military’s permanent dominance over a “protected democracy,” but also included a plebiscite on the renewal of his presidency in 1988, which, to his consternation, he lost. In the required election that followed, the “Concertación,” a bloc of Christian Democrats, Socialists, and lesser left-center parties, gained the presidency. Before relinquishing office, Pinochet therefore decreed additional laws making reduction of the military’s authority in the 1980 constitution virtually impossible. With his positions as army head and commandant of the armed forces intact, Pinochet famously declared “mission accomplished.”

The book’s eight essays cover the first fifteen years of Concertación’s efforts to restore parliamentary democracy and civilian control of the military, to expose the
gross human rights abuses of the Pinochet dictatorship and to compensate its victims, and to lessen inequities of the imposed free-market model. The essays share a general perspective. Although the transition took longer than Concertación had imagined on assuming office, “leading the coalition to focus its efforts on political reform and ameliorating poverty without changing the fundamentals of the free market model,” a new political, social, and economic order with staying power has emerged (xiv). The essays therefore “focus on one of two themes that arise from our general perspective. The first is that of the consequences of the penetration of the market model in society; the chapters that deal with public policy issues—including health care, pensions, trade and macroeconomic policy, and foreign policy—elucidate consequences in these arenas. The second is that of the slow pace and piecemeal process of political reform, despite Concertación’s goal of achieving greater democratization. This theme is reflected in the chapters that deal with justice and human rights violations, reform of the political and party system, and church–state and civil–military relations. Taken together, these chapters provide an overall vision of what Concertación both has attempted . . . and has been able to achieve during three presidential terms” (xiii, xiv).

The approach of the authors, some of Chilean, others of American affiliation, has been to summarize and update their writings on their assigned topic. The chapters are, however, more useful descriptively than for analytic insights. Boundaries imposed on the authors by the editorial division of labor doubtless limit the analysis. But some were self-imposed; there is little cross-referencing between the chapters. Disregarding the excellent chapter of William Lies (“A Clash of Values: Church–State Relations in Democratic Chile”), those on political reform ignore the emerging women’s liberation dynamics in the new political and social order and the possibility that the next Chilean president could be a single-mother Socialist. The editors attempted amends with a concluding essay by Aldo Vacs. It offers a useful, quick summary of the chapters but does not attempt to sort causal interactions. Lois Hecht Oppenheim’s economic policy chapter is marred by errors of commission and omission. She assumes that Concertación modified the Chicago Boys’ strategy from its pristine form. In fact, that had already been done by Hernan Buchi and his team that replaced the Chicago Boys, discredited by the 1981–1983 economic collapse. Buchi resorted to Keynesian rescuing, so that by 1990 the banking system was in deep debt to the Central Bank, the latter to the IMF, and import tariffs averaged 27 percent, compared to the 10 percent precrisis average. Concertación’s export-led growth strategy used tariff reduction as a bargaining tool in bilateral trade negotiations. But by 2005, its 6 percent average exhausted that tool. The chapter alludes to disagreements on the
viability of the export-led growth strategy in its present form, but does not elaborate.

Notwithstanding, the book is a worthy addition to reading lists for Latin America and economic development courses.

Washington University in St. Louis

David Felix


This reviewer is hardly alone in envying the author’s rare skills as a narrative historian. These days few of us historians get the chance to publish big books (much less trilogies), and fewer still succeed in producing works that justify exceptional length. In completing his exhaustive, although not exhausting, account of the transformation of American black–white relations during the 1950s and 1960s, Taylor Branch has rewarded his publisher and readers with an engrossing mosaic of deftly drawn portraits of Martin Luther King Jr. and a panoply of sometimes quarrelsome Southern Christian Leadership Conference colleagues, tenacious grassroots leaders, brash Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee rivals, unreliable government officials, doctrinaire black nationalist critics, loathsome segregationists, and the intrusive minions of J. Edgar Hoover. Having interviewed and written about many of those who appear in Branch’s account, the reviewer concedes that Branch discovered things about them that were disconcertingly new to him.

Branch’s first volume, Parting the Waters [1988], was acclaimed by critics and won the Pulitzer Prize for history—as well as “almost every major award” according to the dust jacket of his current book. Pillar of Fire [1998] received somewhat less acclaim, leaving some honors for the rest of us, but was actually more original and ambitious than its predecessor. The first told a story—the successful effort of valiant civil rights protesters to achieve national civil rights reform—similar to the one that other historians, the reviewer included, had related with less grace and scale. The second highlighted the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, but Branch complicated his account by featuring Malcolm X during his final year as a pessimistic counterpoint to King’s dogged advocacy of American democratic ideals.

This concluding volume is similarly ambitious, placing King’s final years in the broader context of African-American and national politics. At Canaan’s Edge begins early in 1965 as King seeks to invigorate the struggle for black voting rights even as many black activists influenced by Malcolm X express racial resentments
that would soon be symbolized by the Black Power slogan. As in his previous volume, Branch imbeds a triumphal story, culminating in the Voting Rights Act of 1965, in a montage of foreboding. During the weeks after President Johnson signed the act with King in attendance, Johnsonian liberalism was tested by simmering antipar dissent, SNCC’s trend toward radicalism and racial separatism, a major outbreak of racial violence in Los Angeles, the brazen murder of civil rights worker Jonathan Daniels in Alabama’s Lowndes County, and King’s decision to launch a major protest campaign in Chicago.

This dense montage extends to the end of King’s life, but King’s prophetic vision no longer provides Branch with a unifying theme. King often serves as a foil for other black activists—notably SCLC’s Hosea Williams, James Bevel, Jesse Jackson, and SNCC’s Stokely Carmichael, each of whom exhibited a volatile but potent mix of idealism, ambition, craziness, and tactical brilliance. United only by a realization that their goals extended beyond civil rights legislation, these and other veteran black organizers joined forces with local leaders in urban centers and the southern Black Belt to use hard-won rights in new struggles against entrenched racial and economic oppression. For many activists, the American intervention in Vietnam confirmed their distrust of this nation’s democratic pretensions, and by 1967 King was finally willing to suggest publicly that “America’s soul” had become “totally poisoned” by its war policies (592). Less than three years after expressing at the March on Washington his dream of a nation living out the true meaning of its egalitarian creed, King felt called to speak “clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today—my own government” (592).

Even as King’s influence declined and his relationship with Johnson deteriorated, he remains the heroic central character in Branch’s panorama. Johnson would have been astounded to learn that he had lived in the King years, but King himself, during his last years, probably suspected that his time had passed. In any case, Branch does not tell us much about King’s reflections as his dream turned to a nightmare. Relying in part on FBI reports, Branch exposes King’s private affairs but reveals little of his private thoughts. He limits himself to showing that King courageously persevered.

This paucity of explicit analysis is more troubling in Branch’s current volume than was the case in his more narrowly focused initial volume. He sympathetically paints King as a flawed yet persistent proponent of nonviolence, but his explication of King’s religious and philosophical convictions is undeveloped.

The same could be said for Branch’s thematic statements. His introduction insists that “the whole architecture of representative democracy springs from the handiwork of nonviolence” and that “the nonviolent civil rights movement lifted
the patriotic spirit of the United States toward our defining national purpose” (xi). But this expansive view of the significance of nonviolence is difficult to reconcile with the reality that American democracy was defined by revolution and a bloody history of racist oppression and conquest. Although nonviolent tactics prompted historic civil rights reform, they also produced a white backlash—the massive and enduring shift of white American voters from Democratic liberalism to Republican conservatism.

Branch’s epilogue concludes that King’s “oratory mined twin doctrines of equal souls and equal votes in the common ground of nonviolence, and justice refined history until its fires dimmed for a time” (771). He concedes that anti-government Reaganism “became the dominant idea in American politics, as a cyclical adjustment in history shifted the emphasis of patriotic language from citizenship to command, shrinking the public space” (770). But those faithful readers who have read the two thousand pages of Branch’s narrative deserve a better explanation of America’s swift passage through the King years to the Reagan years. The confluence of African-American history and American history that Branch describes so definitively in At Canaan’s Edge begs for deeper analysis, which future books must provide.

Stanford University
Clayborne Carson


This is an excellent study with a misleading title. Instead of providing a panoramic view of New Orleans from 1901 to 1922—from Louis Armstrong’s birth to his departure for Chicago—the book explores the city’s musical influence on the trumpeter. New Orleans’s parades are discussed first, and the roughly chronological succeeding chapters examine the impact of the Sanctified church, tinhorn peddlers, children’s bands, orphanages, “freak” dance bands, ragtime, Creoles of color, Storyville, riverboats, and the black migration north. While much social history emerges, Thomas Brothers’s analysis always focuses on Armstrong’s musical development. Because Brothers is a musicologist, this is no great surprise.

In fact, the book succeeds brilliantly as a musicological study situated in a historical context. Brothers has produced the most detailed, challenging, and stimulating study of Armstrong’s development and early New Orleans jazz—and of how the former deviated significantly from the latter. More extensively than any other scholar, Brothers mines the jazz oral history collection at Tulane University (containing the reminiscences of hundreds of city musicians) to produce an
extraordinary collective portrait of jazz’s early years. Local archival sources and Armstrong’s own writings (of which Brothers has edited a volume) and scholarship on the city and on jazz augment the research.

The general contours of New Orleans culture and Armstrong’s development are familiar. The city possessed a rich musical culture rooted in French and Afro-Caribbean traditions, and embodied the twin racial legacies of French rule (which created multiple racial classifications) and U.S. control (which degraded anyone possessing African blood, regardless of their skin color). Louis Armstrong’s parents were among the many dark-skinned, non-Creole, rural black migrants who came to New Orleans between 1870 and 1900. These migrants, living “uptown,” endured the city’s worst poverty and discrimination. Their instrumental music derived from their “rough” rural blues singing and exuberant Sanctified church hymns, while “downtown” Creoles of color drew on European musical styles and formal training. Parades, funerals, parks, and dance halls employed black and Creole bands.

Brothers clarifies and enriches this story and corrects long-held assertions. Bands’ use of rural blues, he argues, was far more complex than the simple process of adoption that earlier histories posit. Ragtime—the musical rage immediately preceding jazz—also was adopted by uptown musicians only in revealingly limited ways. Some Creoles became major jazz musicians, but Armstrong only encountered downtown bands late in his development. Brothers stresses how Armstrong’s early tutelage by the blues-playing cornetist Joe Oliver was followed by employment on riverboats, where his exposure to European-style harmonies and sheet-music reading hastened his departure from standard uptown playing and set him on the path to celebrated jazz innovation.

Brothers argues that Armstrong’s journey held ideological import. It demonstrated one way in which determined poor southern blacks could use their cultural resources to adapt—but not assimilate—to the white majority and gain economic and cultural traction, and even advantage. Richly researched and vividly written, Brothers’s work is a major contribution to jazz studies and to the integration of musicology into the study of American society.

Western Connecticut State University

Burton W. Peretti


This study of Union general John M. Schofield is less a full-length biography than an extended discussion of the intrinsically political environment in which the U.S.
military had to function in the nineteenth century. In a theme supported by extensive research into relevant government documents, the author persuasively argues that throughout American history “[m]ost civil–military conflicts have involved struggles between one civilian and military coalition of interests versus another coalition” (7). Schofield recognized the pervasiveness of politics in military affairs earlier and more fully than most of his fellow officers. As a result, he was able to parlay a solid, although hardly distinguished, record in the Civil War into a postwar career that saw him occupy every senior position in the army and serve as secretary of war.

After a brief sketch of Schofield’s life and career down to 1861, Donald B. Connelly’s study moves into high gear with its analytical description of Schofield’s command leadership during the war. In Missouri, Schofield learned the invaluable lesson of how to craft a middle course in threading his way through a minefield of racial, sectional, and ethnic tensions that polarized political factions in and outside the state. Although a Democrat, Schofield accepted emancipation as a military necessity, but he never abandoned his racist belief in the unfitness of the freed African-Americans to assume the rights of political citizenship.

As a corps commander during the Nashville and Atlanta campaigns, Schofield played his most important role during the war. Civil War buffs will find much of interest here, particularly in Connelly’s evaluation of just how lucky Schofield was to escape the trap that General John B. Hood had set for him at Spring Hill, Tennessee. Overall, Connelly rates Schofield as a solidly competent field commander whose “greatest contribution” to Union success in the Nashville campaign consisted of persuading Sherman to leave Schofield’s XXIII Corps behind in Tennessee to assist General George H. Thomas in turning back Hood’s invasion (122).

The end of the war found Schofield serving just where he wanted to be—in the East under Grant and Sherman, the generals whom he knew would call the shots in the postwar army. Always something of a political opportunist, Schofield was incredibly adept in avoiding antagonizing any of the bitterly contentious factions that instinctively turned to the army to gain an edge in shaping the politics of Reconstruction. His balancing act enabled him to retain the support of both Johnson and Grant as the impeachment crisis reached its climax.

As Connelly makes clear in his most original contribution, Schofield used the key offices he held after the war to push for the bureaucratic reforms and heightened professionalism that positioned the postwar military to meet the much greater demands that would be placed on it beginning with the outbreak of the Spanish-
American War. Indeed, Connelly makes a strong case for crediting Schofield with the “kind of bureaucratic leadership required of modern Chiefs of Staff” (339).

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

William L. Barney


In this book, the author examines a notable “might have been” in the history of U.S. farm policy, the Brannan Plan as developed and debated during 1947–1950. Seven chronologically ordered chapters trace the events from conception of the idea to its political resolution in 1949 and 1950. Other histories of agricultural policy have covered this topic, but Virgil Dean’s treatment is unprecedented in depth. Does a failed farm policy proposal so arcane and complex warrant such extensive coverage? The answer is a resounding yes.

The essence of the Brannan Plan was the replacement of the New Deal approach to price support, which relied on government intervention via commodity purchases and acreage controls, by payments to producers to achieve producer support objectives while letting market prices fall to clear the markets at prices more favorable to consumers. As put forth by the Truman Administration, the proposal was tailored to limit the quantity of a farm’s output eligible for payments and to promote conservation by requiring appropriate farming practices. These features generated opposition, especially the budgetary costs of payments. The debate was further complicated by the inclusion of “flexible parity” in early versions of the plan, which proposed reductions in the level of support from the then-prevailing 90 percent of parity (prices in relation to a 1910–1914 base).

Secretary Brannan—to whom President Truman in his cabinet-based approach to governing had delegated the administration’s agricultural policy making—stubbornly adhered to 100 percent of parity for the main price guarantees. Dean argues that, had Brannan been more flexible on this score in 1949, a compromise could well have been reached that would have enabled the Brannan Plan to be enacted—although opposition of the coalition of Republicans and Southern Democrats to the plan’s populist tinge might have inevitably proven an insuperable obstacle.

A fact that increases the book’s relevance is that eventually the Brannan Plan’s ideas achieved political success. Conservation compliance and payment limits are now well established in farm legislation, even if limited in effectiveness. Most notably, direct payments to producers have replaced acreage controls and com-
modity purchases to an extent even exceeding what the Truman administration envisaged. It is also notable that some criticisms of the approach, notably its invitation to budgetary excess, have been vindicated.

Beyond the substantive issues addressed, and their continuing relevance today, this book is a pleasure to read for the detailed stories it tells about the personalities and politics of this fascinating period. Truman’s first Secretary of Agriculture, Clinton Anderson, gets a sympathetic but not uncritical treatment that engages the reader’s interest and respect for him. The terms of debate and the outcomes of farm politics are strikingly similar to what we see today, despite the many changes in the U.S. economy, politics, and society.

Dean permits politicians on all sides to speak for themselves through well-chosen quotations. The same is true for the many economists and ordinary citizens whose comments Dean has deftly selected from his archival investigations. The book is widely and deeply sourced, well written, well edited, and nicely presented, and it is a credit to both author and publisher.

University of Maryland, College Park

Bruce Gardner


The foreign policy of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, controversial in its own time, remains a subject of lively academic debate. Supporters describe a statesman moving his country skillfully and successfully through the greatest crisis of its history. Critics present an indecisive, shortsighted leader whose misguided reading of the postwar world in particular left the United States worse off in 1946 than in 1933.

FDR’s debatable legacy is the basis for this unusual book. It brings a supporter and a critic of the president between the same covers. Each contributes an extended essay on Roosevelt’s diplomacy; each provides a half-dozen supporting documents that illustrate and flavor his position. Both Justus D. Doenecke and Mark A. Stoler bring impeccable credentials to the discussion. Doenecke’s Storm on the Horizon is a seminal analysis of the debate over intervention in 1939–1941. Stoler is well known for his prize-winning work on the military aspects of U.S. foreign policy in World War II. The authors take pains to establish their mutual rejection of simplistic, polarized interpretations. Readers expecting a confrontation on the lines of a TV talk show will be correspondingly disappointed. The work is nevertheless more than a celebration of consensus.
Doenecke titles his section “An Ambiguous Legacy.” He depicts FDR presiding over the emergence of the United States as the dominant world power, which was simultaneously enjoying unmatched prosperity. If that is not enough, Doenecke characterizes Roosevelt as the principal architect of victory: the man who kept the Grand Alliance together until the Axis was destroyed. Doenecke’s Roosevelt, however, was also a short-yardage player, dealing with particular situations at the expense of a comprehensive strategic plan. Too negative toward Churchill and Britain, Roosevelt was too positive toward Stalin and the Soviet Union. An extremely poor administrator, he consistently poisoned such vital issues as the postwar treatment of Germany. Emphasizing the war’s idealistic nature, he never explained to the American people the necessity of having to make pragmatic bargains with unpalatable negotiating partners. Roosevelt, in short, left his country significantly unprepared for the rough-and-tumble postwar world.

Stoler concedes Roosevelt’s shortcomings and mistakes as a war leader. But, he asks perceptively, what reasonable alternatives to the policies FDR pursued can be suggested? Even with the benefit of a half-century’s hindsight, what would have been the use of a prewar interventionist policy likely to divide even further a New Deal coalition far more fragile than is generally understood today? What alternative policies could have been pursued toward a Soviet Union whose full participation in the war was necessary for Germany’s defeat? And what other national leader of Roosevelt’s era would have been preferable? Charles de Gaulle? Chiang Kai-Shek? Winston Churchill was by 1945 so out of step with his own people that he was decisively repudiated once Germany was defeated.

Stoler’s conclusion that Roosevelt must not be judged by an absolute standard unattainable in the real world is especially useful in an era of diplomatic and military utopianism, a time when it seems none but optimal solutions will satisfy endless legions of critics. In war there are no elegant solutions and few complex options. It comes down to win, run, or quit. Roosevelt won, and that is enough.

Colorado College


The author of this book argues that the age of FDR has been replaced by the age of Reagan. The liberal regime created by Roosevelt during the 1930s to combat the Depression evolved after World War II into a Keynesian-inspired political economy that provided an expanding prosperity until the 1970s. During that decade, the Keynesian consensus broke down when it could neither explain nor
provide a remedy for stagflation, the simultaneous rise of unemployment and inflation. The transformation to a conservative regime was also aided by the ineptitude of President Carter, which contributed to the public’s collapsing confidence in the government’s ability to deal with the nation’s problems. Carter’s failures fulfilled the conditions that allowed Reagan, as the leader of the conservative movement, to enter from stage right.

Integrating research from historians, political scientists, economists, and sociologists, John Ehrman paints a favorable portrait of the continuities and changes that took place in the 1980s. Chapters are presented on the decline of liberalism and the Democratic Party; Reagan’s first and second terms; and the effects of deregulation, expanding competition, and new technology on daily life. The author focuses on domestic policy and politics.

For Ehrman, the most provocative question of the 1980s was: “[h]ow was Reagan able to push a nonideological political system, rooted in the center and dominated by a centrist class with many liberal tendencies toward the right” (6)? He suggests that, although Reagan was a committed conservative (especially in his rhetoric), he was also “a shrewd politician and a man of moderate temperament and cautious political instincts that were similar to those of most other Americans” (6). As president, Reagan consistently exerted pressure to move policy to the right, but when he encountered strong popular opposition, he usually backed off.

Ehrman claims that Reagan’s success demonstrates that, despite the fact that ideology matters little in American politics, ideas that guide policy are still essential. According to the author, Reagan championed a set of ideas that could be easily understood and that addressed the concerns of ordinary people. After the failures of government in the late 1960s and the 1970s, conservative proposals to rely more on the private sector by cutting taxes and deregulating the economy resonated with the middle and professional classes. Liberal Democrats, on the other hand, were incapable of agreeing upon a program that could attract majority support.

The author argues that the most significant change during the 1980s was the rise and legitimation of conservatism to the leading position in American politics. Reagan’s presidency overcame conservatism’s reputation as an extremist philosophy and proved that the conservatives could govern. Although conceding that Reagan’s administration had its share of failures—Iran-Contra, the savings and loan debacle, the defeat of Robert Bork’s nomination to the Supreme Court, and expanding income disparities—Ehrman points out that Reagan’s policies also provided a long period of economic growth, high employment, low inflation, and
a soaring stock market. In praising Reagan’s economic policies for staying the course, however, Ehrman overlooks a major course correction in the summer of 1982, when the President signed a $98 billion tax increase to reduce the rising budget deficit and Paul Volcker’s Federal Reserve began to loosen the money supply.

Ehrman’s book is perceptive in explaining the hybrid nature of the present regime. He stresses that, although much of political liberalism has been discredited, many of the changes it brought about, such as the expansion of rights for minorities, women, and homosexuals; the sexual revolution; and concern for the environment, have become part of the national consensus and were not seriously challenged by Reagan. Indeed, Ehrman points out that Reagan was more committed to the economic agenda of the conservative movement than with the religious right’s proposals to overturn Roe v. Wade, outlaw pornography, and break the monopoly of secular humanism in public schools.

In brief, Ehrman has given us an honest, scholarly, and well-written book that evaluates the Reagan presidency from a conservative point of view. Both liberals and conservatives can benefit from reading this analysis, which summarizes the changes in an important decade.

*University of Houston*  
John W. Sloan

*Benjamin Franklin’s Printing Network: Disseminating Virtue in Early America.* By Ralph Frasca. (Columbia, Miss.: University of Missouri Press, 2006. Pp ix, 295. $44.95.)

The year 2006 marks the three hundredth anniversary of Benjamin Franklin’s birth. Not surprisingly, the year has seen a variety of exhibitions, lectures, ceremonies, and books dedicated to celebration of this occasion. Ralph Frasca’s book can claim an important place in joining this assortment. His book is not a history of Franklin’s career as a printer or a journalist (a word not used in his day); rather it is given to an analysis of how he went about his work as a printer and of why he conducted his business as he did. These are subjects that have been treated by others, but no other book known to the reviewer treats them as systematically as does that by Frasca. Nor does any other book place them so clearly in Franklin’s ideas about virtue.

The method in Frasca’s study examines closely the system, called here a network, in Franklin’s approach as a printer. A little more than half of the book reconstructs Franklin’s creation of a network of printers extending from New England to Antigua in the West Indies. His practice in establishing printers differed from that found in Europe, which depended almost entirely on appren-
ticeship; there, a master printer took on apprentices, teaching them the trade and in the process tying up their labor and restricting competition. Franklin used apprentices at times, but his chief technique was one that today would be called franchising. He found capable printers, sometimes trained by himself, and helped them to set up shop for themselves. This entailed providing equipment—a press and types plus other supplies when needed. In return, the franchised printer signed a contract that ran for six years and included the obligation of paying Franklin one-third of the profits. The printer also agreed to use only the press and types provided by Franklin. At the end of the contractual period, he could extend the contract, with the sharing of profits, or buy the press and types from Franklin.

These arrangements paid off for Franklin and yielded clear benefits aside from money paid in. Franklin had in these print shops a venue for the sale of Poor Richard’s Almanac. Perhaps even more important for Franklin than profit—if Frasca is to be believed—was the opportunity this printing network gave for exposing the American people to the precepts of virtue. The old standards remained important to him throughout his life. Newspapers offered a means of inculcating the importance of honesty, hard work, and a temperate course in all aspects of life.

Frasca may not give enough emphasis to the profit motive in explaining Franklin’s entrepreneurial action, but he does acknowledge it, pointing out that Franklin’s appointment as postmaster allowed him to send his newspapers out without charge. He also received at no cost newspapers from shops he had established throughout the colonies. His own paper, the Pennsylvania Gazette, enjoyed an advantage over competitors—it could reprint stories culled from papers in the network without paying for them.

The first nine chapters (of twelve plus the conclusion) of Frasca’s book concentrate on the network—its structure, finances, and importance as an agency of communication and morality. In the tenth chapter, Frasca turns to this partnership of printing and moral advocacy in the colonies during the American Revolution. Franklin, he points out, proved slow in sensing that resistance to the Stamp Act of 1765 bit deeply into American society. But he caught up with American public opinion in the following years and used the newspapers in the struggle to defend American liberty. The story of these years, Frasca shows, was a mixture of failure and success. The failure stemmed from the aberrant behavior of printers, largely a second generation by the time of the Revolution. The greatest success had come earlier—well before the Revolution. Frasca’s account is helpful to understanding both failure and success.

University of California, Berkeley

Robert Middlekauff

It is easy to find fault with this book. It is repetitive, wordy, and sometimes makes exaggerated claims, beginning with the dust jacket puff that its smalltime subject was once “Mayor of Underworld New York . . . .” It has little truly original to offer specialists in the several subjects with which it deals. And yet it is remarkably good reading, the product of truly exhaustive research, and touches on so many people and institutions that no one can fail to learn from it.

Timothy Gilfoyle has hit upon a small goldmine in the form of a ninety-nine-page semiliterate memoir written by one George Appo in 1915, at the age of sixty-seven. Its author, sometime pickpocket, flimflam artist, and greengoods steerer, is hardly a typical figure; half-Irish son of a famous Chinese immigrant murderer, taught to read and write (sort of) by a Sing Sing cellmate, he testified about the cozy relationship between cops and crooks before the reformist Lexow Committee in 1894, an experience that helped him turn straight, with some zigs and zags, and become late in life a part-time investigator for the Society for the Prevention of Crime. The entire memoir, annotated, will be published separately by a scholarly press.

Appo is an oddly appealing figure; barely five-foot-five and 120 pounds, a (mostly) nonviolent offender, he lived in a dangerous world, a multiscarred body and glass eye testifying to gunshots, stabbings, and beatings inflicted by opponents on both sides of the law, all endured without apparently violating his own code as “a good fellow,” who remained generous, brave, and true to his friends, wholly without self-pity, and honest except for professional reasons. His story is dramatic, even melodramatic: twice, in prison and later an insane asylum, he was reunited briefly with the father convicted of murder when he was not yet three years old; in the late 1890s he essentially played himself onstage in a popular Broadway production entitled In The Tenderloin. He was involved in several kinds of confidence games and served a total of ten years in as many institutions, all of them different except for the corruption and brutality on the inside. Remarkably, one of few things he seems never to have suffered is discrimination as a result of his mixed parentage. But his is only one of dozens of biographies here; the rough narrative supplied by selected excerpts from the memoir is interrupted continually as Gilfoyle takes up the stories of most of the people that Appo encountered in his eventful life: judges and crooks, policemen and defense lawyers, gang leaders and reformers, doctors and wardens.
The Appo story is then simply the framework for a tour, as a partial list of New York’s criminal scams, its nightlife, law enforcement, prisons, and politics, its bohemian opium dens, the state of nineteenth-century psychiatry, the impact of the Industrial Revolution on children of the working class, all well-illustrated by contemporary pictures. Gilfoyle, author of *City of Eros: New York City, Prostitution, and the Commercialization of Sex, 1790–1920*, knows his dark streets well. And if he takes a reader on some unnecessary side trips—for example, the putative route that the elder Appo may once have taken from California to New York—he is an entertaining as well as informative guide.

*Haverford College*  
Roger Lane


This author has written a well-researched, comprehensive yet popular account that will supersede older accounts by Henry David and Paul Avrich. The strengths of *Death in the Haymarket* are many. It is a well-written, often gripping narrative that reads like a novel. This is especially true after the book reaches the time of the eight-hour day strikes in 1886. James Green’s work is also comprehensive: he has clearly mastered the secondary literature, much of it written since Avrich’s last popular account published in 1984. Unlike Avrich, this enables him to root the Haymarket Affair in the history of the local labor movement. Some of the other highlights of the book include a detailed portrayal of the city’s working class; an excellent discussion of the importance of immigrant workers and their communities; a wonderfully “thick description” of the 1886 Great Upheaval; a short, but hard-hitting summary discussion of the trial of the anarchists; and an extended survey of the legacy of Haymarket and anarchism.

Yet the book’s popular virtues may also limit its appeal to labor historians. Green has opted to sacrifice analysis to the needs of narrative. It is difficult to discern tightly argued answers backed with evidence to the sorts of issues labor historians of this era have debated: labor republicanism and its relation to other forms of thought, the viability of the Knights of Labor, and the relation of labor to the evolution of the local economy and politics.

*Death in the Haymarket* does have a central theme: that the great upheaval was a nonpolitical “populist moment,” a great rising against plutocracy, and an
attempt to set up a cooperative commonwealth in which “intelligent craftsmen” would govern their own workshop (163, 130). This “Chicago Idea,” according to Green, would find its legacy in the mass strikes of industrial unions and the revolutionary unionism of the Industrial Workers of the World (287, 304). Accordingly, Green plays up the anarchists, and secondarily the Knights of Labor, as strike leaders and underplays the key role played by the trade unionists. This leads him to ignore or slight, among other things, the importance of the boycott, new forms of craft union organization, and the more limited goals of unionists.

In fundamental ways the book reprises progressive historiography’s idea of the Haymarket Affair as a tragic miscarriage of justice, and adds to it a newer orthodoxy of post-1886 labor decline. To many readers this emphasis on state repression, a united business class, and the defeat and marginalization of the labor left will strike a contemporary chord and may seem to be the only narrative possible. But it is one that must underplay the way the movement was able, over time, to remake mainstream institutions. A different narrative could make better sense of the ability of some unions to establish a beachhead in local industrial relations following Haymarket and the resuscitation in the 1890s of labor and socialism to levels of strength greater than in the 1880s.

Still, the virtues of this book will doubtless make it the standard popular account of the Haymarket Affair. Its dramatic and compelling narrative has the potential to rekindle interest among students and the wider public in Haymarket and in the central role of labor in the Gilded Age.

Indiana State University

Richard Schneirov


This is a welcome new edition of Steven Hahn’s much-admired, prize-winning study of the social milieu and special historical circumstances that made two selected Georgia counties fertile ground for that state’s Alliance-Populist politics. As the author notes, his study was meant to “lift some of [the] . . . shadows” that have obscured “the process through which white yeoman farmers . . . came to embrace the Populist alternative.” He felt that by examining “the yeomanry’s experiences over a lengthier period of time” one might better “explain not only the emergence of political disaffection and protest but also the nature and meaning of Populism itself” (vii–viii). If one takes care to note his qualifications
regarding the scope and intent of the study there can be no doubt that Hahn’s was a mission accomplished in a highly commendable fashion.

Beginning as a dissertation under C. Vann Woodward but ultimately finished after Woodward’s retirement under the supervision of Howard Lamar, The Roots of Southern Populism certainly has earned an influential place for itself on a long list of published studies focusing on the agrarian revolt. Although the title on its face may be overblown and thus misleading, the study is by no means narrowly contrived. Hahn recognizes that there was “more than one yeomanry,” and also that “a study of the origins of Southern Populism should be regional in scope, for the movement displayed important variations” (51, 7). One gets the feeling that Hahn himself (especially as he reflects on a study now nearly a quarter-century old), by focusing primarily on the geographical origins of the movement’s supporters, may well downplay influences and changes that derived as much from the present and future time dimensions as from the past.

Perhaps the biggest shortcoming of the approach taken in the study (“analyzing how white yeoman farmers directly experienced social change,” while fitting the whole within the framework of a “pre-industrial republicanism”) is that it discounts the extent to which the emerging commercial-industrial world ran counter to some deeply ingrained democratic traditions that struck to the core of the American ethos, and thus how that dynamic complex undermined the Alliance-Populist commitment to political democracy and a truly cooperative commonwealth (62). The same might be said of Populism’s antithesis, a mind-set virtually off the radar screen in this study. The reviewer would like to think that Woodward would agree that we need a study of equal stature entitled “The Roots of Southern Anti-Populism.” Granted, this criticism does not apply if we can agree that Southerners, unlike other Americans, somehow operated from less democratic and humane mores. If so, we might ask, was that the price one must pay for that well-known peculiar institution?

The reviewer’s own Populist studies have convinced him that the Populist phenomenon of the 1890s was, simultaneously, the culmination of an old and the beginning of a new effort aimed at salvaging and resuscitating the democratic spirit. Steven Hahn does an admirable job of explaining that part of the story centered on an old radicalism that resonated strongly among a segment of the Southern white yeomanry. No one has told that part of the story better or with more staying power than he.

Washington State University

Gene Clanton

This book is a study of two conflicting issues: the relationship between ethnic and national identity and the contradicting relationship between neoliberal market economies and the state’s defense of social welfare and ecology. It is a contribution to the contemporary history of the political struggles of the Mapuche of Chile. Throughout the colonial period, the Mapuche were famous for their fierce resistance to the Spanish conquerors and colonizers, to the point of having maintained an independent territory in central Chile until 1886, almost seventy years after national independence. The Chilean government then concentrated the thirty thousand remaining Mapuche to reducciones (reservations), which were lands held in common title and legally protected from sale to outsiders, while the surrounding land was auctioned to Chilean settlers and European migrants. Poverty, alcoholism, and the loss of part of their territory drove the Mapuche to surrender and to sign a peace treaty at the end of the nineteenth century.

In spite of all this, the Mapuche have kept a strong cultural identity, and today their population is close to nine hundred thousand. Mapuche have been active in various social movements and NGOs as well as in Chilean political parties through which they have been able to make strong political claims. Despite various struggles to be recognized as a separate “people,” the Mapuche are national Chilean citizens, although their cultural distinctiveness was recognized in a 1993 law that adopted a multicultural model for Chile.

The central thesis of this book is that whenever there has been a conflict between Mapuche rights and powerful economic interests, the postmilitary democratic governments of Chile have favored the latter. This argument is presented through a detailed description of two neoliberal economic projects affecting Mapuche territory: the construction of a series of foreign-owned hydroelectric plants on the Bio-Bio River and the establishment of transnational logging companies adjacent to Mapuche territory. Both cases negatively affected Mapuche land and ecology. The Chilean government, in spite of its center-left ideology, ended up supporting national interests (energy and sources of state revenue) rather than maintaining a commitment to the cultural reproduction of an ethnic group. From the government’s point of view, the Mapuche—as Chilean citizens—would benefit from these projects, which would allow the nation to face its lack of natural energy resources and export bases, while at the same time providing them with welfare perks. The final solution of the
problem came when the leaders of the movement accepted a large amount of money as compensation for peacefully allowing the end of the construction of the project.

The author strongly affirms that neoliberal concepts of modernization have been maintained by concierto (center-left parties) governments by defending the interest of large transnational corporations and national enterprises as leaders of economic growth rather than, as in the case of the Mapuche, defending indigenous collective and community rights. In a departure from traditional democratic left and center political parties, the Chilean concierto has agreed on a pattern of economic development and modernization that is in essence the same as that of the conservative right, which leaves those social groups that do not benefit from the neoliberal model without institutional channels of political influence.

National University of Mexico

Larissa Adler-Lomnitz


The question of the United States as an empire is a hot-button topic in political science in this new century. The emphasis is on the word “hot.” Rather than a subject for sober analysis, it is bandied about either as an accusation, by leftists and Bush haters, or as a badge of honor, by neoconservatives and Bush supporters. Harold James has entered the fray with this new book. His account is welcome on two counts: rather than an ideological rant, James conveys a genuine analytical desire to understand the current American preponderance of power, and he grounds his analysis in thoughtful historical parallels.

The “Roman Predicament” that has confronted all great powers with a global reach is that “either there is disintegration because of a proliferation of values, or disintegration because of the imposition by force of one set of values provokes an inexorable and violent backlash” (24). To James, this dilemma is most cogently presented in the writings of Edward Gibbon’s *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* and Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations*, both published in 1776. Gibbon addressed the political dynamic of the founding of Roman power on a polytheistic value base that was undermined by the opulence and inequalities that the expansion of this power produced. The move to meliorate these injustices through the conversion to a monotheistic value base, Christianity, served to isolate politically the Romans themselves, thereby rendering them too weak to uphold their own
system. Adam Smith, of course, undertook the economic argument to show that the costs of upholding the contemporary British empire, similarly, were too costly for the British themselves.

The modern equivalents of this predicament are the forces of globalization and imperialism, which act against each other in a similar fashion. The globalization of the world economy requires a set of rules both to regulate this commerce and to ensure an equitable trading regime. The problem lies in the very complexity of these rules that, to James, leads more to conflict than to cooperation. Indeed, these conflicts ultimately necessitate the threat, or the outright use, of force by a hegemonic power. Thus, “Realpolitik overrides rules... Britannia waives the rules in order to rule the waves” (34).

There is a hit-and-miss quality to the analysis of this book. This author’s chapter on the unraveling of empires is one of the best essays on this subject that the reviewer has read. James talks about the psychological centrality of peripheries to empires, and how, nevertheless, when one such peripheral case (like Vietnam or Iraq) becomes central to this power, the empire is surely undone. The domino theory herein is lucidly revalidated. But his discussion of conflict through complexity is less compelling. Although he makes his set of arguments, the author fails to engage them with the alternative explanation of complex interdependence leading to cooperation as explained by the early postwar literature on functional integration and the later literature on regime theory.

In fact, more generally, James does better with questions than with answers. For example, his likening modern Europe to the Austro-Hungarian Empire poses a provocative question. But the point of the question is not clear for the fate of modern Europe. Finally, his solution to the “Roman Predicament” for the United States lying in some resuscitation of natural law is, to put it charitably, undeveloped. Still, in any debate, insightful questions usher in fresh perspectives, and James raises his questions with articulate flair.

Saint Louis University

Timothy J. Lomperis


Between 1925 and 1969, in perhaps the twentieth century’s single most important development in American constitutional law, most of the provisions of the National Bill of Rights [1791] were made applicable to the states. Most scholars agree that the Bill of Rights was not originally intended to apply to the states,
and the Supreme Court so ruled in 1833. Most scholars also agree that the 1868 Fourteenth Amendment’s guarantees of “liberty” and “due process” against state government action were not originally intended to apply the Bill of Rights to the states, and the Supreme Court so ruled in 1908. No Supreme Court majority has ever ruled that the Fourteenth Amendment is a shorthand version of the Bill of Rights. Nevertheless, with only a few exceptions, the provisions of the Bill of Rights became applicable to the states because, one by one on a case-by-case basis, a majority of justices (often for differing reasons) made them so.

One such case is *Mapp v. Ohio* [1961]. Of course, the constitutional law purist will point out that *Mapp* did not deal with the Bill of Rights directly. And that is true. So, we have to go back to 1949 and the case of *Wolf v. Colorado*, which ruled that the Fourth Amendment’s protection against unreasonable searches and seizures *is* applicable to the states. However, in *Wolf*, the Court’s majority also ruled that the federal “exclusionary rule” (which prohibits the use of evidence secured through an illegal search and seizure) did *not* apply to the states. The basis for that ruling was that the exclusionary rule is not an explicit requirement in the Fourth Amendment but only a judicially created rule of evidence, a federal remedy, which Congress might negate. The dissent in *Wolf* argued vociferously that without the exclusionary rule the Fourth Amendment is “a dead letter.” The dissent was finally to have its day in *Mapp v. Ohio*.

This book tells the story of that case with exquisite clarity and narrative verve. Ms. Dollree Mapp is at the center of the story, not only because it was her home from which “the poisoned fruit” (illegally seized evidence) was taken, but also because she (eighty-two years old in 2006) granted author Carolyn Long the personal interviews that provide the narrative with much of its colorful, entertaining, and fascinating detail. The case itself is important, of course, because it was a part of the Warren Court’s record of “revolution” in the criminal justice sphere, leading Richard Nixon to campaign for the presidency in 1968 promising to “strengthen the peace forces against the criminal forces” in American society. And the immediate impact of this particular ruling would be especially great because, at the time [1961], less than half the states were using the exclusionary rule in their criminal trials.

Long demonstrates that she is a very capable journalist. She provides remarkable details from both documentary evidence and interviews with many of the principals. No detail about the case appears to have been omitted (e.g., the reviewer has studied, taught, and written about *Mapp* for years, and never
knew before that the initial “tip” that led the police to Dollree Mapp’s Cleveland, Ohio, house came from a young “numbers game” operator who grew up to be the well-known boxing promoter, Don King). Long is also a most capable historian. She provides context and tracks the Fourth Amendment’s provisions back to their origins in English law. She is also an accomplished political scientist. Her analyses of Mapp’s implementation and impact deal with the short term (immediate impact), the midterm (subsequent curtailments by later Courts), and possible future consequences. In short, she describes, explains, and predicts. A book like this one must deal with difficult legal definitions, concepts, processes, and other jurisprudential mysteries. The author’s legal references and analyses are spot on.

This book is comprehensive, engaging, and lucid. A reviewer can rarely write this, but here it applies: this book need not be done again.

Ohio Wesleyan University

William C. Louthan

Jay Cooke’s Gamble: The Northern Pacific Railroad, the Sioux, and the Panic of 1873.


This book is a dramatic narrative that helps explain the rise and fall of the Philadelphia banker between 1861 and 1873. The early chapters describe his success in selling U.S. government bonds to fund the Civil War. Lincoln saw that Cooke was a better salesman than Secretary of the Treasury Chase or others who bid for the privilege of selling bonds. After the war years, the narrative focuses on the financing of the Northern Pacific Railroad and then turns to Jay Cooke’s insistence on a reconnaissance party to see the proposed route. While other Pacific Railroad officials considered this an unnecessary step that would delay the project, it is as nothing compared to the next ten chapters of slogging survey and track-laying expeditions, which seem to have completed their initial work a few weeks before Jay Cooke declared bankruptcy, closed the doors of his bank, and dragged the country into a financial panic.

The book certainly may be misnamed, because most of the substance is to be found in descriptions of the knock-down, drag-out work of the surveyors, track layers, and army units who determined the course of the road between 1870 and 1873. In these chapters may be found a narrative reminiscent of Bernard DeVoto, but with even more immediacy and considerable additional documentation. The narrative is closely woven around eye-witness accounts of track layers falling into underground lakes, marching the wrong way for miles, fighting off the increas-
ingly threatening Sioux led by Sitting Bull, and taking casualties among the men from weather, inebriation, and Indian fighting.

The *dramatis personae* would be recognizable to most students of American history. Former members of the Union Army from Sheridan and Custer to enlisted men and a few talented former members of the Confederate Army make up most of the surveying teams. The author introduces every one of them with extreme care and traces the working relations of each with the other. At the end of the book is a short alphabetical postscript which tells what happened to these men after 1873.

While this book was enjoyable and enlightening to read, the reviewer ended up with quite a few questions in mind. What were President Gregory Smith and Jay Cooke doing while the workers were slogging? How was the protection of the United States Cavalry obtained for the field work? Where are the financial statements that connect the bond sales to the workers in the field? Is that really where the money went? And finally, did the slow work and Indian resistance in the West really make the difference on paper between solvency and bankruptcy? Or was it the rise of Morgan and other financial competitors to Cooke? We need a drawing together of these strings in an equally dramatic sequel.

Quinnipiac University
Sarah H. Gordon


Throughout the lowland jungles and scrub forests of eastern Mesoamerica lie the ruins of scores of cities built by Mayan peoples, beginning around 500 BC. By the Late Classic period (AD 550–850), many of these cities were densely populated centers, ruled by semidivine kings whose power rested largely on charismatic ritual performance rather than control of basic resources. However, toward the end of this period, many of these centers suffered dramatic depopulation.

The causes and historical trajectory of the Classic Mayan collapse have tantalized generations of scholars. Myriad causes have been proposed, including popular revolt, foreign invasion, elite competition, and warfare. Recently however, some researchers have begun to emphasize external factors, particularly a drought that is thought to have intensified during the period of the collapse.

In *Water and Ritual*, Lisa J. Lucero explores the effects of this purported disaster on Classic Mayan society. The study raises the question of why political fragmentation endured after the drought period had passed. Lucero offers the
hypothesis that royal authority had from its inception been closely tied to water management. This included the sponsorship of drains and reservoirs, as well as an elaborate ritual tradition, which invoked the gods of rain. However, when these rites proved ineffective under drought conditions, the general populace lost faith in the institution of kingship as a whole.

In support of this thesis, the author examines historical trends in Mayan ritual, assessed through burials, caches, and termination practices at three centers of different scale. These are Saturday Creek, a small site in Belize excavated by the author; the secondary center of Altar de Sacrificios, located far to the southwest on the Pasion river of Guatemala; and the regional capital of Tikal, in the central Peten. Both of these latter sites were excavated decades ago. It is observed that the structures of these rituals are basically the same at all sites. However, when water was less plentiful, as at Tikal, political centralization was of greater importance. Such large centers were particularly vulnerable to long-term drought, such as that supposed to have struck the Mayan zone during the time of the collapse.

Overall this book engages mainstream anthropological issues, especially comparative studies of state formation and collapse. Where it encounters difficulty is in assuming that Mayan elite rituals were overtly aimed at controlling water resources. In this reviewer’s opinion, more attention to the specific symbolism of ritual structures is needed. The relationship between the replicated rituals and the control of water is difficult to demonstrate. Moreover, in many regions, particularly that where Altar de Sacrificios is located, there is no evidence for drought conditions or other environmental disasters. Yet kingship collapsed just the same. More microenvironmental studies are necessary before water management will be accepted as an explanation for the rise and fall of Mayan kingship on a regional scale.

California State University, Chico

Matthew G. Looper


In the decades leading up to the American Revolution, Philadelphia hosted a pleasure culture in which casual sexual relations outside of marriage were common. Adultery, self-divorce, informal marriage, prostitution, cross-race and cross-class intermingling, illegitimacy, and a print culture that satirized sex prevailed among all classes. The pleasure culture continued to thrive after the
Revolution, in part, because nonmarital sex was often accepted and rarely prosecuted. This blossoming of sexual self-expression in an atmosphere of relative tolerance, Clare A. Lyons claims, enabled women to challenge the constraints of patriarchy but also invited men to victimize women.

Lyons explores the nature and contours of the pleasure culture in great detail. However, her most insightful analysis focuses on the evolution of the pleasure culture in the early nineteenth century. She detects two significant trends. First, Philadelphia’s elite and middling classes launched an attack on the pleasure culture. The attack involved redefining male and female sexuality, honoring legal marriage, and warning against disasters that awaited women who fell from virtue. The attack was also manifested in efforts by Philadelphia’s Guardians of the Poor to serve individuals willing to reform their sex lives and to coerce those who relapsed into the pleasure culture. Still, elites did little to prosecute sex crimes such as rape and prostitution because powerful men protected their patriarchal privileges over women’s bodies.

The second significant trend was that elites reestablished clear class and race boundaries by associating sexual promiscuity and criminality exclusively with the rabble, which included the lower classes and African-Americans. Lyons argues that Philadelphians “created a two-tiered system of sexuality . . . the dominant and public version of virtuous women and virile men, and a lustful, uncontrollable sexuality of the rabble” (310). For example, they contrasted the passionlessness of middle-class women to the lustful, adulterous promiscuity and prostitution evident among lower-class women, who might be subjected to reformer benevolence or written off as incorrigibles. Sexual self-control became a key measure of respectability and good order. The association of the rabble with sexual license brought with it the stigma of disorderly and criminal tendencies. The stigma was important. Vagrancy statutes were sufficiently vague that anyone suspected of disorderly or criminal tendencies could be summarily imprisoned.

*Sex Among the Rabble* is an impressive scholarly accomplishment. Still, it lacks several important components. It does not examine same-sex desire as part of the pleasure culture. And its analysis of the early nineteenth-century attack on the pleasure culture is thin in places. Who were the attackers? Were they driven by instrumental reason, benevolent morality, or perhaps structural forces? Was the attack limited by a political economy invested in sex culture and commerce? Overall, Lyons’s scholarship is so engaging and intriguing that, after four hundred pages, the reader wants more.
Literature tracing the convolutions of school reform in recent years has grown voluminous. Likewise, much has been written about the broad policy initiatives of successive U.S. presidents, from Lyndon Johnson to Bill Clinton. Yet virtually no one has linked individual presidents with the specific school-related policies they tried to forge—that is (among other things), connecting the story of administrations variously engaged in redefining the federal role in education with the respective policy legacies they left behind. The result of this failure to link presidents and education policies, argues historian Lawrence McAndrews, has been a “significant void” in assessments of late twentieth-century U.S. political history (221).

McAndrews’s study endeavors to fill the alleged lacuna by analyzing federal education priorities under the administrations of Presidents Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush, and Clinton. The focus is on three specific controversies: public school assistance, nonpublic school aid, and school desegregation. Each has been embedded, historically speaking, within broader questions about social justice, equality of opportunity, and exclusion in American society.

The exposition is both lucid and engaging. A minor caveat concerns the author’s decision to visit the three broad policy issues twice—first looking at the span between 1965 and 1981 and then at the period from 1981 to 2001. Given this structure, presidential administrations receive multiple iterations as well, depending on the particular theme and time period discussed. The result is a narrative that feels more choppy and “episodic” than necessary. Had the author elected instead to organize his thematic materials around the presidencies themselves, a more synoptic perspective might have been possible.

On the other hand, a bon mot or clever turn of phrase here and there does a great deal to enliven the narrative. Summing up the elder Bush’s record on education, for example, McAndrews claims that for every positive aspect there was a negative one. “He raised expectations but expressed doubts. He mounted the bully pulpit, only to mix his message. He affirmed a federal presence, then attacked it. He offered an innovative program, but Congress would not pass it. For this Education President the glass was half full, but it was also half empty” (150). President Johnson’s commitment to school desegregation: he tried to govern from the middle and “clung tenaciously to both sides of the issue” (54). Comparing Gerald Ford’s education record with that of Nixon: “Ford was less
serious than Nixon about reform, more serious about retrenchment, and in the end, just as unsuccessful” (107). At the party for advocates of nonpublic school tuition tax credits, as the author characterizes it, the honored guest [Ronald Reagan] “arrived late and left early” (190). On Nixon’s contribution to school reform: “He promised a new beginning; he delivered a false start” (103). As for Bill Clinton on nonpublic school aid, he was, McAndrews judges, “consistently inconsistent” (210). Given this level of rhetorical skill, those who analyze the intersections of ideology, politics, and policy formation will find McAndrews’s study to be as entertaining as it is instructive.

University of Americas

Christopher J. Lucas


If you are a baseball fan, did you know the rule for nine-inning games was adopted in 1857? Or that a pitcher was originally called a “feeder” because his job was to feed the ball so that the batter could easily hit it? Or that the four balls for a walk, three strikes for an out rule was not adopted until 1889? If not, then Peter Morris’s book is for you.

Morris set out to answer certain basic questions related to the evolution, not the invention, of baseball as a major American sport. When did certain tactics begin? Why did they not take root earlier? When did these changes become a permanent part of the game? In doing so, Morris wants the reader to gain an appreciation for the factors that shaped and reshaped baseball over the past century and a half. He also seeks to correct the commonly held view of contemporary fans of the game that the way baseball is played now is not as it has always been played.

Morris’s method works superbly. In twelve chapters, he analyzes everything from the size and shape of the baseball, the evolution of the uniform, the development of different pitches, and just about any other aspect of baseball that you can imagine. His approach is to search for the earliest documentation from newspaper accounts or private letters for the emergence of the various changes in baseball. He then cites the evidence he has found and any other supporting material. The final result is to give the reader a sense of confidence in his discoveries.

An interesting by-product of Morris’s research, but one he does not explore, is how modern baseball took shape in the 1880s. That decade, and not the 1920s,
deserves the appellation of baseball’s first Golden Age. In the 1880s, overhand pitching was adopted, pitchers began using windups, sliding into bases became common, gloves came into widespread use, and the strike zone was defined as from the shoulder to the knee. Statistically the baseball of the 1880s resembles the modern game. The batting average for the National League in 1889 was .264. In 2005 it was .262. Any fan today would recognize the game of 1880 as the clear forerunner of the modern game of baseball.

Morris’s book is a solid piece of near exhaustive research into the arcane but crucial aspects of the development of baseball. It is an important addition to the serious study of what remains America’s most influential game.

La Salle University

John P. Rossi


Despite a misleading title, this book tells a tale of Rhode Island merchants who took up opposing stands on disparate issues as the United States came into existence. By bringing to light the many venues and ways in which John and Moses Brown clashed, this study makes fresh use of archival sources. Ignored, however, is the cultural context in which the Browns jousted. The result adds less to knowledge of the slave trade than the title leads readers to expect, but Charles Rappleye’s brother-based perspective is original nonetheless.

Indeed, the Brown brothers’ recurring collisions provide a platform on which to probe colonial motivations that were not always lofty or even well-considered—the better to delve into early national attempts to work out precepts regarding citizenship, trade, and rights, as each was enmeshed in individual, state, and federal responsibilities. Explicating decades’ worth of fraternal collision clearly, Rappleye finds that men who enjoyed their wealth and status differently offer contrasting “American archetypes, the robber baron, and the social reformer, thunder and light” (345). Supporting this charge are passages that describe the tactics, ploys, and counter-ploys devised by Moses or John to gain ends as disparate as the location of a bridge, evasion of official censure, or passage of a legislative act. The book plots and narrates varied engagements well. It remains unclear how, finally, Rappleye understands the brother described in one chapter as “almost pathological” and in another as gleefully “politically incorrect” (330, 303). Unfocused, too, is the author’s treatment of the sibling chastised
for buying West Indian cotton and initiating children’s labor in New England factories, while inveighing against slavery (289–290).

Most troubling to this reader is the awkward handling of the trade in African slaves. Rappleye does say that this form of commerce raised few (European) eyebrows when Moses and John took up different stands. But that does not explain why the book describes kidnapped Africans as “disconsolate” and “woeful cargoes” before showing that some of them grew so enraged, when ripped from home and kin, that they organized in rebellion, sometimes murderously (14, 270). The degree to which conflict between Moses and John Brown could have been fomented by antipatriarchal rhetoric put in play during the Revolution is also insufficiency examined. Political agitation directed at a British king might seem a strictly public matter, but challenges to a paternalist regime could have affected quite significantly behaviors as “home-bound” as John’s parenting style, the harsh mistress-ship style reported of Moses’s first wife, and his response to in-house cruelty, as well as decades worth of fraternal conflict. This book provides enough evidence on each of these topics (however glancingly) to suggest to this reader that commitment to incommensurate models of masculinized power—rather than slavery or revolution per se—was the motor that impelled the brothers Brown.

National University of Singapore

Barbara Ryan


The author of this book sets out to write a “sympathetic” account of Justice Scalia, one that “understand(s) Scalia as he understands himself” (ix). He accomplishes that goal but fails to provide an uncritical analysis of Scalia’s jurisprudence.

After a brief introduction describing the justice’s life prior to his appointment to the Supreme Court in 1986, Ralph A. Rossum takes up the outlines of Scalia’s judicial thought in chapter two. Rossum describes Scalia’s “text and tradition” jurisprudence as “an ‘original-meaning’ jurisprudence that accords primacy to the text of the Constitution or the statute being interpreted and that declares it to be the duty of the judge to apply that text when it is clear or the specific legal tradition flowing from that text (i.e., what it meant to the society that adopted it) when it is not” (ix). According to Rossum, such an approach aims to “constrain judicial discretion” and to protect the people’s “right to govern themselves as they see fit . . .” (208).
In four chapters of the book, Rossum examines Scalia’s opinions and writing in four areas of law: the separation of powers, federalism, substantive rights, and procedural rights. Parsing scores of opinions, Rossum argues that, with important exceptions, Scalia has been remarkably consistent to his judicial philosophy. For example, in separation of powers cases, an area Rossum calls “the mainspring of Scalia’s textualism,” Scalia has sought to protect the “rigid fences” separating the branches of government (52). By contrast, the “pragmatic, flexible” approach adopted by other members of the Court has allowed them to claim fidelity to the separation of powers while “winking” at the distortions of constitutional text and tradition they create. Against his colleagues’ “disregard for separation of powers,” Scalia has insisted “that the question of how governmental powers were to be co-mingled (and how much) was answered once and for all by the Framers . . .” (86–87). In other areas of law, too, Rossum argues that Scalia stands as the most consistent, sometimes the only member of the Court to interpret faithfully the text and tradition of the Constitution.

In a short concluding chapter, Rossum assesses Scalia’s impact. Using empirical data, Rossum argues that Scalia has been unable to build a coalition on the Court to support his textualist approach, because, Rossum asserts, “most of his colleagues chafe at and ultimately reject the constraints imposed by any coherent interpretive approach—including his [Scalia’s] textualism” (205). Scalia instead has tried to persuade the broader legal community and reach the next generation of lawyers. This strategy, Rossum argues, has succeeded, as Scalia’s opinions and ideas are more often included in law school case books and law journal articles than those of any of his colleagues.

There is much to like in this account of Scalia. Rossum carefully documents and explicates the main lines of Scalia’s judicial thought. He makes a convincing argument that Scalia has remained largely, although not always, consistent in adhering to his textualist vision. Like Scalia himself, however, Rossum seems blind to criticism of that vision and to powerful arguments against it. Scalia’s Federalist Society version of the separation of powers, for example, makes sense only if we grant his premise that the Framers intended to create airtight, hermetically sealed departments—a view soundly rejected by most constitutional historians such as Edward Corwin or Louis Fisher. There are other problems and contradictions in Scalia’s judicial philosophy. How does his textualism respond to the open-ended nature of so much constitutional text? How does his simplistic, majoritarian conception of democracy square with the Constitution’s clear rejection of such principles? Or how can Scalia’s insistence on textualism be reconciled with the doctrine of incorporation, his expansive view of free expression rights, his cham-
pioning of a textually unsupportable view of state sovereignty under the eleventh Amendment, or even his agreement with the *per curium* opinion in *Bush v. Gore* (2000)?

To his credit, Rossum recognizes many of these contradictions in Scalia’s thought, but his discussion too often glosses over their magnitude and gives short shrift to Scalia’s critics. Even when the contradictions are glaring, as is the case with Scalia’s acceptance of a textually unsupportable view of state sovereignty, Rossum tells us that Scalia’s departure from principle “offers an important insight: when Scalia fails to abide by this textualist premises, he ends up acting like the activist justice he routinely criticizes” (126). That Scalia’s “text and tradition” approach may itself be an engine of judicial activism, that Scalia’s departures from it in cases like *Bush v. Gore* or those involving state sovereignty may be driven by his desire to reach particular outcomes is not seriously considered by Rossum, nor, one presumes, by Scalia himself.

*Washington State University*

Cornell W. Clayton


The title accurately describes the book’s contents, a compilation of temperance song lyrics usually sung to borrowed tunes. The author supplements other works on this topic by providing the words for a large and systematic sampling of temperance songs. For the sake of comparison, he also supplies the original lyrics of the songs that the temperance reformers adapted. He organizes his book in six sections.

Temperance songwriters borrowed the melodies (and sometimes some of the words) from patriotic songs, hymns, Scottish songs, popular songs, and Civil War songs. Frequently there were many alternative temperance texts for the same borrowed tunes, which themselves often had been adapted from earlier music. For example, the melody of “The Star-Spangled Banner” came from an English song, “To Anacreon in Heaven.” Temperance versions include the “Defence of Fort Temperance,” Fanny Crosby’s “The Banner of Temperance,” and over a dozen others.

In addition to the texts of songs and four invaluable pages of temperance songbook titles, Paul D. Sanders provides a brief general introduction, as well as introductions to sections and individual songs and a general conclusion. From the
standpoint of historians, Sanders’s most important argument may be that “for any given tune, we are more likely to find coercive lyrics among the songs written later in the temperance movement, but suasive lyrics continued to appear as the movement evolved” (261). In other words, moral suasion survived the shift to prohibition enforced by the law.

Sanders’s knowledge of the American temperance movement and the scholarly literature about it is adequate despite occasional surprising slips. For example, Saratoga was not the birthplace of the Independent Order of Good Templars (4). What matters much more than such a petty error is Sanders’s impressive research on temperance song lyrics. He has produced a useful book that historians will exploit for many years.

Miami University

David M. Fahey


Maurice Rosenblatt [1915–2005] played an inside role in mobilizing the National Committee for an Effective Congress (NCEC) in the effort to bridle Joseph R. McCarthy in 1954. Shelby Scates has drawn on lengthy interviews with him. He also mined Rosenblatt’s private papers plus the extensive NCEC files now at the Library of Congress (but once open for research in the laundry room of the Washington brownstone that housed Rosenblatt’s varied activities).

Rosenblatt led a fascinating life. As a youth in Vienna, he witnessed the disorders of the interwar era. As a collegian he observed the late-1930s campus turmoil at the University of Wisconsin. When football players dunked two leftist professors in the lake, liberal voices were still; only the conservative Dean George Sellery denounced the act. What was the message? Right-wing excesses were best checked by conservatives. Rosenblatt soon applied this lesson while working (as a journalist) in New York City. Bundists and Coughlinites ruled the streets, but Gotham’s elders sat on their hands. Rosenblatt marshaled divinity students and others to hand out fliers preaching tolerance; they were set upon by toughs, and the ensuing headlines at last triggered the concern of the city’s elite. He thus learned “political jujitsu.”

After army service in World War II, Rosenblatt lobbied for a group seeking to found Israel as a nonsectarian state and for such private clients as nonscheduled airlines. In 1948 he helped establish the NCEC, which steered funds to liberal and internationalist Senate candidates.
The NCEC came to sense that its mission required neutralizing McCarthy. In the 1950 and 1952 elections, the Senator’s stump dramatics produced uproar enough to make his colleagues dread crossing him lest his campaigning defeat them as it seemingly had other critics. This fear constituted a key pillar of his power. The author overstates McCarthy’s might as an electoral bulldozer, but so then did Joe’s contemporaries. The book might have delved into NCEC efforts to deflate such perceptions of McCarthy’s electoral influence.

Rosenblatt saw that the solution lay in practical lobbying, as it was for a “God-damned power company,” and in rousing conservatives to the threat that McCarthy—more radical than conservative—posed to their institutions (89). Providentially, Senator Ralph Flanders of Vermont challenged him, providing the Republican cover needed to line up the Democrats. The NCEC’s services to this emergent opposition could have used more detailed treatment. Scates might have plumbed more deeply NCEC’s operating premises. They drew intellectual succor from Hannah Arendt’s Origins of Totalitarianism and William Bolitho’s essay on Catiline, and their strategy resembled the analysis in the essays of The New American Right, published in 1955.

The book is marred by errors and anachronisms. Also vexing at times are the digressions that its raconteurish approach embraces. An anecdote about how Unity Mitford’s dog once upended Hitler has only happenstance tying it to Rosenblatt and has nothing to do with McCarthy. Still, the book contains intriguing details, such as Rosenblatt’s effort to coach the pope on the McCarthy situation in late 1953, and it is good to have a biography of this obscure but important and captivating figure.

*University of Illinois at Chicago*

Richard M. Fried

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In Michael Moore’s Fahrenheit 9/11, Robert Brent Toplin explores the firestorm unleashed by this documentary. Toplin’s purpose is two-fold. First he revisits the film and the bitter feuds it ignited. Second he undertakes a reappraisal of Fahrenheit 9/11, asking whether it was a misguided piece of propaganda or a milestone in documentary filmmaking.

Toplin demonstrates that after the film’s release Bush supporters swiftly mounted a campaign targeting the credibility of the film and its director. These attacks focused on exposing the film’s inaccuracies and questioning Moore’s patriotism. The film’s critics were aided by the press, eager to take on the flamboyant Moore, and influential liberals, who, confronted with evidence that he had taken liberties with certain facts, abandoned the filmmaker and his movie.

Toplin concedes that Moore did make mistakes. For example, conservative pundits correctly pointed out that key Saudis were not whisked from the country during the post-9/11 no-fly period as Moore claimed. But Toplin maintains Moore’s detractors fixated on minor details, never countering the filmmaker’s central thesis that the Bush administration took America to war based on false pretenses. Although conservatives successfully undermined Moore’s reputation, they failed to prove that he was substantially wrong about the Iraq war.

Toplin then uses the historian’s tools to assess Fahrenheit 9/11’s validity. Praising the filmmaker’s use of primary sources, he judges Moore’s thesis as well-supported. He argues that evidence can be analyzed in a variety of ways and that Moore’s interpretation presents a “truth.” In many ways, this book centers in on the debate over historical objectivity; Toplin sides with those who hold that subjectivity is the unspoken reality of all attempts to document events, issues, or people whether it be through scholarly essays or documentary films. Toplin demonstrates that Moore’s work deviates little from the studies of the Iraq war made by respected scholars who have advanced similar arguments packaged in a less attractive form—academic books.

Additionally, Toplin insists that Moore forged new ground in documentary film. He places Fahrenheit 9/11 within the tradition of the “committed documentary,” a genre rooted in depression-era films that not only chronicled social problems but also advocated reform. Moore gives this a new twist, inserting himself as both the narrator of and humorous character in the film—techniques that allow him to communicate with a broad audience.

Toplin agrees with Moore’s analysis of the Bush Administration, and at times, the narrative stridently defends Fahrenheit 9/11. But Toplin writes with passion and compels historians to take a hard look at how they deliver their messages to the public. This engaging contribution to the literature on the American docu-
mentary tradition insists that partisanship in recounting both the past and present is, given historical discourses’ relativistic nature, inescapable and itself a fundamental “truth.”

California State University, San Marcos

Jill Watts

“Behind Bayonets”: The Civil War in Northern Ohio. By David Van Tassel, with John Vacha. (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2006. Pp. x, 125. $35.00.)

This thin volume provides a pleasant and informative look at what was going on in northern Ohio—primarily Cleveland—while the Civil War was raging hundreds of miles away. The project began as a museum exhibit at Cleveland’s Western Reserve Historical Society, and the book grew out of the catalog for that exhibit. David Van Tassel died before finishing the book, which was ably completed by John Vacha.

The account begins with a description of Cleveland on the eve of the war, a pleasant up-and-coming town at the mouth of the Cuyahoga River, where the chief matter of concern was balancing the citizens’ desire to maintain a clean, pleasant environment with their competing desire for the wealth produced by industry. Those who have seen the Cuyahoga in more recent times will recognize that industry won. Also on the minds of Clevelanders in 1860 was the growing national conflict over slavery and, in particular, the chief way in which slave-state law reached into free states: the Fugitive Slave Act. The act and its enforcement became the subject of several controversies, and celebrated court cases arose in Cleveland in the years immediately prior to the Civil War.

Like other Northerners, Cleveland residents rushed to enlist when war broke out. Those who stayed behind experienced the war on the home front. Despite the presence of a large and vocal abolitionist community in Cleveland and a solid Republican majority, the city on the lake also possessed numerous and equally vocal Democrats, whose local press organ was the Cleveland Plain Dealer. The newspaper, edited by Joseph W. Gray, spouted egregious racism and opposition to the Lincoln administration. This editorial policy made the paper so unpopular in Cleveland that it had been forced by economic necessity to suspend publication before the end of the war.

For many women on the home front, the war meant waiting for word of their menfolk in the army, and the authors present several touching examples from diaries and letters. Like many Northern cities, Cleveland sponsored a “sanitary fair”—a major fundraising event aimed at garnering funds to care for sick and wounded soldiers. Meanwhile business still thrived in Cleveland during the war, and some men made the beginnings of what would one day be great fortunes, most
notable among them, John D. Rockefeller. He and other highly successful businessmen began to line the city’s Euclid Avenue with their ostentatious mansions even while the armies were still fighting. It was along that same avenue, at war’s end, that the funeral procession of Abraham Lincoln marched, at one of many stops along the circuitous route of his body’s transport back to Springfield, Illinois.

Profusely illustrated and full of interesting facts, this book will be of use to students of the Civil War home front and of the history of Cleveland.

*Texas Christian University*  
Steven W. Woodworth


George Washington’s promotion of military discipline in the Continental army and his approval of exemplary, although infrequent, executions to serve as deterrents are well-known in the historiography of the American Revolution. Harry M. Ward’s book provides a valuable contribution to our understanding of how the commander-in-chief and his officers maintained even partial control over soldiers, despite supply shortages, arrears in pay, and high desertion rates. This study examines the various roles, responsibilities, and methods of duty personnel, guardsmen, and other individuals who policed the Continental army. It conveys their wide range of activities and circumstances, from catching stragglers to monitoring camp cleanliness; from permanent units, such as the provost guard and the Maréchaussée Corps (mounted constabulary), to temporary police patrols; from elite guards like Washington’s life guards to lowly drummers. Of the book’s sixteen brief chapters, most focus on a particular position and its responsibilities; distinct chapters cover generals’ guards, camp and quarter guards, picket men and safeguards, temporary police patrols, office of police, provost marshal, drummers and fifers, and executioners. Narrative accounts include richly detailed descriptions of the diurnal or nocturnal activities of the guards. Yet the reader may also be captivated by the intricate web of interactions between positions, that is, what lies conceptually between the chapters. Ward aptly demonstrates the multilayered, component parts of this extensive guard system that, he asserts, involved more than one-quarter of the Continental army. Unfortunately, the book ends with the chapter on executioners and so misses the opportunity for a conclusion that could have better emphasized the integrated whole: how the positions not only overlapped but intertwined to promote discipline and regularity.

Several ironies and inequities are explored. Revised regulations of the Continental army more closely approximated the British Articles of War. Enlisted
men faced harsher penalties than officers, and the incessant fear of brutal punishments was “the most objectionable aspect of service” (ix). Soldiers relinquishing their civilian rights upon entering the army found that “the military code of an army fighting for American liberty was grounded in the denying of liberty in military society” (30). For common soldiers, military justice could be swift and unfair, because it was concerned more with deterrence than with ensuring a fair legal process. Ward notes the increased military professionalism of the Continental army over time, but he does not attribute that phenomenon to the army’s success at policing and regulating disorderliness. Instead he contends that corporal punishment was “counterproductive” because it did not lower rates of desertion (164). Yet the efforts at policing the army and the use of severe punishments (floggings and executions), even if generally acknowledged to be less draconian than British practice, suggest a good deal about the nature of Revolutionary society. Capital punishment “underscored the low regard in which enlisted men were held by their officers and indeed by their countrymen” (197). These are all intriguing, suggestive arguments, even if the book’s chief significance still lies with its nuanced descriptions of the activities and responsibilities of guardsmen and other duty personnel.

University of Western Ontario  

Nancy L. Rhoden


At last there is a biography of Lyndon Baines Johnson worthy of the man. Using important new sources, such as the fascinating and often quite revealing presidential phone conversations, the author of this book provides far and away the best rounded and most persuasive portrait of a complex and controversial figure.

Nearly half of *Architect of American Ambition* deals with the prepresidential years. Without indulging in psychobabble, Randall Woods skillfully dissects the influence of Johnson’s mother and father. He explores the origins of the insatiable ambition, relentless drive, and instinctive political skills that marked the emerging political genius. He also exposes the glaring faults of the man: his sometimes ostentatious crudeness; his cruelty to those closest to him, including his wife Lady Bird; the abuse he heaped on aides; and an unstable psyche, marked by periods of exhilaration and depression. Here also one sees the emergence of Johnson’s burning desire to help the less fortunate and especially his aim to redeem the South by shaming it into extending full civil rights to African-Americans. A Texan himself, Woods is especially good at showing how Johnson was influenced by and in turn shaped the idiosyncratic political culture of that state.
Although an accidental president, LBJ compiled a record matched by few, if any, who have held that office. Exploiting the circumstances of his accession to power, his unique knowledge of the Congress, and his inestimable political skills, he drove himself and those around him without relent in 1964–1965 to secure landmark reform legislation. Woods argues persuasively that the Great Society did not die in Vietnam, pointing out that even as Johnson became increasingly burdened by budget problems and an unpopular war, he secured passage of major legislation dealing with federal funding for the arts and humanities, public radio and television, the environment, and fair housing.

LBJ least of all wanted to be a war president, but it was his misfortune to inherit a war that was probably unwinnable and that, by his own admission, he was ill-prepared temperamentally to conduct. Where others have stressed that Johnson felt compelled to escalate the war in Vietnam for reasons of national security and domestic politics, Woods emphasizes that his Christian idealism, his hope to extend to other nations the sort of goals he sought to achieve at home, was a driving force behind his fateful 1965 commitment. In an even more interesting bit of revisionism, Woods insists, without providing much evidence, that Johnson, in 1967, was prepared to negotiate with the National Liberation Front and even accept a coalition government in South Vietnam, a flexibility others have not found in his policies and that seems contradicted other places in these pages.

Thoroughly researched, rich in detail, acute in its analysis and insights, and admirably readable, Architect of Ambition is the best biography of a hugely important figure we are likely to have for many years to come.

George C. Herring

Asia and the Pacific

The OSS and Ho Chi Minh: Unexpected Allies in the War Against Japan. By Dixee Bartholomew-Feis. (Lawrence, Kans.: University Press of Kansas, 2006. Pp. x, 435. $34.95.)

In September 1945, in the last report that Office of Strategic Services officer Peter Dewey wrote before becoming the first American casualty of the wars in Vietnam, he warned his handlers in Washington, “Cochinchina is burning, the French and British are finished here, and we ought to clear out of Southeast Asia” (299). Most of the handful of Americans who worked for the OSS in Vietnam and along the border with China, as described by Dixee Bartholomew-Feis in her authoritative monograph, would have agreed with Dewey.
In her balanced study, Bartholomew-Feis traces the history of the connections between American intelligence operatives and the Viet Minh, some of which played at least a minor role in the ultimate success of Ho Chi Minh’s revolution in 1945. Based upon her dissertation, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh* now becomes the single best source for studying this relationship. In addition to her work with U.S. documents, Bartholomew-Feis enriches her narrative considerably with fascinating material from interviews she conducted with several colorful veterans of the OSS mission. She did not, however, employ Vietnamese-language sources for whatever information they might have provided.

But that is a minor quibble considering the imaginative and thorough research she conducted in English, as well as French, to tell her very complicated story. One major complication was apparently that the Washington bureaucracies did not know there was a war going on. As if the American operatives did not have enough problems with their British, French, and Chinese counterparts, who seemed to work at cross purposes with them and one another, they had to deal with the internecine political warfare between the OSS and the Navy. At times the bureaucratic infighting seems to be more central to the author’s story than the actual accounts of derring-do in the field.

Bartholomew-Feis carefully explains the sort of communications and small-weapons training given to the Viet Minh by American agents, how a U.S. medic’s intervention may have saved Ho’s life, and especially, whatever he may really have thought of Washington, how Ho used his intimacy with Americans to improve his status among rivals for leadership of the insurgency. Here readers will discover that Anna Chennault was not the only Chennault to play a role in the Vietnam War.

Like most historians who try to understand Ho, the author finds it difficult to conclude with any degree of authority whether he really did admire the United States or was just using Washington’s envoys against the French, Chinese, and Japanese. However, Bartholomew-Feis is able to demonstrate convincingly that almost all Americans with whom he came into contact admired him, a few even considered him a close friend, and that they had good reasons to adopt that position. And as Bartholomew-Feis tells us repeatedly, William Donovan’s pragmatic OSS, which had few problems working with members of the communist underground, was essentially run and staffed by rather conservative people.

Full of intriguing what-might-have-beens, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh* is a significant contribution to our understanding of U.S. involvement in Vietnam during World War II and the months after V-J Day.

*Wayne State University*  
*Melvin Small*
When confronted with the information that a man he had recommended for office based upon his poetry had accepted bribes, the statesman and literatus Ouyang Xiu was forced to concede: “That’s how unreliable poetry is” (104). As Ronald Egan makes clear in his impressive and groundbreaking book, *The Problem of Beauty*, eleventh-century Chinese thinkers found it extremely difficult to reconcile their interest in aesthetically pleasing works with the serious moral mission of the educated gentleman. If a bad person could produce good poetry, painting, or calligraphy, then beauty itself existed outside of the moral realm and could not serve a serious moral purpose. Northern Song literati struggled to collect and produce artistic works without compromising their own moral position.

Egan succeeds admirably in opening up a new field of study within Chinese history, not aesthetic theory in the abstract, or the history of literature or art by themselves, but the cultural history of aesthetic appreciation in China. This spans everything from Ouyang Xiu’s collection of old stele inscriptions for their calligraphic value, to his discussion of flowers, and on to Su Shi’s development of *ci* poetry into a more acceptable form. Along the way, Egan illuminates many surprisingly unstudied or understudied areas of Chinese history, like Ouyang Xiu’s *Collected Records of the Past* (*Jigu lu*), for which he is now known as the father of Chinese epigraphy. What is most compelling about Egan’s discussion is the overwhelming importance of a very few prominent men, usually writing against the mainstream and at great personal cost, shaping the aesthetic sensibilities of their own time and for the subsequent millennium.

In undertaking such a pioneering task, Egan, out of necessity, tends to open more doors than he closes. He refers, for example, to Ouyang Xiu’s letter to his friend, the famous calligrapher Cai Xiang, requesting his calligraphy for the preface to the *Collected Records of the Past*, in which he downplays the content’s historical values, without mentioning Cai’s reply, in which Cai takes the diametrically opposite position, asserting the content’s historical value over the aesthetic value his own calligraphy could bring to such a collection. Indeed, Cai famously asserted the primacy of his role as official over that of calligrapher in that reply, amply demonstrating the currents of thought against which Ouyang had to struggle. Yet this also raises the intriguing question of what role Cai played in Ouyang’s changing values with respect to calligraphy, particularly because Ouyang repeatedly used Cai’s authority in this area to legitimize his own opinions.
This is not, however, a book for the nonspecialist. Someone unfamiliar with Northern Song history and culture would understand that something important happened in the eleventh century, but not why this was so, even why it could happen at that time, and the larger significance of that change. One can only note this fact in passing without having the temerity to criticize such a fine book.

Vanderbilt University

Peter Lorge


Writing in the New Republic, the author of this book commented recently on “the paths available to nations coping with the grim and often sanguinary legacies of communism . . . . And then there is the Chinese way,” he says: “Change everything, admit nothing.” John Gittings provides the antidote to this silence from Beijing in this excellent book. He successfully addresses exactly how and why China has changed everything over the last forty years.

The dust jacket of Gittings’s book features a perfectly emblematic, if strangely disturbing, photograph of a young woman who, with the assistance of a copious amount of peroxide and some only partially successful cosmetic surgery, has, indeed, changed her face. The result is a face that is neither Chinese nor Western. The same is true, Gittings suggests, of contemporary China.

Gittings is especially well equipped to tell this story. His first visit to China took place thirty-six years ago, and he has been writing and reporting about the People’s Republic throughout that period. This book, which is described on the flyleaf as in part an updating of his 1989 book, China Changes Face, begins with a chapter subtitled “The new ‘New China’” in which he contrasts the “new China” brought into being with the socialist transformation of the political and economic systems in the country in the first decade after the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949 with the “new China” of today. He writes, “China’s features are no longer confused: state socialism has become state capitalism” (3).

Like Tom Bissell, Gittings is disturbed at what he sees as the current tendency among Chinese leaders to treat today’s China as though it had sprung full-blown from the brow of Deng Xiaoping (or perhaps that of Deng’s successor, Jiang Zemin). Although Mao Zedong has not been repudiated, he, his sixty-year career, and the earth-shattering changes he brought about are currently submitted to benign neglect—the tendency to “admit nothing” of which Bissell speaks. Unlike one or two recent books that treat Mao as profoundly evil, unremittingly self-seeking, and totally devoid of a broader vision for China, Gittings asks us to take
a second look at the man and his ideas. He makes a persuasive case that contemporary China can only be understood correctly when seen as the product of its history—particularly the last half-century of that history.

But Gittings has not set about writing a book about China’s leaders. Indeed, it is difficult to get a clear picture of Mao or, more importantly, of Deng from this book. Rather, it is a book about how the remarkable changes in the country have affected the Chinese people. And here Gittings’s experience as a reporter serves us well. The book is larded with personal stories and personal accounts of how people’s lives have been changed by the events through which they have lived.

If there is a shortcoming in the book as an introduction to contemporary China for the general reader, it is the author’s decision to intersperse chronology with a thematic approach to his story. Moving generally forward from the founding of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921, the text loops back on itself to explore more deeply instances of rebellion, economic transformation, political conflict among party leaders, intellectual dissent, and China’s relations with the outside world. This minor shortcoming aside, The Changing Face of China provides a wonderfully written rich tapestry of a nation in which everything has changed and is likely to continue to change.

Yale University

John Bryan Starr


This collection is the long-awaited compilation of new and previously published articles by Craig J. Reynolds, one of the leading historians of Thailand and Southeast Asia. The eleven historically rich chapters are divided into four sections, which cover the history of Southeast Asia as a region, the politically seditious side of Thailand’s history and historiography, Thailand’s cultural history, and the meanings of the term “globalization” and its predecessors. Several themes running through the volume distinguish Reynolds’s scholarship as unique.

For example, Reynolds’s work vigorously queries the construction of knowledge within its cultural and historical contexts. In other words, he asks not just what we can know about Southeast Asian and Thai history but how we can know it from our various historical and cultural distances. All chapters are characterized by this acute analysis of historiographical issues. A molten density of heat and light mark Reynolds’s work when he discusses the relationship between the context of writing history and the substance of that written narrative, making him a historian’s historian. This enlivening approach to knowledge construction has ensured that his
articles, written between 1973 and 2006, have withstood the test of time to become mainstays of the scholarship on the region and on Thailand in particular. Another theme that Reynolds addresses is the tension between what is understood as local knowledge and foreign knowledge, the relative privileging of which depends on historical circumstances. In chapters one and two, he critically addresses the scholarship on premodern Southeast Asia, which argues that the ability by Southeast Asians to adapt outside influences and incorporate them as local know-how characterizes and unifies the region as a whole. In Reynolds’s chapter on Thai manual knowledge, we learn that foreign know-how was favored during the period of high imperialism, but that local or “indigenous” knowledge has dominated since the 1980s, as a result of the impact of globalization.

The skillful utilization of a seemingly all-encompassing source base similarly marks the entire volume. Reynolds valuably combines an analysis of Thai-language primary sources, secondary literature written by leading Thai and foreign scholars, and concrete historical examples elucidated within their contexts. This is a hallmark of Reynolds’s contribution as a scholar of Thailand. For impressive demonstrations of this, sample the eight chapters that comprise the volume’s second and third sections, which explore, respectively, critical histories of Thailand that challenged military and royal state authorities, and cultural histories on gender, Buddhism, and the transmission of moral and practical knowledge. Reynolds’s dispassionate elucidation of one Thai elite’s document defending polygyny in the late nineteenth century remains essential reading on the topic. Moreover, his chapter on Thai manual knowledge demonstrates Reynolds’s masterful skills in utilizing primary and secondary literature in Thai and English. Manual knowledge refers to historical materials—folk handbooks, cosmographies, chronicles, manifestos, and so on—that have encoded moral, ethical, and practical information. He interrogates these sources for what they may reveal about the culture of authority in Thai knowledge production.

Deeply introspective, yet conceptually broad, Seditious Histories is essential reading for scholars and students of Southeast Asia and Thai Studies.

 Cornwell University
Tamara Loos

The author of this book is a much-respected New Zealand anthropologist who has studied the peoples of the Pacific, usually concentrating on the cultural contact


The author of this book is a much-respected New Zealand anthropologist who has studied the peoples of the Pacific, usually concentrating on the cultural contact
between those people, especially the Māori, and later visitors from Europe. In this new book, she presents valuable insights on how these people regarded the arrival of James Cook, the eighteenth-century British explorer, in their midst, and offers her opinions on the reasons that led, ultimately, to Cook’s death in Hawaii in 1779.

Since the 1970s, when J.C. Beaglehole wrote his biography of Cook, there has been a shift in attitudes toward him and how he is regarded in Pacific history. Postcolonial viewpoints have come to the fore. The people of the Pacific, especially native Hawaiians, New Zealand Māori, and Australian Aborigines, have begun to voice their opinions, and they are not always complimentary toward Cook. Before now, most works on the explorer have largely ignored that Pacific perspective, and local people have enjoyed an incidental role in texts.

Anne Salmond’s book is neither a biography of Cook nor a narrative of his voyages. Instead, it provides a reassessment of Cook and his voyages in light of recent research and viewpoints. Cook and his men viewed Polynesian societies through European eyes and largely failed to understand them. Salmond details the complicated structures and hierarchies that existed in Tahiti and Hawaii at the time and shows how they influenced the response to the arrival of strangers, explaining many of the interactions from that viewpoint. She looks carefully at Cook’s own behavior and how that changed over his three voyages. Cook’s record on discipline of his crews is also discussed and used as evidence of Cook’s developing state of mind.

For two hundred years after his death Cook was a hero of British history, but in recent years several writers have sought to show Cook as an invader who brought disease, death, and poverty to the Pacific. The author records those negative aspects while still acknowledging Cook’s great achievements in navigation and cartography and the scientific knowledge generated through his voyages. She accepts that he was a man of his times, influenced by his own upbringing and the prevalent attitudes of the late eighteenth century. Cook’s suitability for taking charge of his third and final voyage is discussed, as is his physical and mental wellness through that voyage and its contribution to his death. The author details how Cook forged a close and complicated relationship with Pacific peoples and how he was influenced and modified by those experiences, for which he had little or no training. In the end though, the breakdown of that relationship was one of the major contributions to his death.

Too many poor books have been written about James Cook, so it is refreshing to find this book offering new insights into the explorer and his exploits. Salmond has written an eminently readable book that adds considerably to our
knowledge and understanding of Cook and his relationship with the people of the Pacific.

University of Waikato

John Robson

**Europe**


It is perhaps understandable that books that delve into the historical origins of political violence have no difficulty attracting readers. The state-induced terrors of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries seem to cry out for explanation. In this large and well-presented book, David Andress tackles modern history’s first prototype terror: the attempt by the French Republic between 1792 and 1794 to enforce obedience upon an entire population in the name of freedom, equality, and justice. Numerous books have already been devoted to this seminal episode, but they have mostly been written by, and for, professional historians. Andress’s book is written for a wider audience, yet with a command of the subject matter that only a specialist can demonstrate. The result is a book eminently suited to the needs of the general reader. In the experience of this reviewer, it meets the needs of college and university students as well. The author tells the story of the civil emergency that gave rise to the Terror in France as part of a wider narrative of the political history of how the Bourbon kingdom succumbed to revolution. Although the focus is on the process by which the liberties of French men and women were savagely curtailed from the summer of 1792 onwards, the book might easily double as a general history of the French Revolution. The author relies on fluent and frequently vivid narrative, for this is essentially a blow-by-blow account of the gestation of the Terror. The explanation of how France came to this extremity is largely implicit in the narrative. There is little, if any, discussion of the existing secondary literature on the Terror, and when, at the end of the book, the author pauses to reflect on what today’s generation can learn from an understanding of the French Revolutionary Terror, his remarks are perfunctory.

This uncluttered and unproblematized approach to the subject makes for easy reading. But it will leave some readers less than satisfied, as the book’s dust jacket claims that the author offers a “a radically different account of the Terror,” which amounts to a “trenchant reassessment.” Neither of these claims is borne out by the text, unless it can be argued that Andress’s suggestion that the Terror should be understood as a species of civil war amounts to a new
interpretation. Many specialists would question this verdict in any case, because it overlooks the large areas of Revolutionary France in which the Terror was not especially “terrible.” Yet the fact that the book does not quite deliver on all fronts should not be allowed to detract from its very real merits as a spirited narrative account, which contains some powerfully evocative vignettes. His description of the King’s flight and recapture in 1791 or the prison massacres of 1792 will linger in the minds of readers long after the debates between historians have moved on.

University of Birmingham

P. M. Jones


This is a book written by an aeronautical engineer, and it shows, for better and for worse. If you are a specialist or military enthusiast looking for technical analyses, this book may be for you. But if you are a generalist looking for a well-constructed, well-written introduction to World War I air combat, then there may be better options.

Gunning for the Red Baron is a catchy title that builds on the author’s earlier Three Wings for the Red Baron and connotes a straightforward primer on WWI aerial combat. The publisher’s blurb elaborates that this “richly illustrated” volume “explains why aim was so notoriously bad” and then culminates with “detailed insight into the mechanics of air warfare [that] allows him to reach some startling conclusions about . . . what finally brought the Red Baron down.”

All of that is true, except perhaps the publisher’s “startling” choice of adjectives. Leon Bennett does indeed provide “detailed insight” into the odds of an airman being hit by ground-based fire (thought to be roughly one in two hundred before the war but recalculated during the war to be perhaps as high as one in eight), why machine guns predominated (the best of bad options), what problems confronted airmen in using those weapons (jams, reloading difficulties, aim corrections, optical illusions, and poor gun sights), what planes were “the best” and why (overall, the British Camel and SE5a), and finally why kill totals by WWI aces could have been much higher (Richthofen’s eighty still well short of Bennett’s estimated “maximum” of 120). Specialists will likely be fascinated by the technical explanations for each of these conclusions.

The general reader, however, should probably just peruse the sequential summary paragraphs at the end of the book and maybe page through the “rich”
Illustrations. Anything more would expose some of the vices of Bennett’s virtues. Although his engineering perspective prompts valuable lines of analysis, his engineering writing style tends toward lists and formulaic constructions. Rather than a book, this is more a series of “Consumer Reports” articles on why one should purchase a “Camel biplane with twin front-mounted Vickers machine guns guided by an Aldis optical sight.” Certainly informational but hardly an inspiring read.

One also senses that the manuscript has been “stretched” to get over the two-hundred-page mark. Why such repetition in the questions asked and answers given? And why such wide margins?

Occasional attempts to spice up the vocabulary will not impress the general reader either. Do we really need to know from the acknowledgments page, for example, that the workers at the Public Record Office were “plucky,” or that Bennett’s writing process was “faltering” until his wife guided him, and with “gusto” no less? That Bennett doffs his hat to the Red Baron for being a model citizen in this “mad world”?

If you can overlook the prolix, purple prose, however, and if you are a specialist or enthusiast interested in the aeronautical fine points of WWI air combat, Bennett provides a useful and insightful guide.

*John Brown University*  
Edward E. Ericson III


This volume devoted to a study of Mussolini’s Italy should be of particular interest to professional historians. It speaks to the nature of what historians are understood to be doing when they practice their art.

In substance, R. J. B. Bosworth’s book is a mordant, unrelenting, and unforgiving critique of an “incompetent,” “corrupt” political regime that ruled Italy under a venal, ignorant, “superficial,” and “hollow” opportunist. An opportunist who, contemptuous of his fellow human beings and surrounded by a “motley crew” while intoning what he thought his “wealthy readers” wished to hear, succeeded in seizing power in Italy with “henchmen.” These included “socialist killers” like Italo Balbo, as well as “paranoids” and “cretins” like Fascist Party secretaries Giovanni Giuriati and Achille Starace, together with “social climbers” and “brutes” like Renato Ricci, Ardengo Soffici, and Roberto Farinacci. Others, like Dino Grandi, were simply “serpentine.” The account never varies. Under the “tyranny” of that “savage,” “violent,” “aggressive,” “meretricious,” “vile,” and
“evil” system, its followers “enjoyed” “sacking and burning” so much that even the idealist philosopher Giovanni Gentile—considered by so many to be humane and civil—was rendered “brutal.”

The regime succeeded at absolutely nothing (neither in running the trains on time, nor the draining of the Pontine marshes, nor road building, nor in efforts to reduce the incidence of tuberculosis or malaria, nor in the provision of perinatal assistance for mothers). Fascism was an abject, absolute, and irremediable failure.

Professional historians may be somewhat surprised by such unqualified judgments. After all, the picture of Fascist rule left us by Renzo De Felice was considerably different. Any such concern is quickly mollified. Elsewhere Bosworth tells us that De Felice wrote as he did about the fascist regime because, as an “archival historian,” he “rarely displayed an interest in methodological questions.” Because of his indifference to methodology, De Felice imagined himself a “neo-Rankean,” reporting “what actually happened in the past.” De Felice did not know that “ultimately historical interpretation is directly related to changes in contemporary politics and society.” Totally unaware of his own “conservative and even nationalist” bias, De Felice put together his own history of fascism. While perhaps unconscious of his prevailing bias, he must have been aware of the fact that “powerful conservative backers both within Italy and the United States” were lending him critical assistance in order to make him an internationally celebrated historian. Thus, with a nod in the direction of postmodernists like Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, Bosworth seems to account for the discrepancies in the different accounts of “the Italian dictatorship” as he did in his earlier study, *The Italian Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives in the Interpretation of Mussolini and Fascism* (London: Arnold, 1998).

Should all that seem credible, professional historians and students of history are left with the question of how one might determine—of all the available interpretations of a tortured period in the twentieth century—what might be considered a “truer” rendering? Or does such a question have any meaning at all in our time?

University of California, Berkeley

A. James Gregor


In 1504 Columbus’s caravel, *Vizcaína*, sank near the coast of Panama. Is the wreck recently found in the waters near Nombre de Dios the remains of that ship? The question is important because none of Columbus’s ships have ever been
recovered. The authors, investigative journalists for Der Spiegel magazine, offer meticulous descriptions of how marine archeologists, scientists, and historians have attempted to authenticate and salvage the discovery. They also provide a fascinating analysis of the endeavor’s political context. One conclusion readers may draw from this narrative is that the story’s extraordinary cast of characters, including politicians, entrepreneurs, and treasure hunters, is at least as interesting as marine archeology itself. Consider Nina Vásquez, who studied journalism at Florida State University and who became a real estate agent in Nombre de Dios and the owner of a dive center called Diver’s Haven. Her motto is “Everything has its price” (18). Together with her son, she founded a small company, Investigaciones Marians del Istmo (IMDI), to assert their claim to all wrecks discovered in Panamanian waters. The authors contend that Vásquez and her son wanted to exploit the wreck for maximum financial gain.

This investigation into the ship’s identity ends without resolution. Negotiations between the representatives of IMDI—a “treasure-hunting company” and Felipe Castro, a scholar at Texas A&M and a leader in the attempt to authenticate the discovery, collapsed (202). When this book went to press, the Supreme Court of Panama was considering the case; on September 19, 2005, the director general of Panama’s National Cultural Institute informed Texas A&M that it would not receive permits to explore or excavate the site. The authors conclude that “it is uncertain when or whether the judges will hand down a ruling” and “the wreck that has been lying in the bay of Nombre de Dios for five hundred years will lie there for a while longer” (283, 284).

At the end of the first chapter, the authors argue that “[t]he fate of the Vizcaïna reflects the mysteries that continue to swirl around Columbus himself” (31). At this point they change the direction of the narrative and tell the story of Columbus’s life and enterprise. The Vizcaïna does not reappear until chapter seven. Readers already knowledgeable about Columbus will find nothing new here, others will find this part of the book informative and interesting. Particular note should be made of the “truths about Columbus” attributed to Stuart Schwartz (195–197).

Professional historians will regret the lack of citations, even for direct quotations, and the barebones bibliography. All readers will enjoy the authors’ energetic prose, retained in an excellent translation, and their detailed descriptions of the present-day condition of Columbus’s sites. At the monastery at Huelva, for example, there is a “Columbus theme park” where replicas of the Santa María, the Niña, and the Pinta sail in a pond. “These replicas have steel masts and synthetic fairleads. Plastic turtles float in the water while unclothed plastic Indians stand on
the edge of the pond with plastic fish hanging from their fishing poles” (82). Unfortunately, the book includes no illustrations.

Washington State University

Roger Schlesinger


This author brings together an impressive synthesis of research that he has published in various forms for more than a decade concerning the period of the Directory and the difficulty of bringing the French Revolution to an end. For Howard G. Brown, the problem lay primarily in the legacy of domestic violence left by the Terror and by the creation of a culture of violence, instability, and fear throughout society. To end the Revolution meant bringing this violence under control and establishing a regime that could assure law, order, and security. In Brown’s analysis, this achievement did not occur until 1802 with the establishment of the Constitution of the Year X.

To assess efforts to establish law and order during the Directory and early Consulate, Brown focuses on the criminal justice system in four regions of France, examining the kind of criminal activity that came before the courts, the nature of the judicial process, and the resulting pattern of convictions or acquittals. This close look at the workings of local courts, their officers, and their juries reveals the actual difficulty of interpreting and implementing the laws concerning refractory priests, émigrés, brigands, terrorists, and “anarchists.” To compound the problem, laws and lawmakers changed, most significantly with the coup of Fructidor 1797, which Brown sees as far more important than the Brumaire coup of 1799 that brought Napoleon into power. After Fructidor, the Directory increased its repressive tactics to include military courts and a Gendarmerie Nationale largely free from local civilian authorities. Here was the beginning of “liberal authoritarianism” that culminated in the constitution of 1802. This “modern security state” gained its legitimacy not from constitutional principles but from the fact that it met an increasing public demand for domestic security (358). Protecting the constitution was no longer as important as protecting public safety.

Brown’s thesis is large and well-argued, as well as based on archival records and an extensive bibliography. His discussion of “The Economy of Violence” in chapter two is both theoretical and graphic, particularly in its description of brigandage. A series of charts analyze crimes and punishments, and Brown is equally deft in presenting his insights with the well-wrought phrase or the evocative
metaphor. Thermidarians thought religion should “be kept quiet, dull, and indoors.” Royalists and chouans were like oil and vinegar, producing a “rich savor” when properly mixed, but with a “natural tendency to separate” (240). This combination of information, interpretation, and individual case studies will be useful to specialists and nonspecialists. The sections on the National Guard, the Gendarmerie Nationale, and the Chouannerie are particularly helpful. The fascinating example of a protracted southern family feud illustrates the complex mix of local rivalries, criminal activity, judicial proceedings, and military intervention that constituted the dilemma of law and order under the Directory. In such circumstances, Brown argues, only a Hobbesian solution could end the French Revolution.

*Armstrong Atlantic State University*

Janet D. Stone


The first National Socialist killing program consumed Germany’s long-term institutionalized mentally ill and handicapped. After the war, perpetrators of the euthanasia program were tried in American military tribunals and in reconstituted West German courts. Using trial transcripts and verdicts, Michael S. Bryant tells how judicial values and perspectives changed dramatically over eight years, initially producing convictions followed by stiff sentences, then convictions with lighter penalties in the late 1940s, and finally acquittals in the early 1950s.

Bryant’s discussion is divided into an introduction, five chapters, and a conclusion. The introduction outlines Bryant’s argument followed by a concise and thorough review of the euthanasia program in chapter one. Subsequent chapters focus on the United States euthanasia trials, 1945–1947, and on German trials, 1946–1953. In the case of the former, Bryant argues that long-standing American opposition to the establishment of supranational institutions that could undercut American sovereignty led to the decision to categorize all Nazi crimes as facets of the Nazi war of aggression, drawing little distinction between the grand conspirators and functionaries. This American concern was at the heart of judicial proceedings that blurred the distinctions between war crimes and crimes against humanity. “The effect was not only to obscure the origins of Nazi euthanasia by over-identifying it with military conquest but, in some cases, to invert the usual presumption of innocence in U.S. criminal trials” (3).

Bryant then argues that German weariness with continual references to Nazi atrocities, the emergence of the Cold War, and the drive to regain sovereignty in the late 1940s weakened the will to punish accused war criminals and to
presume “the innocence of euthanasia defendants, despite voluminous evidence against them” (3). From the very start, the dilemma of *ex post facto* laws troubled the Germans more than the Americans. A solution was to emphasize natural law, assuming that all people should know that these actions violated universal morality. In capital cases, German law distinguishes between accomplices and perpetrators by assessing intent and authority. As time passed, German courts increasingly ruled that defendants could not have known that their actions were illegal and accepted arguments that defendants remained in their posts in order to subvert the euthanasia program, thereby preventing even worse crimes. After 1950, courts acquitted defendants in cases very similar to those where defendants were convicted and sentenced to death a few years earlier.

Bryant’s study is clearly organized, cogently argued, and crisply phrased. His regular introductions and summaries render his arguments accessible to virtually any reader. One might wonder whether the return to the bench of former officials from the Third Reich after the 1949 amnesty affected the trend toward leniency, but such an avenue of inquiry is clearly beyond Bryant’s parameters. Beyond Bryant’s central story, though, this study also gives the reader another way to view Germany emerging from the ruins of the Third Reich and Germans grappling with their immediate past. At the end of this fine book, the reader is amazed and appalled by the acquittals of men and women who obviously killed their charges.

*Hanover College*  
Larry Thornton


After the flood of new biographies and other types of books in 1991, the two-hundredth anniversary of Mozart’s death, one may have thought the tide would abate. It has not. They have continued to be published at a rate of about a dozen per year, and in the next Mozart year, 2006, a staggering one hundred new books appeared. With this tidal wave, is there anything new to be said about Mozart?

Another book on Mozart’s operas, particularly those of his last ten years, will surprise us, especially as no phase of Mozart’s life and work has been more thoroughly scrutinized. Throughout the book, David Cairns liberally quotes some of the notable Mozart specialists, especially Daniel Heartz, H. C. Robbins Landon, Charles Rosen, Julian Rushton, and Nicholas Till. He even gives us a list
of works cited, perhaps a practical necessity, but from this list the absences of equally notable works are conspicuous.

The greatest strength of Cairns’s book lies in his enthusiasm for the subject. He clearly loves the works he discusses, and his passion reveals itself in his writing. To a large extent the reader is carried along by his fervor, sharing the enjoyment of his descriptions of memorable moments in the operas. Mozart’s great sense of humanity comes through, and we can savor this at every turn. For those who know the operas well, though, this may not be enough. The world has seldom seen anyone with as subtle and agile a mind as that of Mozart, and one detects only a limited amount of that in this study. Cairns occasionally acknowledges Mozart’s use of irony, but he seldom sees the full extent of it.

Of Le nozze di Figaro, he argues that the sense of sadness in the Countess’s music near the end should not prevent us from hearing genuine reconciliation in the celebration, but considering the irony that comes at the close of all of the operas in question, his case is weak. In Don Giovanni, the music Mozart inflicts on the singers of the moral in the finale, preceded by a vaudeville, makes them sound foolish, and in Die Zauberflöte the music for the queen and Papageno gives them a clear edge over Tamino and Sarastro. None of the political and personal subtleties of La clemenza di Tito emerge in this book; because of the music, that opera turns out to be more about Vitellia’s resolve than Sesto or Tito’s clemency. Cairns objects to Edward Dent’s view of Idomeneo, but his discussion does not convince us of Dent’s errors.

Cairns quotes many of Mozart’s letters, especially those to his father, and here he discovers no sense of subtlety. These letters are almost always strategic, used by Mozart to diminish his father’s influence, but Cairns prefers a straightforward, naïve reading of them. In the end, he paints a picture of an enlightened humanist, not of the brilliantly complex figure that Mozart embodies.

Dalhousie University

David Schroeder


Nicholas of Cusa is not an easy read, and this collection of papers approaching his work from fresh angles, given at a conference to commemorate the sixth centenary of his birth, forms a welcome addition to the modern scholarly literature.

The papers are grouped thematically, beginning with theological topics. Nancy Hudson and Frank Tobin discuss “Nicholas of Cusa’s Sermon on the Pater Noster,” which survives in the vernacular in seven manuscripts and a single manuscript with
a Latin version. The authors provide useful insights into the degree to which vernacular preaching followed the prescribed patterns of Latin preaching.

Bernard McGinn’s “Seeing and Not Seeing” seeks to place the De Visione Dei in the history of Western mysticism. Jasper Hopkins returns to the question of “Nicholas of Cusa’s intellectual relationship to Anselm of Canterbury,” for Nicholas had undoubtedly read Anselm and there have long been interesting problems about what exactly Nicholas made of him. Louis Dupré tackles “The question of pantheism from Eckhart to Cusanus.” Wilhelm Dupré, writing on “The image of the living God,” considers Nicholas’s ideas on “perfection.” The treatment of all these themes is much stimulated by the authors’ awareness of the challenges presented by Nicholas’s unusual views on a number of common preoccupations of thinkers of his time.

The collection then moves to the spatial and visual and to symbolism. Karsten Harries writes “On the power and poverty of perspective”; Walter Andreas Euler on “An Italian Painting from the late fifteenth century and the Cribratio alkorani of Nicholas of Cusa” (because another of the unusual things about Nicholas of Cusa was his interest in the Koran). Il Kim adds “A brief report on the painting of three haloed figures.”

The next group of papers deals with politics in church and state. These are important aspects of Nicholas of Cusa’s work. He was much involved in practical politics. He was at the Council of Basle (1435–1437) and various imperial diets, a member of legations to Germany and the Netherlands, and involved in reform in the Tyrol. In the De Concordantia Catholica he argues for a single empire, on the principle that such rule is the holiest as well as the highest, when systematically compared with all others, from the way the Tartars govern themselves at one extreme, to the near-miss of Christian kingship. Nicholas accepted the notion of a territorially limited jurisdiction. An emperor’s writ runs only in his own empire. On all this there are valuable insights in Thomas Prügl’s “The concept of infallibility in Nicholas of Cusa,” Cary J. Nederman’s “Empire Meets Nation: Imperial Authority and National Government in Renaissance Political Thought,” and Paul E. Sigmund’s “Medieval and Modern Constitutionalism.”

The last two papers look at mathematical and cosmological questions. Elizabeth Brient asks “How can the infinite be the measure of the finite?” and Regine Kather considers “The earth as a noble star.”

This is a lively and at times exciting collection that makes a useful contribution to relieving modern “learned ignorance” about its subject.

University of Cambridge

G. R. Evans
In the Spring of 1761, just before resigning as abbess of the Convent of La Purísima Concepción of San Miguel el Grande, María Antonia del Santísimo Sacramento related that “this convent is transformed into a hell of lies and factions.” The struggle between the reformist faction, which imposed a severe austerity, and the rebellious faction, which wanted a “relaxed” observation of the Conceptionist rule, lies at the heart of Margaret Chowning’s wonderful new book, aptly titled *Rebellious Nuns*. Chowning brings together a close eye for psychological motive, ideological confrontation, and radically different visions of the proper role of religion and of the cloistered life in this engaging study of one of the late colonial period’s most noted convents.

La Purísima was founded in 1754. The idea behind the foundation was to bring prestige to San Miguel, a middling city rivaling Querétaro. The wealthy Creole benefactors and the “founding” nuns drawn from the large Regina Coeli convent in Mexico City saw in its foundation the chance to establish a reformed convent as well as to show the rest of New Spain that San Miguel was an important city. At the heart of the ideological struggle, which Chowning deftly outlines, was the question of the *vida común*. In theory, nuns were to be strictly cloistered, subjected to a communal life where no one nun enjoyed the perquisites of the upper class and status that a wealthy woman on the outside would, like the possession of servants and exemption from manual labor. A strictly “reformed” convent insisted that nuns follow a demanding schedule of reflection, prayer, discipline (both mental and physical, in the form of fasting and abnegation of the flesh), silence, and lack of contact with the outside world. But in practice most convents in the colonial period practiced a “relaxed” rule, which mitigated many of the stricter aspects of the *vida común* and allowed wealthier nuns to bring servants, slaves, and personal belongings to the convent and to avoid the more physically taxing aspects of the rule.

From the beginning of its foundation, La Purísima in San Miguel was split between the reformers and the “rebels”—nuns who wanted a relaxation of the rule. This rebellion forms the heart of the book. Chowning relies on a rich collection of material that details this rebellion, and the result is a story that is at once about personal rivalries as much as it is about theology. For example, one nun, Cayetana de las Llagas, attempted suicide and blamed the harsh application of the rule by the reformist abbess for it. But the rebellion by the nuns who wanted to relax the rule was also about ideology. In one of the findings most likely to stir...
discussion and debate, Chowning argues that Enlightenment ideology percolated through society and into the collective consciousness of the nuns. Thus the nuns calling for rebellion against the harsh reformers drew on Enlightenment discourse of rationale, reason, and the rights of sentient beings. But this rebellion took place within a larger trend in Mexican religious history, moving away from a kind of elaborate baroque ostentation and toward a more internal, almost Erasmian, spirituality. Chowning identifies the rebellion in La Purísima as part of this broader trend toward inner-reflecting spirituality.

In addition to Chowning’s masterful use of documentation and discussion of the debate about the nature of convents, she offers an engaging book—one that is a pleasure to peruse and that reads at times like a detective novel. Historians of colonial and modern Mexico, as well as students, will delight at a book rich in descriptive detail (we see the nuns sipping their morning chocolate while simultaneously wracked with turmoil over the question of their salvation). The care with which Chowning treats her subject and the complex and nuanced assessment of this convent’s life offer a treasure of issues and topics for further discussion and debate.

*University of Miami*

Martin Nesvig


Who wrote the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* that we read? This question differs from who composed or sung “them” before audiences, because hundreds of bards had done that, but each as uniquely as a Delta blues performer. Where, when, how, and why did someone choose to record in a new technology, and thus freeze, heretofore oral epics? Andrew Dalby, a student of the classics and linguistics and a self-described “escaped librarian,” is the author of several other books; in this one, he addresses these contested questions.

Dalby summarizes much useful English-language scholarship for the general reader concerning the epic poems’ historical and archaeological context. He discusses their time and place of origin as oral traditional poetry and examines the development of recent theories evaluating possible historical information preserved in oral transmission concerning cities like Troy; political structures like Ithacan civil society; and events, particularly the Trojan War. Recent expeditions to Troy and Near Eastern excavations and documents support some stratum of reality in “Homer”—but the devil is in each detail. Dalby divides nine chapters into three parts: “The Poems,” “The Poet” (the most provocative), and “The Response.” He offers a timeline and three basic maps, a useful guide to further
reading, and an index, but no illustrations. The bibliography distressingly omits a better, similar, and notably illustrated title for budding Homerists: Michael Wood, *In Search of the Trojan War*.

Dalby thinks that the ancient author cannot be any man, “Homer.” He credits a woman with the scribal innovation. The reticent and secluded narrator (in Ionia, c. 650–630, unlike her alleged predecessor Hesiod) had her telling of the already popular Troy-tales inscribed because of women’s inability to circulate in male society. Dalby cites unfamiliar folkloristic parallels for female bards from Ethiopia, Russia, Ireland, etc. This genius found a mysterious “backer” (with unspeciﬁed motives) to fund her experimental, oral-dictated “outreach” version of nearly sixteen thousand hexameters. She produced this fullest *Iliad*, and later she composed another “subversive” song-story, the *Odyssey*, in part to convey the epics’ deep understanding of Greek gender conﬁlict (114, 125). (One scholar facetiously argued that Homer must have been a hangman because he knows so well how the hanged twitch.) Neither historical criticism nor archaeology can refute or prove these speculations.

Dalby is not a Homerist, but he has done much intelligent homework. He writes engagingly, if sometimes hastily (on page seventy-ﬁve he claims that the ruler Alcinous has a one-room household! This is false. See *Odyssey* VI. 1–50). He writes informally even for publics presumed to need plot summaries of these foundational Western texts. On page 109 he says, “This is what happened, then”; and on page 140 he asks, “Do we dare to speculate . . . ?” In other books also, his intended audience has encouraged him to skate with other scholars’ conclusions to simplify their complex solutions. For example, Milman Parry and Albert Lord discussed (abnormal) simultaneous composition and recording (102). Dalby’s intended audience allows, or requires, inadequate argument and dicey assertions ﬂagged by “surely ought,” “may certainly,” and “not diﬃcult to believe.” Like *Wikipedia*, which already cites this book, Dalby’s essay may be recommended to undergraduates only with cautions.

*Ohio Wesleyan University*  
Donald Lateiner


This latest work in the trendy field of coalition warfare analyzes the practical elements of the Franco-British alliance from its conception in 1904 through the end of World War I. Like most other alliances, this one was plagued by
haphazard efforts at communication and coordination through all levels of government and military command, effectively delaying Allied victory in World War I until General Foch managed properly to integrate the allied forces in 1917.

Paralleling the roles of political, military command, and civilian bureaucracy, Elizabeth Greenhalgh paints a picture of a lackluster alliance with fear of German expansionism as the only raison d’être. The Allied Powers failed to use their resources effectively because each side considered the others’ contribution to the alliance as nominal, and there were no unified command structures or joint training maneuvers. Only through seemingly miniscule steps, with civilian administrations ahead of military command, did Franco-British cooperation grow.

French reluctance to support the British Expeditionary Force, for example, in its rescue attempt of Antwerp in 1914, ultimately doomed the campaign. Furthermore, British access to Dunkirk as a key element in the supply line never materialized because the French feared a close relationship between Belgian and British forces. The French, for their part, blamed the poor result of the 1916 campaign on inadequate British contributions to the war effort.

Conversely, it was the British who took steps to closer cooperation in 1916–1917. With the French embattled by political and military difficulties, the British undertook successive, albeit unsuccessful, attempts at a new command relationship for the Entente. Ultimately, it was the crisis of the German advance in March 1918, amid Allied fears of France suing for a separate peace that raised Foch to become the general of all allied forces. Far from uncontested, Foch’s assumption of authority as well as his forceful and inspiring execution of the war, led the allied military forces to utilize effectively their resources and to defeat the Prussian war machine.

The author points to shipping and logistics as an example of how effective Allied cooperation could have ended the war much sooner (285). Yet, here the claim that Franco-British coalition policies determined the duration of the war seems too lofty an argument. A study on Franco-British coalition building is of significance in its own right, yet arguing that the effectiveness of logistics determined when victory occurred is definitely too broad a thesis. Undoubtedly, the outcome of the war was not determined by one side alone, and some comparative angle on the Central Powers could have reinforced the importance of Allied coalition policies. Similarly, other elements, such as the role of civilians in the war, soldiers’ morale, technology, and the role of the United States before 1918 are almost completely excluded from this work. With the title, therefore, being rather presumptuous, Victory Through Coalition is an otherwise well-researched
account of Franco-British coalition warfare that would be of interest to historians and general readers alike.

*Indiana University of Pennsylvania*

Werner D. Lippert


In the first chapter of this work, the author writes that “it is a little odd, given the acknowledged importance of this subject, that there are relatively few general, sustained accounts of Etruscan religion, and there is as yet none today in the English language.” Perhaps it is a twist of fate that shortly before the appearance of the present book, Jane K. Whitehead’s English translation and update of Jean-René Jannot’s *Devis, Dieux et Démons* was published. Now scholars, students, and nonspecialists alike, particularly those with limited knowledge of foreign languages, have complimentary in-depth discussions of Etruscan religion at their disposal.

Planned as a handbook with wide scholarly appeal, *The Religion of the Etruscans* contains a brief preface, eight well-researched and concisely written essays, and ample illustrations, mostly in the form of drawings and black and white photographs. Topics range from the religious significance of writing to the Etruscans’ concepts about their deities, the afterlife, and ritual space. Nancy Thomson de Grummond, for example, offers a comprehensive history of the discipline as well as a discussion about their prophets and priests. Using evidence from “linguistics, comparative studies of religion, observations of cult practices, and the topography of excavated Etruscan sanctuaries,” Erika Simon then lays out the basic characteristics of the Etruscan pantheon, arguing, above all, that their deities were devoted to “seeking a balance in the universe, [and] striving for peace and harmony . . .” (45, 57). Her essay also includes a useful glossary highlighting the attributes, origins, and cult centers of key divinities. Jean MacIntosh Turfa enhances Simon’s discussion by providing an excellent summary of the Etruscans’ principle votive contexts and activities, and Ingrid E. M. Edlund Berry focuses on the different types of earthly and heavenly spaces or boundaries, which allowed the Etruscans to maintain political, religious, and social stability. Also insightful are the chapters by Ingrid Krauskopf and Giovani Colonna, especially since both authors usually publish in German and Italian, respectively. Although the absence of sound textual evidence makes understanding Etruscan beliefs about life after death especially challenging, Krauskopf argues for a concept “of an Afterlife, which can be thought of as a banquet,” and for the importance of the
“journey into the Underworld, which was probably subdivided into a series of stages and was replete with dangers . . .” (78). She reinterprets the symposia scenes in late sixth to fifth century BCE Tarquinian tombs as taking place in the realm of the dead, not the living, and suggests that the sacrifices and games performed by survivors both “secured a safe journey to the hereafter [and] gave the souls of the dead the possibility to come back . . .” (78). Colonna’s essay primarily focuses on the sanctuary at Pyrgi, which contains examples of the four main types of Etruscan sacred architecture, and his discussion of their different altar types, especially the ones made of rough stones, is especially informative.

Following Colonna’s essay, there is a glossary of key terms and two extremely beneficial appendices. The first, by Jean MacIntosh Turfa, focuses on the Etruscan Brontoscopic Calendar and includes both Johannes Lydus’s Greek text and the author’s English translation, while the second, edited by de Grummond, contains a number of pertinent Latin and Greek texts, which are reproduced both in their original language and in English. Unfortunately, a third appendix, which was to contain an “index of [Etruscan] inscriptions” does not appear (9). This minor omission, however, in no way detracts from the overall success of the book, which is an essential resource for anyone interested both in Etruscan religion and this fascinating culture.

Northern Arizona University

Alexandra A. Carpino

By Wolf Gruner. Translated by Kathleen M. Dell’Orto. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press with the United States Holocaust Museum, 2006. Pp. xiv, 322. $75.00.)

This book is a milestone in the historiography of the Holocaust, focusing on what the author called, in a 1992 essay, “terra incognita.” Jewish forced labor was planned and directed mainly independently of the SS-controlled concentration camps and ghettos. Although these parallel systems conflicted and competed, normally there was “a compromise between work and destruction” that persisted to the summer of 1944 when the Lodz ghetto was destroyed (292). It was thus not an unwarranted calculation by Jewish councils that cooperation with the Germans would stay deportations; for many Jews, forced labor for the war economy, in Wolf Gruner’s judgment, “represented a real chance to survive mass murder” (275).

Nazi policies were driven by an irrational ideology, but ideology was often nullified: allocation of Jewish forced labor involved rational implementation, as in
any complex economic enterprise, from the labor administration down to the smallest private firm; all were governed by “the requirements of the labor market, interests of the economy, and the goals of war production” (xviii). A striking example is SS General Albrecht Smeltzer, who intercepted some fifteen trains headed for Auschwitz and removed several thousand able-bodied Jews so that “many [armament] companies were able to continue uninterruptedly exploiting their forced labor” (228).

Jewish forced labor began in a desultory way immediately in 1933 when German municipalities “spontaneously” rounded up “the work-shirking Jewish rabble”—acting on Berlin’s rhetoric, not its policy, which was not yet formulated—for public works or private projects, sometimes inflicting badges on them, sometimes beating them (233). As Jews were displaced from the economy and thrown on the welfare rolls, local labor exchanges (created under the Weimar Republic) organized forced labor to make Jews pay for unemployment benefits and segregated them in camps; at the peak there were over a thousand such camps in Hitler’s Europe. The penal-colony-like camps exacted heavy labor that was punishingly hard and exhausting, for which most Jews were singularly unsuited as professional people, businessmen, and the like. At least three birds were bagged by this one stone: the unemployed, impoverished Jews were dealt with; the always dangerous, powerful, conspiratorial Jews were controlled under surveillance, stigmatized by a badge, deployed in “Jewish columns,” and isolated from fellow forced laborers and the general population; and the acute labor shortage was alleviated. All Jews, impoverished or not, were soon caught in the forced-labor web, thus creating the “forced community” and a system of “segregated labor deployment.” Wolf Gruner describes in succeeding chapters the system’s extension over Austria, the Czech Protectorate, the annexed territories, and rump Poland. By 1942 and especially after Stalingrad, Jewish forced labor engulfed the Mischlinge (persons of mixed descent or in mixed marriages). One of these was the famous diarist Victor Klemperer, who toiled in perpetual danger in factories where there were “600 minutes in every hour.” Far more civilians, companies, agencies, and institutions in Germany and occupied Europe exploited Jews—at the zenith, over a million—as forced labor than thought or assumed heretofore.

Gruner’s monograph suffers from excessive repetition and too frequent unidiomatic translation, but these and other venal failings detract little from a masterful work of scholarship.

*Manhattan College*  
Frederick M. Schweitzer
In the winter of 1938, a team of five Nazi SS officers, accompanied by an entourage of local porters, made its way to Lhasa, Tibet, undertaking an anthropological expedition to the “top of the world” financed in part by Heinrich Himmler, the Reichsführer SS. This relatively obscure historical episode inspired the box office smash *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and serves as the basis for this gripping and entertaining account, originally published in the U.K. as *Himmler’s Crusade: The True Story of the 1938 Nazi Expedition into Tibet*. The subtitle of the current edition, although perhaps catchier, is misleading. Himmler never intended to discover the “origins of the Aryan race” in Asia. As one of the foremost proponents of, and true believers in, the Nazi racial mission, Himmler sought to document the diffusion of the Nordic race (supposedly one of several Aryan races) beyond its putative original home in Europe. The term “Himmler’s Crusade” better describes the genocidal policies inflicted largely by the SS on the populations of German-occupied Europe during the Second World War.

Beginning with a splendidly described exotic adventure in the snows of Tibet, Christopher Hale leads the reader ultimately to the Nazi death camp at Auschwitz. Hale’s central thesis is that Nazi genocide was a direct result of the same crank theories that inspired the journey to Tibet. Hale contends that “occultism facilitated murder” and warns the reader on the book’s final page that in the early twenty-first century a revival of occultism “in different circumstances might turn into a slippery slope, descending into darkness” (372, 380). For quite some time, however, many historians have argued persuasively that the foundations of the “twisted path to Auschwitz” lay in ideas taken not from the lunatic fringe, but from what at that time were considered respectable works of racial science, anthropology, and eugenics. Although Himmler and Hitler did in fact dabble in some marginal and bizarre notions from time to time, it is (or certainly should be) far more troubling that relatively mainstream ideas, values, and beliefs did much more to underpin and precipitate the Nazi Holocaust.

Hale writes in a lively and engaging style. His book’s organization is logical and well thought out and is replete with an impressive array of fascinating details. Although Hale does not explicitly develop the case, his story lucidly illustrates the diverse range of activities and services in which many SS officers found themselves involved. For example, Bruno Beger, one of the central protagonists in Hale’s
narrative, (many of the book’s most fascinating details are derived from interviews with Beger, conducted on Hale’s behalf by a colleague), served as an anthropologist in the Tibet expedition, served for a time at both the Natzweiler and Auschwitz camps, and served briefly in 1941 and again in 1944 in combat formations of the Waffen SS.

This book would have benefited from a more thorough fact checking, as the text is marred here and there by errors of fact. Although many are relatively minor in the sense that they do not bear directly on Hale’s thesis, and in no way detract from the overall quality of the work, they do call into question the accuracy of other less well-known details. For example, the Swastika flag became the national flag of Germany in 1935, not 1933; Herman Goering’s notorious comment about reaching for his revolver when he heard the word “culture” was probably not intended to mean that “culture justified conquest”; Himmler, with his degree in agronomy, was of course not “[b]y far the best educated of the Nazi leaders”; the name R. Walther Darré appears consistently without the first initial; the term Wehrmacht refers to the German armed forces as of 1935, not during the First World War or before; historians generally do not attribute the founding of the First Reich to Frederick Barbarossa in the twelfth century; and the description of the German revolution of 1918 more accurately describes the Russian revolutions of 1917—the German troops in the line did not mutiny, and it is incorrect to state that prior to the signing of the 1918 armistice, front-line German soldiers “simply dropped their rifles, picked up their kit bags, and walked home.”

These criticisms aside, Hale has produced a very readable and entertaining account of a relatively unknown but certainly fascinating snippet of history of the Third Reich.

Ohio Wesleyan University

Mark P. Gingerich


Later described as the “torso” of all prior and future work, scholars of history, philosophy, political science, and literature from 1760–1830 should know Isaiah Berlin’s perspectives on Romantic thought (ix). Those already interested in Berlin’s scholarship will find the origins here of his broader contributions to the “history of ideas” while at his intellectual peak. Trained in social and political theory, the renowned Oxford professor’s “ur-text” was written for a series of
lectures at Bryn Mawr in 1952, shortly thereafter revised, and then abandoned. Published a decade after his death in 1997, these four thematically linked essays are entitled, respectively, “Politics as a Descriptive Science” (Helvétius, Holbach), “The Idea of Freedom” (Rousseau, Hume), “Two Concepts of Freedom: Romantic and Liberal” (Fichte, Kant), and “The March of History” (Vico, Herder, and Hegel). Across their span, Berlin clarifies Romantic-period views of “the political” by examining and critiquing the writings of major thinkers, then considering how freedom and ethics were interpreted contextually, and then historically.

Although captivated, not until the appendix (260–265) did the reviewer quite understand how Berlin interprets the Romantic political legacy. Here Berlin identifies the “false dichotomy” between “objective” and “subjective” ethics as the most misleading and persistent in Western thought, and as perhaps beside the point. “It seems clear that one of the principal motives for a search for an ‘objective’ ethics,” he writes, “was the desire to escape from such subjectivism, not merely a desire for the secure knowledge which only the ‘objective’ seemed to promise” (261). Berlin claims that Rousseau

puts sincerity and emotional relevance above truth—and thereby originates that long European tradition of romanticism, which stresses the value of goodness and purity of nature and warmth of feeling above that of accuracy or intelligence or penetration or the intellectual virtues generally (127).

He credits Kant and Hume in particular for helping later thinkers to see that “value statements,” such as “statements of politics...are neither subjective nor objective, but wholly different in kind from statements which are so” (264). This crucial distinction seems to be the major “influence” on modern thought referenced in the book’s subtitle.

Berlin’s long-time editor Henry Hardy proved wise to publish the manuscript intact despite its unwieldy, repetitious tendencies, and masterful in his choices of contextual materials. He includes Berlin’s prologue and his own 1992 correspondence in which he encouraged Berlin to publish this “long version” of the lectures. We also find students’ summaries of the lectures for the Bryn Mawr weekly College News in early 1952. Joshua Cherniss’s brilliant introduction proves essential to understanding how the “torso” fits into Berlin’s larger career and contributions and “helps us understand the development, and appreciate the unity, of Berlin’s thought, and reminds us how venturesome a thinker he was” (xxii). This would be a difficult textual journey for those not already
well-versed in Enlightenment philosophy and political theory. Yet Berlin somehow both managed to codify the “conventional wisdom” and to anticipate the complicated future of “multiple Romanticisms” that we associate with that legacy today.

*Elmhurst College*

Ann Frank Wake

*Gender and Petty Violence in London, 1680–1720.* By Jennine Hurl-Eamon. (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 2005. Pp. xii, 213. $44.95.)

Using hitherto underutilized source material, the author has written a thought-provoking book that challenges a number of widely held views relating to the nature of crime in early modern London and wider perceptions of the construction of gender. The book is divided into two main sections dealing with perpetrators and prosecutors, and a central theme throughout the study is the notion of prosecution as a form of empowerment. Through a detailed study of recognizances brought before the Westminster Quarter Sessions, the author argues that there was a greater-than-expected degree of unacceptable and therefore prosecuted violence. Additionally she argues that neither in its perpetration nor in its prosecution was violence “entirely subject to gender limitations.”

In part one, Jennine Hurl-Eamon argues that victimhood, rather than victimization, was a source of empowerment, particularly for a range of ordinary women, who, as “unlikely candidates for empowerment,” have commonly been seen as victims of a male-dominated criminal justice system and a wider patriarchal society. Pregnant women, battered wives, and rape victims emerge as unlikely beneficiaries from lower-level courts in which JPs were more likely to believe the stories of victimhood and to acknowledge and punish male violence. The discussion of battered wives as plaintiff is particularly interesting, not least as it shows that women saw this form of legal remedy as an effective way of limiting unacceptable violent language and behavior. This runs contrary to a widely held view that women were unwilling to go to court for fear of provoking further violence. The sympathy for, and hence empowerment of, pregnant women is less surprising, but the argument that rape victims could be empowered by presenting themselves as victims of assault is quite surprising. Hurl-Eamon’s concern with victimhood does not focus exclusively on women. Indeed, one of her more important findings is that men used victimhood as a means of curbing female violence without contradicting notions of masculinity.

In part two, which focuses on perpetrators, there are further challenging findings. Women were responsible for about a third of all assaults and could be as
aggressive, in word and deed, as their male counterparts. Early modern femininity was “surprisingly assertive and aggressive,” particularly in riots and rescues where women were often “aggressive and eager participants.” The most striking examples relate to female Jacobite violence, which has not been detected by previous historians, whose focus has been on Old Bailey trials. More generally Hurl-Eamon uses this evidence to challenge the common perception of violence as being distinctly masculine. To the contrary, the language of these early modern recognizances suggests that much violence was ungendered.

*Gender and Petty Violence* is a stimulating read for those interested in the workings of the early modern criminal justice system and for those interested in the interaction of popular culture, with its subtle constructions of gender and the state in the guise of the magistrate. Some parts of the argument, particularly those relating to the empowerment of victims of sexual assault, are not wholly convincing (or are so heavily qualified as to reduce greatly their importance), but this is a stimulating book that deserves a wide readership.

*University of Huddersfield*

David Taylor

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In this book, the author explores the popular perception and role of the devil in early modern England. From the early years of the English Reformation to the end of the Civil War, the author traces what he characterizes as a “subtle realignment” of the way in which notions of the devil became an integral part of the Protestant experience both for individuals and the larger English community (1).

Nathan Johnstone argues that the development of the understanding of diabolism within the period following the Reformation focused on the idea of an internal struggle with the devil, which manifested itself in the temptations commonly experienced by Christians. The experience of demonism was particularly important in the Protestant concept of diabolic agency. Unlike Catholic perceptions of the devil, which relied on the rites and rituals of the Church to protect the godly from demonic influence, Protestant literature emphasized the necessity of individual perseverance in resisting the devil and his influence. Although the godly could expect the devil to be persistent in his work, knowledge and self-examination could produce significant, if temporary, relief from temptation.
This understanding of the role of diabolic temptation influenced English popular culture. Johnstone points to discussions of the devil in published and spoken sermons as well as to autobiographies and ballads in the “pulp press” that illustrated the extent to which these ideas pervaded society. Protestants identified the devil’s subversive action within the Catholic Church, as well as in popular entertainment such as the theater and dancing. Johnstone suggests that the common experience of temptation created a thread that bound English Protestants together and propelled them into the religious and political conflicts that led to the Civil War. Armed conflict created an environment in which Anglicans and Nonconformists alike applied their understanding of diabolic agency to political rhetoric. Even after the war, Johnstone notes, Protestants continued to apply ideas of diabolic subversion to politics, as exemplified in Puritan attacks against Quakers.

Few historians have dealt with the historical concept of the devil, and Johnstone is careful to place his work within the context of existing studies. Indeed, much of his argument depends on the work of historians such as Stuart Clark, Peter Elmer, and others, which provides a catalyst for Johnstone’s argument. This is especially true of his desire to shift the study of the devil away from the context of witchcraft and to challenge notions of continuity in the historical conception of the devil. As such, Johnstone’s book occupies an important place within the historiography of early modern England.

At times, however, the reader unfamiliar with this field, and with sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England in general, may find this work a bit cumbersome. Although Johnstone does an excellent job of illustrating his points with useful examples, he assumes a significant degree of knowledge of the political and religious characteristics of the period. Still, Johnstone presents a valuable picture of the integral role of the devil and suggests new ways of analyzing demonism in the English Protestant experience.

Pacific Union College

Amy Rebok Rosenthal

The Pastoral Role of the Roman Catholic Church in Pre-Famine Ireland, 1750–1850.

In the three or four generations before the Great Famine of the late 1840s, the population of Ireland more than doubled, and this increase was especially evident among the majority Roman Catholic population. As the overall numbers of Catholics in Ireland grew, the supply of priests and churches to meet their spiritual needs did not rise fast enough to keep up. The Roman Catholic Church in Ireland,
still recovering from the era of the penal laws in the preceding century, faced the dilemma of how to minister to its growing flock in the face of clerical and infrastructural deficiencies.

At a time when Rome stressed the need for Church-centered religious practice, the Irish Church lacked sufficient funds to build the necessary churches and supply them with priests. According to Emmet Larkin, in his latest volume on the history of the Church in Ireland, the Irish Church devised a unique strategy to overcome the discrepancy between the supply of clergy and churches and the demand of a growing laity: stations. By transforming a sedentary clergy into a circuit-riding ministry, the Church insured that even the most remote faithful would have access to valid sacraments performed by ordained clergy. The Church would go to the people, as it did not have the personnel or infrastructure to allow the people to come to it. Pre-Famine Irish priests were the homegrown sons of the Irish Church. Prepared to minister to flocks in even the most remote and impoverished parts of the island, priests baptized, married, and buried the faithful and said Mass in the homes of local leaders in an era when the Church could not provide the more normative setting of a parish church.

The Church’s ad hoc response to the unprecedented growth of the Catholic laity in the diminishing economy of pre-Famine Ireland, Larkin argues, was unique in both Irish and Church history. After the Famine, the Irish Church grew in wealth and national power and became more orthodox and conservative. In those same years, the number of faithful plummeted as overall population levels tumbled in the wake of famine mortality and mass emigration. Demographic adjustments in the post-Famine era further reduced the number in the country. At the same time, however, the Church grew to national prominence, and its conservative post-Famine orthodoxy now conformed to Rome’s dictates. The post-Famine Church had the personnel and financial means to impose orthodoxy on the faithful and seize political power that the Church is only today relinquishing. The era of the stations had ended.

Larkin’s eloquent analysis of the unique structure of the Church in Ireland before the Famine, along with the transformative changes in Irish life and the Church before and after that event, adds to our understanding of the intimate relationship between the Irish laity and their Church, and demonstrates the watershed impact of the Famine era on Irish ecclesiastical as well as demographic and economic history. His provocative thesis, buttressed by a lifetime of archival research, must henceforward inform all studies of nineteenth-century Ireland.

Loyola University Chicago

Janet Nolan

Writing a short biographical introduction to Sartre is no easy feat, and it would be difficult to top this author’s effort. After all, Sartre was one of the most prolific intellectuals of the twentieth century, producing forty thousand pages of literature, philosophy, journalism, screen plays, and works of theater. The high priest of existentialism, he has emerged as “the most written-about twentieth-century author” (8).

Andrew Leak’s virtue is to have succinctly encapsulated Sartre’s personality and core convictions from the midst of the heap left by the Sartrean writing machine. He is sensitive to the intellect in his context, how he responded in his writing, and how scholars have commented subsequently. As such, this is a wonderful addition to the compelling series “Critical Lives.”

The book is ordered chronologically, but, as a fine literary scholar, Leak always enters through Sartre’s text. For example, his childhood is disclosed from the purview of *Words* [1964], Sartre’s autobiography that prompted the Nobel committee to give him the prize for literature, which the infamous iconoclast promptly rejected as a bourgeois idol that would reify and domesticate him. Sartre was always venomous about the bourgeoisie, since “bourgeois ideology has the effect of transforming historical contingency into eternal essence” (38).

This is the cardinal sin for existentialism, whose key maxim Sartre coined in 1945: “existence precedes essence.” Roquentin, the protagonist of Sartre’s magnificent modernist novel *Nausea* [1938], realized the dread of apprehending that we write our lives by the choices we make, often not in situations of our own choosing. Like all of us, “every day, Roquentin awakens to a blank page” (35). Sartre never tired of teaching that to be human is to be free and to be thrown into a world in which we must take responsibility for our lives by the acts that inscribe who we are in the book of life. Full apprehension of this entails anxiety. So most flee our accountability (today for the war in Iraq or genocide in Darfur, in Sartre’s time for Vietnam and Cambodia), numbing ourselves with television, food, drugs, work, whatever fills the void at the heart of the human condition.

Sartre’s extraordinarily productive period under the jackboot of the Nazis—“two novels, two plays, five screenplays, eleven literary-critical articles”—made him a star (65). But as the iron curtain of the Cold War descended, Sartre, who in 1944 thought that “any situation could be transcended by a subjective movement,”
knew by 1951, as his lifelong partner Simone de Beauvoir put it, “that circum-
stances sometimes rob us of our transcendence; against them, no individual
salvation is possible, only a collective struggle” (97). The result was Sartre’s
alignment as a fellow traveler of the hard left. So as an activist-witness and insurgent
writer, he “supported all forms of working-class revolutionary struggle” from the
so-called Third World to the student revolts in the 1960s that were inspired by them
(132). Sartre’s stance on behalf of the oppressed and marginalized was ubiquitous
until his death in 1980. Andrew Leak has concisely captured why Sartre’s critical
life is part of a prophetic tradition whose resources are needed now more than ever.

University of Memphis

Jonathan Judaken

Suspended Animation: Pain, Pleasure and Punishment in Medieval Culture. By Robert

This book is a study of the iconography and literature of medieval penal repre-
sentations, secular and religious, from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries in
Western Europe. Robert Mills analyzes the pain, suffering, violence, and pleasure
in these representations; their cultural roles in the formation of society, institu-
tions, and self; as well as the varied responses they invoke among late medieval
and modern viewers. Poetic, religious, theatrical, and historical texts; contempo-
rary anecdotes; and modern analogies provide context and foil for one hundred
illustrations. A comprehensive bibliography informed by modern critical discus-
sions of violence, pornography, masochism, and especially queer cultural history
underpin the approach and methodology. The latter allows Mills to integrate art
history and literary criticism, but also psychoanalysis, anthropology, and sexual-
ity, in his discussion and find meaning in the images from different perspectives.
The study is fluid, open, generous, and expansive. “A sense of potentiality informs
my analysis throughout,” and the aim “is to engage with the contingent, indeter-
minate and ‘tactile’ dimension of . . . viewing” (19, 72). The title derives from the
modern literary and cinematic concept of suspense, both in time and space, and in
literal and symbolic senses. The crucifix is the prototype of the idea, and also, the
first image Mills discusses. Suspended animation, images suspended in action “in
a threshold zone ‘betwixt heaven and earth,’ ” between life and death, caught in
the midst of pain and suffering, reinforces the drama of the images in pain, and
focuses their cultural messages (25). According to Mills, these penal images rarely
record reality, but express a “medieval penal imaginary,” denoting the creative
“discourse and fantasy” of these representations (8, 16). They are visual propa-
ganda of the established powers and their values.
The aesthetic leitmotif of suspended animation ties together the iconographic and literary analyses in six chapters, which deal, in part, with defamatory portraits of aristocratic traitors and debtors, hanging upside down, in Germany and Italy. Gerard David’s Judgement of Cambyses, the flaying of a corrupt judge, is used as a representation of civic justice and political power in Bruges. Mills describes the infernal and imaginative punishment of sodomites in Italian frescoes, where punishment mirrors their sexual crimes, in the hope of their social elimination. Master Francke’s Martyrdom of St. Barbara in Helsinki is “pious pornography” to some feminists, but a symbol of “impregnability and a . . . stand-in for the beleaguered but . . . invincible church,” and hence of potential female empowerment, to Mills; the masochistic martyrdoms of the saints, mixing willed pain and “mystical or . . . erotic pleasure,” especially in Sebastian; the gender ambiguities in Passion representations of Christ in monastic and hermetic literature, practice, and art; and finally, the erotic power of the ithyphallic Christ as Man of Sorrows, whose current theological interpretation Mills augments with sexuality (106, 117, 149). The author offers a penal imaginary of representations reinforcing “institutional authority . . . bourgeois civility . . . cultural prejudice . . . social control” and “messages about the coherence of the Church and the ‘body’ of Christian faithful” (17).

Despite the pain and torture in most representations, patrons clearly found aesthetic and social pleasure there. And other groups evoked alternate reactions; women, religious, the lower class, and perhaps even “sodomites” drew positive responses from these tales and images. Modern analogies appear frequently because Mills does not accept an unqualified dichotomy of past and present. Rather, past and present act like a mirror, with meanings, ambiguities, and connections, perceived “incompletely, even fleetingly by . . . structural analogies and intersections” (20). The volume’s title is an example.

This stimulating analysis of the medieval penal imaginary is a summation of modern scholarship, while its title thesis is an original conceptual paradigm. Mills’s iconographic and literary argumentations are detailed and persuasive. The book’s debt to contemporary critical theory might limit the audience in North America to graduate students and faculty in art, society, history, and culture of the later Middle Ages and their subspecialties; however, for them the study will be enthralling. But all medievalists will benefit from his approach and methodology and find his contributions an important addition to understanding history.

Indiana University Fort Wayne

Gary B. Blumenshine

The present volume forms part of a projected series of books on the culture and customs of Europe. The foreword makes plain the primary target audience of the books by insisting that “the historied [sic] and enlightened Europeans will continue to fascinate Americans” (viii). Kevin O’Conner’s contribution on the Baltic States is based largely on secondary literature and makes no claim to originality.

The opening survey of the history of the lands inhabited by the Baltic peoples is reasonably accurate and balanced, which is perhaps not surprising in that O’Conner published a history of the Baltic states in 2003. There then follows an interesting and extended analysis of the place of religion. After a chapter on marriage, family, gender, and education, attention shifts smartly to one on holidays and cuisine. The remaining chapters cover language; folklore and literature; the media and cinema; the performing arts; and, in the last two chapters, architecture, housing, and art.

While this is no book for the academic specialist, the general reader—particularly one hoping to visit or indeed work in the Baltic states—will be well served. The text is both informative and readable and the themes of each chapter are explored for each of the three countries in turn. Indeed, the book is best described as a sort of upmarket guide for the discerning traveler. In that respect a paperback edition might have been preferable. O’Conner certainly shows Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania for the fascinating countries that they are and he has successfully conveyed his interest to the reader.

University of Bradford/University of Glasgow

John Hiden


This study of the Russian Revolution offers a valuable survey of five hundred years of Russian ideas about power and five hundred years of Russian hopes for authority, to 1917. This is not a book about preconditions and precursors; the author is always keen to emphasize “the autonomy of ideas” in human affairs and to dispel the shadow he thinks 1917 still casts over most studies of Russian intellectual history (xiv). Big thinkers’ big ideas are Richard Pipes’s subject matter. Although Pipes admires the greats of Russian intellectual history—Ivanov-Razumnik, Isaiah Berlin, and Andrzej Walicki—he thinks they focused too much on the Radicals. He aims to write an intellectual history of Russia that
“include[s] . . . statesmen” able “to ascertain what was wrong with their country and how to set it right” (xiv).

Pipes succeeds. Radicals are no longer progenitors. Statesman and their policies are shown in full intellectual relief. The prose is always readable. In one long chapter, “The Birth of Conservative Ideology,” Pipes begins with fifteenth- and sixteenth-century “Possessing” controversies and then shows that these ideas affected ideas of private property and autocratic public authority in the eras of Ivan IV, the first Romanovs, and Peter the Great. A second long chapter, “The Conservative Liberal Controversy,” sees eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Russian intellectual history as shaped by the contradiction of the second Catherine’s and the first two Alexanders’ liberal ideas and illiberal imperial mistrust of their own people (65–66, 183–184). For Pipes, Russia was fated by being “an empire before she had become a nation”; “her population [therefore] lacked the spirit of communality that derives from living in a nation-state” (182).

This book is also a soliloquy. Many arguments in this book rehash Pipes’s earlier works. The author ignores scholarship that has long challenged his conclusions; for example with George Weickhardt and Valerie Kivelson’s skepticism about patrimonialism and property, or even with his Harvard colleagues Don Ostrovsky (on Nonpossessors), Michael Flier (on rituals), and Edward Keenan (on Kurbskii and on defining Russia “by what it ain’t”). For an intellectual history that treats statesman and courtiers seriously, Pipes also ignores important recent work on the meaning of public rituals (Priscilla Hunt, V. I. Grosul, Cynthia Whittacker, Richard Wortman, and Daniel Rowland). Pipes’s method is also unaffected by any of the important reconsiderations of intellectual history (Quentin Skinner, Michel Foucault and Michel de Certeau, Roger Chartier and Dominic La Capra). Although students will profit from reading Pipes’s lively text and clear lines of argument, they need to know that the author’s views are contested and controversial. This reviewer finished this stimulating book suspecting that there were also important conservative tendencies in Soviet history. Pipes needs to consider these tendencies free from the shibboleths of Cold War and Communism, and not to stop his account of Russian Conservatism at 1917.

La Trobe University

Adrian Jones


It might seem perverse for a historian of empire as serious as the author of this study to write a book in which he criticizes fellow scholars for seeing too large a
role for the British Empire in the last two centuries. Yet that is precisely what the author of this work has done. In a monograph that is extensively researched, richly detailed, clearly written, and, despite its sometimes self-deprecating tone, strenuously and provocatively argued, he views with consternation the rise of a consensus among critics, particularly in the field of postcolonial studies, that the “discourse” of empire penetrated into every facet of British life from roughly 1830 to 1940. Bernard Porter finds this claim—what he calls the “assumption of saturation”—exaggerated (313). In fact, as his study of such varied materials as public school newspapers, working-class autobiographies, and the high and popular art of the period shows, most Britons were largely unaware of the empire in any thoughtful way.

Here, as Porter emphasizes, one must make distinctions about class. The traditional ruling elite, the class that had always governed at home and abroad, was intensely conscious of the importance of the empire throughout its history. However, the middle and working classes were a different story: the free-trading middle class of the nineteenth century was often hostile toward a financially encumbering empire, and the working class throughout this time was more engrossed by concerns closer to home—wages, working conditions, and trade unionism—than by those of empire. Even during times when the empire was broadly and consciously promoted (for example, during the “new” imperialism at the end of the nineteenth century), the working class in particular was never deeply moved by imperial propaganda. As Porter puts it, “Everywhere we look we see the same phenomenon: the working classes sucking the sugar, then probably spitting the pill of imperial propaganda out” (211). For a scholar as skeptical and empirically grounded as Porter, to assume, as he insists many postcolonial critics do, that most Britons were aware and supportive of the empire is wrong. Even if one agrees that Great Britain was imperial (as Porter certainly does), it is not necessarily true that the nation was imperialistic—in other words, committed, in any widespread way, to an expanded empire.

Many scholars in postcolonial and cultural studies will vehemently dispute Porter’s claims; for some his debunking of the “saturation” thesis amounts to heresy. To an extent, Porter and his critics are talking past each other. His critics are mainly concerned with the endlessly ramifying and permeating discourse of empire; Porter is interested in the extent of consciousness of empire—a phenomenon that is more circumscribed and intractable than any set of imperial discourses. Yet for any serious student of the British Empire, this book is indispensable reading, if only because it questions with such acuteness and
erudition the current received wisdom about imperial thinking in Britain during
the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

*John Carroll University*  

*Caesar in Gaul and Rome: War in Words.* By Andrew M. Riggsby. (Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 2006. Pp. viii, 271. $45.00.)

Julius Caesar towers over the last century of the Roman Republic. His voice, along with that of Cicero, dominates any attempt to come to terms with its history, but although the vast Ciceronian corpus is inexhaustible, Caesar’s extant works are few, short, and seemingly transparent—and have been studied exhaustively for centuries. It is a measure of Andrew M. Riggsby’s success that he finds new things to say about so well-worn a text as the *Gallic War*. Riggsby’s first two chapters include a useful discussion of the inside and outside, respectively the safe and the unsafe, in Roman conceptions of geographical space, and an introduction to Roman ethnography that conveniently summarizes much recent work on the subject, although it is too ready to accept a characterization of ethnographic discourse as exclusively binary and dialectical. In chapter three, Riggsby convincingly outlines the ways in which Caesar uses Gallic facility in the adoption of Roman technology to portray the Gauls as a great and growing threat to Rome. Riggsby also, in a lengthy word-study of *virtus*, shows how the Roman sense of military display could supply a sort of “virtual” command structure on the battlefield, even if key rungs of the military hierarchy were not physically present. More contentiously, he argues that Caesar reconfigured the concept of *virtus* to include submission to command in war—*virtus* taking on shades of *disciplina* rather than standing in opposition to it. That, in turn, suggests that the submission that Caesar expected in Gaul could be construed as equally appropriate for Rome itself. If Riggsby is right, then Caesar was laying the groundwork for his autocracy as early as 50 BC, and perhaps earlier still, a possibility that many will find implausible, and which, if it is to be proved, requires reference to a broader range of evidence than the *Gallic War* alone. Elsewhere, by contrast, Riggsby is surely correct to argue that the *Gallic War* was aimed chiefly at a small Roman elite readership, who might debate the merits and probity of an individual commander and his judgments but who implicitly assumed that Roman wars against non-Romans were not only justified but often obligatory acts of justice—and thus that Caesar had shaped his narrative to conform to, and confirm, narratives in which a Roman war was automatically a *bellum iustum*. 
This book is deeply informed by critical theory, Foucault in particular, and one finds the inevitable modish discussion of Caesarian “self-fashioning.” That said, there is no hermetic jargon here and nothing to frighten the traditional philologist. Quite the reverse is true in fact; Riggsby demonstrates that one can take a thoroughly modern approach to a familiar text and, in admirably plain language, instruct those who think they know it well.

University of Tennessee

Michael Kulikowski


The starting point for this book is that “Western or French, imperialism [was not] all bad” (22). The authors then go on to tell the story of some of the great men—Dupleix, Bugeaud, Faidherbe, Gallieni, Lyautey, Bigeard—who played a key role in either making or ruling France’s two colonial empires, and, in so doing, they draw up a balance sheet of their actions. Each chapter is, essentially, a brief biography of one of these men. Barnett Singer admits that, in the writing of these biographies, he often identified closely with his subjects: “Remember how Flaubert said that he was Madame Bovary? I think my biographical empathy at times attained that sort of pitch” (viii). This certainly comes across in the narrative. We learn a great deal about these men’s qualities and weaknesses, their military prowess, and their literary and cultural tastes. They come over in this portrayal as intriguing personalities and cultivated, sensitive, well-rounded men. In the final analysis, the authors see them as, on balance, more a force for good than a force for evil in the world.

The authors are not interested in theories of colonialism, nor in the complex impacts of the colonial project on the colonized. Singer’s area is social and intellectual history, and John Langdon’s is the social and educational history of modern France. The blurb on the back cover claims this is a “revisionist work.” The reviewer is not sure this is the most important point. Above all, Singer and Langdon have clearly developed a fascination for the men about whom they write, and they write about them with some passion and admiration, as well as much sympathy. This is certainly not imperial or colonial history for the imperial or colonial history specialist. But it is carefully researched and highly readable.

University of Portsmouth

Tony Chafer
The progressive expansion of English asylums in the first half of the nineteenth century has been well documented by Andrew Scull and others. Indeed, it is generally assumed that virtually all individuals with severe psychiatric disorders were so confined. The reality, not usually emphasized, is that the asylums were usually overfull and getting a relative admitted was often extremely difficult. Inevitably, therefore, many mentally ill persons had to be cared for at home, but this is something about which little has been written.

Akihito Suzuki has attempted to fill this historical lacuna. As source material for his book, Suzuki utilized extended newspaper accounts of public competency hearings, called Commissions of Lunacy, which he describes as being “held in public spaces such as taverns or coffee-houses and . . . very well attended by the public,” including newspaper reporters (13). The behavior of the person whose competency was being questioned was extensively described during the proceedings and often included salacious or otherwise newsworthy items. Suzuki refers to the proceedings as “lunatics on stage” and says they frequently degenerated into a “psychiatric freak show,” much to the delight of the reporters (33).

Suzuki’s source material is novel, and he uses it well to cast light on the problems associated with caring for mentally ill persons at home. He writes well and is a credit to his recently deceased mentor, Roy Porter. The book includes extensive notes and a useful bibliography and overall is a handsome tome, with the single exception of having one of the dullest dust jackets I have ever seen. Indeed, it looks like the publisher put a shabby raincoat on a man wearing a tuxedo.

The shortcomings of the book are inherent in the source material. Commissions of Lunacy were done only for individuals in the middle and especially the upper classes, and most of the cases came from the greater London area. Thus what is described in this study is inherently socioeconomic and geographically restricted. Moreover what newspapers chose to print then, as today, frequently focused on what Suzuki refers to as “pornographic” elements of the case, and many accounts resemble soap operas.

From the psychiatric point of view, another shortcoming of the material is the lack of a clear diagnosis. For example, Suzuki describes one case as “an eccentric gentleman with strange habits that certainly did not amount to madness” (51). Many other cases appeared to involve individuals with mild mental retardation or personality disorders and to revolve around issues of inheritance.
In summary, this is a useful, well-written contribution to nineteenth-century English history. Its special value is to upper-class London life and the utilization of the psychiatric profession by that social strata.

_The Stanley Medical Research Institute_

E. Fuller Torrey


Venue 33, the Pleasance Theatre, hosts over 185 shows and a quarter of a million theatergoers during the month-long Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Unknown to the actors, they perform opposite a point of dramatic tragedy, the ancient city wall through which, in the early nineteenth century, recently interred bodies were delivered by “resurrectionists” to the dissection table of Dr. Robert Knox and other distinguished Edinburgh anatomists.

This fleshmarket remains the subject of various works of “fiction,” most recently in distinguished Edinburgh novelist Ian Rankin’s _Fleshmarket Close_. This morbid fascination in the economics of bodies is taken a stage further by Deborah Symonds, who focuses not on grave robbing but on sixteen murders in Edinburgh in 1828 by William Burke and William Hare, assisted by their companions, Helen (Nelly) M’Dougal (sic) and Margaret Laird (known as Lucky Log). The quartet lived in an extended household in Edinburgh’s West Port, and when Hare and Log were faced with the unexpected death of a lodger who owed them money, they, with Burke and McDougal, sold the body to Dr. Knox for a sum equivalent to a handloom weaver’s wages for six months. The shortage of bodies was such that Burke and Hare were subsequently able to obtain the equivalent of eighteen months wages for a body. They preyed on drunks, prostitutes, the elderly, and the infirm; victims were plied with drink and suffocated. They committed one murder too many and then were charged, tried, and convicted on the testimony of Hare and Log. Burke was hanged.

Symonds presents each murder in considerable detail. This occupies one-third of the book. Her account is heavily based on the anonymous _West Port Murders_ (Edinburgh 1829), a published transcription of Burke’s confession, and _Burke and Hare: The Resurrection Men: A Collection of Contemporary Documents_, edited by Jacques Barzun (Metuchen J. J., 1974). If Burke and Hare’s _modus operandi_ was rather formulaic, so too is Symonds’s account of the murders. However, there are two significant and interrelated strands. First, she shows a fine command of the household as an interdependent unit, not at all dysfunctional as judged by
twenty-first century standards, but a pragmatic response to market opportunities and subtle networks of exchange. Women played an active part. In this sense, secondly, Symonds located the murders not as part of “social crime” by ordinary people or a survival strategy akin to poaching or theft, as characterized by E. J. Hobsbawm and others, but as an indicator of an underclass response to market opportunities and a cash nexus that shadowed the formal economy. By embedding her material in this dynamic of an underclass, Symonds usefully moves the argument on from sentencing and a top-down, court-based version of crime and criminals to an analysis of social circumstances and domestic networks.

Symonds proposes that public interest in Burke and McDougal transformed the Edinburgh underworld in 1828. This argument is important and deserves more attention, but ultimately is unsustained here. This gang of four rogues is not shown to have differed significantly from earlier or later decades, and a considerably more extensive study, temporally, thematically, and in terms of documentation, would be necessary to be convincing.

Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester

Richard Rodger


Desperately distressed by the Hanoverian succession to the British throne in 1714, the inequities of the new union of England and Scotland, and the recent Whig rise to dominance at Westminster, Scottish and English advocates of restoring the Stuart dynasty launched a substantial but poorly planned, underfinanced, and badly coordinated rebellion in the fall of 1715. Spread over parts of Scotland and northern England, the revolt lasted until May of 1716, but its unsuccessful outcome was predictable after the indecisive Battle of Sherrifmuir in November 1715. Following the revolt’s collapse, the Jacobite cause was to be largely quiescent, although alive, until the larger rebellion, led by Bonnie Prince Charlie, erupted in 1745.

Daniel Szechi’s book concentrates on the social and political circumstances that anticipated the uprising and on the social consequences of the Jacobites’ defeat. He provides a clear explanation of the social networking, which tied together the threads of Scottish society and even crossed the line separating rebels from loyalists. The ancient ties made kinsmen and noble neighbors sensitive to the plight of their erstwhile adversaries and allowed Scotland to escape the severe retribution anticipated by King George and his Whig ministry. Rebellious Catholics in northern England were not spared such reprisals.
Szechi’s capacity for clear analysis of tangled loyalties extends to his study of the religious dimensions of the revolt, because the Jacobite cause in 1715 was more Protestant than it was Catholic, notwithstanding the Catholic faith of James Francis Edward Stuart, the Old Pretender. Catholics in Scotland and northern England constituted a minority of the rebellious Jacobites in 1715, because the Tories in Scotland were mostly Episcopalian and they were the foremost supporters of the Stuart claim in that season.

Military aspects of the rebellion receive adequate attention, but are not the primary focus of the book. Rather, Szechi explores the conditions that put the Jacobites at great military disadvantage. Government troops enjoyed the upper hand in training, food, arms, powder, money, and leadership in the field. Nevertheless, the Jacobites fielded a force that was sufficiently competent to create alarm at Westminster.

The author is evenhanded in assessing the opposing sides. He has made extensive use of Scottish, English, and French primary sources, and his writing is handsomely polished. Yet he has a hard time resisting the inclusion of attractive quotations, because the book has too many block quotations, which at times needlessly interrupt the flow of his analysis or narrative.

This book will be of most interest to scholars with serious interests in Scottish history and eighteenth-century Britain. It is unlikely to engage the casual reader of Scottish history seeking a thrilling tale of the Jacobite wars. Dramatic narration is not extensively employed, as the author concentrates on closely reasoned analysis of the social, political, and religious circumstances of the revolt. Szechi is very good at that, and he has produced a fine study of the ill-conceived and ill-fated rising of 1715.

_Providence College_  
Richard J. Grace


The significance of money will come as no surprise to anyone with a mortgage, an adolescent, or the need to buy lunch in London. But in this new book, the author provides money with a social life that is every bit as intriguing as that of humans in English history. Deborah Valenze is concerned with the efforts to master “the problematic qualities of money as the age rearranged categories and rules to accommodate the volatile effects of this powerful medium” (278). The account of money’s role in the transition from the early modern to the modern world will
make the book useful for readers interested in the social, economic, and cultural history of the long eighteenth century.

Valenze begins with the fears arising from money’s power to create instability in a divinely ordered world. Around the year 1100, avarice began to replace pride as the primary vice, with the tales of Jesus and the money-changers and Judas providing a theological warning against the menace of materialism. Soon the Franciscans were warning followers against handling coins. But the social life of money can most clearly be seen in the way that it introduced categorical “instability into many areas of social and personal life,” undermining distinctions between social groups and becoming involved in activities that are not strictly economic (32).

Valenze shows how the variety of coins in circulation combined with counterfeiting and clipping to create confusion, leaving individuals to determine the value of any given coin. This in turn led to the desire to fix the value of money and to replace disorderliness with state control. The situation was worse still in the colonies, where the prohibition against importing precious metals led to the emergence of wampum and other forms of exchange beyond state control. In both of these examples, money’s role in society was viewed as a threat to the customary notions of order.

By 1700 John Locke was defending money, relating its functions to those of the body. Getting and spending became natural and healthy because, like blood, money needed to circulate. But the attitudes to money were rarely uniform. Many of Locke’s contemporaries dreaded money’s ability to tempt people to abandon traditional morals or to displace notions like honor and virtue. Similarly, money could be heralded as the great leveler or a democratic enabler, dissolving or subverting hierarchy while simultaneously exerting its “power to create hierarchies, especially as a marker of gender and class” (178).

One of the most interesting themes in the book is the way that money became the means to regulate and to assign value to people, part of a process of creating equivalencies between people and prices, or blurring the distinction between people and commodities. The author shows how this new idea was applied to slaves, vagrants, servants, migrants, women, and the self. This wonderful book is filled with far too many fascinating ideas and examples to be covered here. It will be of interest to a wide range of readers, particularly in its demonstration of the transforming power of money and its ability to redefine social relationships and to remake the identity of users.

University of Delaware

John Patrick Montaño
By the time Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985, the Soviet Union had already experienced almost a generation of economic decline. The lack of progress raised the whole question of whether the Communist system could be reformed at all. Gorbachev may have wanted to preserve the Soviet Union, but he never really understood just how far his own reforming logic would take him. His reforms not only served to produce chaos in the country, but they also produced a backlash against them among bureaucrats, factory managers, the KGB, and the military. The feeling of drift and stagnation became more pronounced, as did a certain sense of hopelessness. According to a poll taken in 1989, half of the Soviet people blamed the current crisis not on perestroika, but on communism. When asked what should be the country’s highest priority, the vast majority expressed their strong wish for material and moral improvement, democracy, and personal freedom. Meanwhile, support for communism was rapidly declining within the party itself, as thousands resigned their memberships.

The author of this book does not consider many important historical events, political developments, or economic conditions in his analysis. He deliberately avoids the use of binary categories to describe Soviet reality such as oppression and resistance, repression and freedom, the state and the people, and morality and corruption. In avoiding this kind of analysis, he ignores a great deal about Soviet decline. Nevertheless, this book is a brilliant anthropological reconstruction of the mental and cultural furniture of late Communism and the fascinating paradoxes of a country “both stagnating and immutable, fragile and vigorous, bleak and full of promise” (4). In his highly original methodology, the author focuses on the final Soviet generation, the ninety million men and women who came of age between the 1970s and the mid-1980s. His goal is to show how this generation, which believed in the eternal verities of Soviet Communism, nevertheless came to be unsurprised by its collapse. With great insight, the author traces the shift from a semantic to a pragmatic model of ideological discourse, which more than anything else helped to undermine the ideological system. To highlight the symptoms of cultural and political breakdown, he makes use of ethnographic materials like films, humor, television, journals, newspaper editorials, and ideological speeches. He analyzes these materials with clarity and intelligence. These sources often give this book an anecdotal look, but the author does succeed in breaking new ground in what is certainly an important contribution to the discussion of Soviet decline.

University of Saskatchewan

Robert Grogin
The author of this book focuses her effort on the use of the symbolic act of circumcision and the remains, the foreskin, as a metaphor for a number of historical situations. The episodes described often, although not exclusively, deal both directly and indirectly with the topic of Christianity and Judaism as discussed in the introduction. The ideas of the superposition of Christ over Moses, the New Testament over the Old Testament, etc., are imbued in the many examples she sees fit to examine. Although the book is short, around one hundred pages of text, she manages to meander in a most Herodotean manner. In many cases throughout the reading, the reader struggles to see how many of the anecdotes are relevant, and somehow doubts that all of them are. Her treatise may override much of the text, but in places, Kathleen Biddick seems quite literal and historical and at times pushes the theoretical nature of her analogy to a near breaking point. Although the reader admires her effort and thesis, this book could have been shortened to a long article and maintained the same punch.

In the introduction, Biddick lays down her central theme. Her thesis addresses Judeo-Christian relations but then is taken back partly in the analysis of the contradictions inherent in ahistoricism and its use as a method of obtaining information on disparate temporal situations. This is quite a conflict. Turning back to theology, she continues on to the topic of Semitic–Occidental relations. Her most repeated subject is that of superposition and its relations to both writing and the spoken word. The highlight of the section is on page ten, where she poses the question of when or where anti-Semitism supersedes anti-Judaism. It leaves the reader wondering at what point does it hit home as more personal, when there is malignity toward religion or when there is animosity of ethnic identity? In the end, it is just a consideration of how one can justify one’s crimes. The reviewer believes that her thesis would answer thus: the process of shedding the foreskin, of shedding time, leads only from one nomenclature to a stigma that only deepens the barbs of racism.

Although in one way or another Jews turn up in most of the rest of the book, the theme mutates a bit to fit each situation—not always to the detriment of the theory itself or to the analysis of the episode—and therefore the text lends itself to the criticism of being a bit scattered. Pieces of history, most notable in the end of the book, seem like history out of time or place.
The analysis in chapter one of the *mappaemundi* and its role in, as well as casualty of, contemporary European racism was fascinating nonetheless, and although the reviewer is not in the position to judge its holistic use of sources, it felt well researched and thorough. The analysis of how important side notes are in maps was a reminder as to how historical information exists everywhere, even, as is later mentioned, in notes from a handwritten journal (which gave context to a picture book of Nuremberg in a later chapter). The allusion to the use of the abstraction of what a Jew was to the medieval society was different in that one rarely hears of racism flowing dangerously from the evolution of the alphabet or astrolabe.

In chapters three and five there is an effort to explore the idea that circumcision is a permanent physical transformation used to exhibit a permanent spiritual transformation, as well as, in the case of Freud, a mental transformation. Where chapters three and four are more historical in their theory, chapter five is more theoretical in its history. Where in the earlier chapters there were allusions to Foucault and other social theorists, as the book goes on there are whole sections dedicated to them, and chapter five is dominated by them. This does not indicate a lack of information; the focus strays a bit from the proposed format and that, in and of itself, does not betray a lack of compelling topics. The book seems to run headlong into a steel plate just as it is getting deep into theory; the depth of the theory indicates an inquisitive author, making the unapologetically abrupt terminus even more puzzling. The end of the book is unfulfilling as it did not, per se, give a holistic answer to all the ideas proposed in the text. For example, Biddick brings up a new facet for analysis, namely the application of a female perspective and spirit for use in this metaphor, and then drops the potentially rich subject after only a nominal two-page treatment without so much as a brief explanation as to why.

On the whole, the book seems to have a shaky beginning; a compelling but scattered body; and an abrupt and unexcused ending, lacking the formal courtesy of a direct culmination of theoretical and historical “loose ends.” Nonetheless, there were many redeeming points left largely unanalyzed that will, no doubt, seep into the way future readings on the subject of Jewish relations with medieval Europe will be addressed.

*Old Bethpage, New York*  
Alexander Xenophon Caviris


This latest volume of the more than forty books written by military historian Jeremy Black is rather loosely framed around the concept of “total war.” That
term emerged as a result of the First World War and was subsequently liberally applied as the dominant nature of modern warfare between the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries. With varying degrees of success, the author seeks to evaluate thematically the accuracy of this rather slippery concept, analyzing its component parts chronologically by briefly exploring wars over nearly a century.

Asserting that any such broad definition can be problematic, Black shows how total war has been variously defined in terms of war’s intensity, range (geographical and chronological), nature of the goals, and the extent to which civilian society was involved. His main thesis seems to be, for it is never clearly and concisely enunciated, that the concept of total war can be contested in both specifics and in more general terms, and if not wholly inaccurate, it at least needs considerable revision. The idea that there was an “age of total war” and that it was synonymous with modern warfare is, he says, a deception resulting from a linear conception of modernization. This is vintage Black, vigorously lancing old paradigms and denouncing what he repeatedly calls teleological thinking. The book is driven by many themes that Black has put forward in earlier works, but which he now applies to the concept of total war and its counterpart, limited war. His critique of military history’s focus on the West and on predominant military powers and military systems leads here to valuable examples of wars and military systems in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Combined with the variety of types of wars in the West, such examples reinforce his argument that there was no single way of war, no Western way of war, and no truly universal age of total war.

Despite its framework (chronological chapters from 1860 to 1945, with a twenty-page postscript on 1945 to the present) the book is primarily an essay rather than a chronological narrative. In each period, Black presents evidence from the latest scholarship to bolster his themes, which include his condemnation of an overemphasis on technology and material resources for explaining military capability. Although some (particularly German) historians have explained Germany’s military defeat as due to the Allies’ overwhelming resources, Black cites recent work emphasizing strategic and operational mistakes made by the Germans themselves as well as increasingly effective fighting techniques by the Allies. In another theme, one particularly relevant today, Black stresses the need to go beyond the study of wars between states and also explore the use of force within states—civil or revolutionary wars—and irregular as well as regular forces.

Despite its outrageous price and sometimes complex prose, this volume is recommended as an excellent summary of much recent scholarship combined with
a number of original insights into multifaceted developments in warfare in diverse societies and cultures throughout the world.

*Rutgers University*  
John Whiteclay Chambers II


Well-written and attractively produced, but not as original as it suggests, this is an interesting work on the relationship between cartography and political science. It would be easy to draw attention to other works that have already covered the ground, and this reviewer hopes that his own *Maps and Politics* (University of Chicago Press, 1997) would be included, but it is possibly best to adopt a benign view, and also to ignore such trite remarks as “The concept of Europe is still fluid and controversial” (132). As over forty pages are devoted to notes and the print size is generous, the text is surprisingly short, but the coverage, whether of exploration, Mackinder, geopolitics, or different cartographic projections, can be readily fleshed out from other works. Arthur Jay Klinghoffer points out that maps may clearly be manipulated, and assesses the impact of political developments such as the Cold War and the post-Cold War, but he is inclined to underrate the degree to which there are separate cartographic issues. These are so profound that they invite attention to an autonomous dimension that Klinghoffer underrates. Possibly it would have been more helpful to ask someone who has produced an atlas to write this book.

*University of Exeter*  
Jeremy Black


The author of this book, who, until he assumed emeritus status, held appointments in both the history and economics departments at Harvard, has a taste for ambitious research projects. In *The Unbound Prometheus* [1969], he explored the technological changes and their sources that made Europe the dominant economic player on the global stage. *Revolution in Time* [1983] is an examination of the changing concepts of time, the manner in which devices to measure it were developed, and the consequences for world history. His most widely read book, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations* [1999], sought to understand “why some are so rich and some are so poor.” In *Dynasties,* David S.
Landes narrows his range considerably to ask why some families have been more successful than others in managing and retaining the large-scale business enterprises they started.

Most of the families Landes discusses will be familiar to his readers: Baring, Rothschild, Morgan, Ford, Agnelli, Rockefeller, and Guggenheim. The others may not be so well known, even if the product names associated with them are sometimes recognizable: Peugeot, Renault, Citroën, Toyota, Schlumberger, and Wendel. Relying on the work conducted in archives by business historians and biographers—Landes makes no claims to doing original research—he traces the roots of each family’s accumulation of wealth and power, the impact of passing generations on the business, and reports on the “current” status of the family’s relationship to the firm. But events move more swiftly than publishers’ printing schedules, and in at least two instances—Morgan and Ford—Landes is behind the times. In the latter case, the chairman of the board, whose name is on the company, has had to cede vast areas of authority to an outsider who is not only not a relative, but who also has no background in the automobile industry. As Landes notes in reference to the company’s earlier problems, “Founder Henry must be spinning in his grave” (151).

Landes’s casual reference to the builder of the Model T is characteristic of the author’s tone. As always, Landes has many penetrating insights to offer on the individual families, but the book is heavy on anecdotes and weak on overall structure. The tension between family enterprise and the encroachment of managerial capitalism is the prevailing theme, but the author supplies no generalizations that would explain why one or the other prevails. Landes taps a “wealth of entertaining tales” to move his narrative forward, but the book is too focused on “fortunes and misfortunes” at the expense of solid interpretation (ix).

If Landes has a message, it is that family businesses are not only an integral part of the modern American economy (one third of the Fortune 500 companies, he notes, are family controlled or have founding families involved in management), but are also indispensable for the economic development of Africa, the Arab Middle East, much of South Asia, and much of South America. Rational managerial enterprise has not and is not likely to take root there. Personal trust and affection offer a workable alternative. This is surely a subject worthy of Landes’s extended attention.

Boston College

Mark I. Gelfand
This volume is an invaluable asset and is an obligatory purchase by all university libraries as well as individual scholars of modern Christianity, in spite of its substantial cost. The author looks at the entirety of world Christianity, from both comprehensive and particular points of view (with one notable omission). Although it possesses the meticulous scholarship and exemplary writing one expects from this specific series and the Cambridge University Press in general, it is also strikingly original in approach and breadth. The footnotes and bibliography are also remarkable; most of the sources are from the last three decades and represent the most up-to-date research.

Eschewing a chronological survey, as one might expect from an encyclopedic work, the book instead has a thematic approach. It is truly “world” in scope, as the title promises; although several articles include discussions of Western Europe and America, many more focus on Africa, Asia, and Latin America. This is a reflection of what the editor, Hugh McLeod, describes in his introduction as a shift in demographics; from a high in 1900 of 80 percent, the “proportion [of Christians] living in Europe, the former Soviet Union, and North America had dropped to around 40 percent” by 2000. Moreover, “the proportion living in Asia and Africa had jumped to 32 percent” from 5 percent by that year (1).

McLeod identifies five major themes upon which the book is built, which are ably addressed by the subsequent essays: 1) the worldwide nature of modern Christianity; 2) various crises in Western churches (such as communism and secularism); 3) interactions between faiths; 4) war and decolonization; and 5) changes in communications. Part one serves as an introduction and surveys all of the major Christian churches, bar one. The one major exclusion is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, which is mentioned only twice in the entire book, and then only in a cursory fashion. Given the successful missionizing work of the Mormons and the worldwide popularity of the church overall, this lack of discussion is unfortunate.

Part two, “Narratives of Change,” examines specific changes in Christian thought and practice. Although not every chapter is “world” in scope, most are. One noteworthy example is the essay on “Marriage and the Family” by Adrian Thatcher, which discusses how different world practices, such as polygamy in Africa, represented a challenge to traditional Christian definitions of marriage (538–539). Part three focuses on interfaith interaction and includes essays on the
relations between Christians and Jews, Muslims, and Buddhists and Hindus, respectively. Issues of sexuality and gender are also contained in this section, as in David Hillard’s essay “Homosexuality,” which includes a frank discussion of how churches have dealt with the gay rights movements of the past century and how this reflects new ways of thinking about marriage and religion. The book concludes with an essay by McLeod on how Christendom has changed.

_California State University, Sacramento_  
Candace Gregory-Abbott