In his preface, the author of this biography begins by writing, “The story of Moshe Dayan is the story of the State of Israel” (vii). This book is indeed a knowledgeable, interesting, and sometimes insightful portrait of a man who has for a long time been identified with particular, often romantic perceptions of Israel. His well-known image came to be associated with military daring as well as strength but also with an exceptionalism manifest in his relations with women and in his collections of archeological artifacts. Mordechai Bar-On tells Dayan’s life story with both empathy and critical awareness. His personal connections with Dayan and his own participation in Israeli public life enhance his capacity to do so in a manner that engages the reader’s interest throughout the work. Nevertheless, it must be said that this narrative focuses narrowly on a biography that is situated within Israeli history but is disconnected from any broader historical analysis of its context or acknowledgment of alternative interpretations.

Dayan was born in 1915 and grew up in a Palestine governed by a British authority under a League of Nations mandate. These years contributed both to Dayan’s experiences coexisting with Palestinian Arabs and his identification with the Zionist project of securing a Jewish homeland. By the time of Israeli independence in 1948, Dayan was an active participant in the military and had consolidated perspectives on security needs as well as political priorities. Bar-On details Dayan’s role in the major developments of the 1950s and 1960s, including Israel’s policies of reprisal against border infiltrations, the decision to participate in the Suez/Sinai action of 1956, and Mapai Party politics.

It was, however, the Six Day War of 1967 that led to Dayan acquiring a position that integrated his military authority with his political position under circumstances that gave his decision making long-term effects. Joining a unity government as minister of defense in the days before war, his presence aroused expectations of action to resolve weeks of growing public insecurity. Once the war began, Dayan played a significant role in decisions contributing to the expansion of territories under Israeli control. At its end he was among those unwilling to consider withdrawal, believing that “Judea and Samaria, along with the Gaza Strip were part of our land, to be settled, not abandoned” (143).

Bar-On makes clear the inherent contradiction between Dayan’s hope of avoiding the alienation of Palestinian Arabs in the occupied territories while
maintaining his opposition to withdrawal. As a result, Bar-On points out, he was to be an active participant in the negotiations that led Israel to peace with Egypt in 1979, while “his policies established political realities that would impede future efforts to compromise with the Palestinians” (144).

This is a study that briefly and elegantly conveys the life of a man who played an important role in Israeli history. In addition, it includes thoughtfully considered material on his personal life. It is also a study based largely on the writings of Dayan himself as well as those of people close to him. Although Bar-On has used archival materials in addition, this is a story in which the context of Dayan’s life is described primarily as he might have understood it himself.

_Duke University_ 

Ylana Miller


Between June 1905 and March 1907, Joseph Burtt traveled to São Tomé and Principe, Angola, Mozambique, and the Transvaal on a fact-finding mission to determine the veracity of reports that alleged that the Cadbury Brothers Chocolate Company was purchasing slave-produced cocoa from Portuguese Africa. As Catherine Higgs states, her engaging microstudy adds to the oft-analyzed narrative of the cocoa scandal “the perspective of Joseph Burtt, erstwhile bank clerk, Quaker utopian, employee and friend of William Cadbury, and ultimately antislavery activist” (171).

Higgs’s accessible and graceful prose captures the complexities, contingencies, and contradictions of Burtt’s voyage through his own words as expressed in letters written to William Cadbury. Burtt’s mission was to determine whether or not Cadbury was purchasing cocoa produced by enslaved, coerced, or free laborers. But Higgs uses Burtt’s insecurities with himself as a utopian Quaker in foreign lands to demonstrate that the cocoa scandal really was about the definition of labor in the early twentieth century. For many British philanthropists, labor was either free or enslaved, and any form of coercion signified slavery. For the Portuguese, dignity was the definitive signifier of free or enslaved labor, and they felt plantation work allowed Africans to live dignified lives. As Burtt traveled in British and Portuguese colonial Africa, he observed and experienced the tensions in the two nations’ approaches to the creation of laborers.

Higgs’s primary source material is Burtt’s letters to Cadbury, but the book is excellently researched and illustrated with images of the cocoa plantations and
labor-recruiting trails. Nonspecialists will find the engaging story about one of the largest early twentieth-century industries interesting and informative. Specialists will be pleasantly surprised that a book with such excellent analysis and documentation is also an engaging story that is much closer to historical narratives produced by journalists than to dry academic fare.

Higgs lets Burtt take the reader on the voyage with him, beginning with his intellectual origins in the utopian Whiteway Colony in England. Burtt then steamed to the chocolate island plantations of São Tomé and Principe where Cadbury Bros. purchased its cocoa. After visiting mostly model plantations, Burtt traveled on to the Hungry Lands in Angola and followed them to the labor-recruiting networks’ origins in the hinterlands. He also traveled to Mozambique and even the British Transvaal to examine the working conditions of Africans laboring in mines. Ultimately Burtt’s careful reporting did convince the Cadbury company that slave labor and labor recruitment were part of cocoa production.

Higgs’s focus on Burtt’s experiences humanizes a moment in history when colonialists were deciding what defined humanity. Higgs’s narrative analysis through Burtt’s letters is also decidedly European. As long as readers do not expect to read history from Africans’ perspectives, they will find Chocolate Islands to be a fascinating journey approachable for scholars and casual readers. Still, adding Burtt’s fevered, exhausting struggles and contributions to the cocoa scandal highlights functionaries’ importance in colonial bureaucracies that is too often analyzed from the distant, lofty gaze of wealthy businessmen and colonial politicians.

Jared Staller

University of Virginia


This is a detailed, synthetic account of the Barbary corsairs who rose from a minor Mediterranean nuisance to become a major maritime menace. After more than three centuries of marauding, the French invasion of Algiers in 1830 sounded the death knell of the Barbary thread. Tracking these corsairs provides a window to the ebb and flow of power in the Mediterranean, eventually drawing in the United States, which fought its first international war against the corsairs in the early 1800s.

The introduction begins not in the Mediterranean but with the attack on a Saudi oil tanker in the Indian Ocean by Somali pirates in 2008. The author
informs us that “many of today’s Muslims seem to see the Somali pirates as heirs of the earlier Barbary corsairs” and that “even Western commentators are falling into step, with talk of Somalia becoming the ‘new Barbary’” (12). Although this assertion is difficult to quantify, the book is meant to strike a counterbalance to such claims, which is accomplished in a brief conclusion.

The book’s four chapters are mercifully disconnected from this rather strained argument, from the opening overview on the “Vanguard of the Sultan, 1492–1580,” followed by the title chapter, “Lords of the Sea, 1580–1660”; “Facing the Sea Powers, 1660–1720”; and the final chapter, “Decline, Revival, and Extinction, 1720–1830.” As semi-independent regencies under the nominal domain of the Ottoman Empire, the Muslim rulers of Salé, Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli played a pivotal role in the imperial contest for control of the Mediterranean and the slave/captivity complex so prevalent in this time period.

Alan G. Jamieson at times seems to hedge his analysis on the side of the “holy war” analysts, for example, stating that “the Barbary corsairs were different from most European privateers in that they engaged in war which was ‘eternal’” and that “the religious justification . . . helped to set the corsairs apart from the true pirates” (13). Yet, as the author demonstrates, the reality was far more complex, with economic justifications usually trumping cultural or religious motivations. The near-perpetual assistance of European renegades and the formal and informal alliances made with European powers help dispel any overarching thesis on the Manichean nature of Barbary maritime warfare.

The author states that “the Barbary corsairs [were] a unique phenomenon . . . for more than three centuries,” but, in fact, institutionalized maritime raiding, in all corners of the Mediterranean, was the norm (28). European kingdoms relied heavily on licensed privateers to perform a similar role as their Barbary counterparts. The North African corsairs were perhaps unique in that their modus operandi over the longue durée was to capture and then ransom European captives—hence, the superficial comparisons to the pirates of Somalia.

Two maps of the region are quite good, and the bibliography provides a suitable reading list on Mediterranean/Barbary history. The glossary of place names and chronology are likewise helpful, although the contemporary prints are a bit flat.

Pirates may not be on everyone’s radar, but with a feature film in production starring Tom Hanks as American captain Richard Phillips of the *Maersk Alabama*, captured and held in 2009 by Somali pirates, that may soon change. Jamieson provides a useful overview in this conversation.

*Loyola Marymount University*  
Kevin P. McDonald
In early 2011, the “Arab Spring” reached Yemen. Protesters in Sana’a challenged Ali Abdullah Saleh’s thirty-three-year-long presidency. Their movement gained momentum; huge crowds demonstrated daily throughout the country. Despite repeated attempts to subvert the people’s will, in February 2012 Saleh resigned, leaving a country beset with emergencies. The crises—Houthi insurrection in the north, secessionist movement in the south, tribal disputes in the east, dwindling oil and water resources, and an al-Qaeda presence—were products of Saleh’s short-term approach to governance and were decades in the making.

Sarah Phillips’s study was written before Saleh’s abdication. Her timely, cogent, and concise analysis explains the political system Saleh created and manipulated. The main chapters cover the informal rules of the game, the external actors, the regime, the political parties, and the importance of Yemen’s stability.

Yemeni politics were based on a neopatrimonial system directed personally by the president. The core principles were to reward supporters with access to state resources and keep opponents’ futures tenuous. Saleh likened the process to “dancing on the heads of snakes.” The key imperative was insuring that beneficiaries never accumulated sufficient power to oppose the president. Individuals bold enough to threaten Saleh’s office were cut off from government-based avenues to wealth. Paradoxically, since crisis makers were mollified by income opportunities, supporters were tacitly encouraged to remind the president of their importance by creating problems.

Saleh had to neglect or intentionally impoverish the population to maintain his elite allies. Even then, money for political favors was limited, especially as oil revenues waned. Phillips’s presentation focuses on the mechanics of control and manipulation; she does not get bogged down in specific cases.

The discussion precisely defines the internal and external players. Phillips enumerates the elites and their relative importance beginning with the president’s family, close kin, and key persons from his natal village. This discussion is helpful for understanding the central roles played by leaders of the Hashid and Bakil tribes. The depth of Saudi attempts to control the internal players is also explained. A separate chapter is devoted to the political parties and their importance.

Phillips argues that Western misperceptions of Yemeni politics as extremely complex benefitted the regime. Saleh used the threat of destabilizing crises to
acquire foreign aid from the United States, Saudi Arabia, and other countries. Lately, an al-Qaeda presence has been rewarded with armaments and development programs. Associating Iran with the Houthi rebellion raised the stakes for the United States. Saleh used emergencies to enhance his importance to donors, as evinced by the steady influx of funds the president needed to remain in power and ultimately by benefactors’ reluctance to encourage his abdication.

Phillips writes straightforwardly. A detailed table of contents makes up for the lack of an index. Twenty pages of footnotes and references follow the text, offering the curious or skeptical ample additional information and sources. This book should be on the desks of anyone studying Yemeni politics or US foreign policy in the Arabian Peninsula.

Ohio University, Zanesville

Thomas B. Stevenson


This book consists of a collection of fourteen articles about the history of the women of the Gulf. As such it can be added to the growing collection of studies on women in the Middle East and in Islamic societies in Egypt, Syria, Turkey, and North Africa, but it is the first to deal in its entirety with women of the Gulf or the Arabian Peninsula. Its articles cover a long period of Arabian history from pre-Islamic times to the modern period. One of its main objectives is to provide an alternative to the standard portrayal of Gulf women in mainstream literature and to note the contributions of women of the region, bringing to light the diversity of their experiences, both public and private. In doing so, it challenges the hegemonic writings that either ignored women or placed them unfavorably, denying them a role in history.

Gulf Women is a particularly challenging project in view of the difficulties that it raises. First among these is the problem of sources, or more precisely the absence of sources. The nomadic nature, until recently, of the inhabitants of the Gulf, the absence of a clearly delineated territory, and consequently the absence of written sources are major factors that complicate the task of a historian trying to write not merely a history of the Gulf but also the history of Gulf women.

The contributors to this work have offered various ways of addressing these problems. Thus in terms of methodology and the use of sources, Gulf Women offers new perspectives on how to study not only Gulf women but societies that have not left written records in general.
Many of the authors have used literary sources, often from the oral tradition. Allen Fromherz analyzes the poetry of well-known Umayyad poets (Jarir and al-Farazdaq) to glean information on women, while Amira El-Zein rereads Umayyad poetry to reach conclusions on gender relations and class in Mecca and Medina. Moneea al-Ghadeer proposes by her reading of women’s poetry to offer an alternate history in their use of vernacular—particularly interesting is her correlation of this poetry with narrative sources of the Turkish period. Barbara Stowasser, on the other hand, dealing with the early Islamic period, uses the traditional sources of this period but reads them in a different way that sheds light on the women who took part in political activities in the early communities in Mecca and Medina and were ever present in the battlefield.

The introduction by editor Amira El-Azhary Sonbol points to the leitmotif that runs throughout many of the articles in the book, namely that there was a discrepancy between the requirements of Islam and the way that jurisprudence was subsequently formed in a fashion that was more favorable to male views, the later developments proving to be much more male oriented than was required by sharia law. Both Sherman Jackson and Ziba Mir-Hosseini argue that the hegemony of legal scholarship has contributed to the way women have been portrayed and show that the views of ulama need not be taken as representative of Islam but rather as representative of a kind of hegemony. At the level of lived realities, a different picture emerges from the one elaborated in legal sources. The presence of women in public spaces is explored by Ramadan al-Khouli (education), Hibba Abugideiri (midwifery), and Hoda El Saadi (the economy).

In a number of ways, notably the way various articles make use of sources and the attempts to find new methodologies and approaches to a difficult subject, this work can be useful both to scholars in women’s studies and to those who are interested in exploring new methodologies.

American University in Cairo

Nelly Hanna


When students think of a “civil rights leader,” they most often follow the cue of their political culture and summon a sometimes flat, smooth, and uncomplicated
image of Martin Luther King Jr. He appears with a seemingly effortless command of a rich rhetoric that, in its indictment of the contradiction between practice and principle, is simultaneously challenging and affirming.

As students and teachers of history, we pay a high price for a civil rights narrative too narrowly focused on the Cold War years. Felix L. Armfield, like the many talented scholars who have preceded him in studying black advocacy in the years between the two world wars, has a solid understanding of how that world differed from the one of the more-celebrated years to come. Thanks to careful and thoughtful studies such as this one, scholars now have a far better understanding of why circumspection and accommodation were among the necessary tools of a people with few other options rather than merely the defining traits of a failed class of leaders.

The special strength of this biography of Eugene Kinckle Jones, who led the National Urban League through the years surrounding the two world wars, is Armfield’s decision to frame his study around the strong effort of social workers to become recognized as skilled, highly trained professionals on par with lawyers and physicians. Although clearly sympathetic to the greater institutional and financial stability that professionalization promised, Armfield also demonstrates that professionalization contained within it many values that went against the idea that the social worker’s mission was not only to help individuals in dire need but also to educate the rest of the community about the ways in which it made human suffering not only possible but also more likely.

All too often, demonstrating one’s professionalism demanded an understanding of those struggling to survive as being personally flawed and in need of correction. Armfield makes a convincing case that, despite the tight corset imposed by these conventions, Jones did his best to keep his focus on the ways in which the larger society actually produced inequality and disadvantage for certain categories and classes of people. Those readers seeking a deeper understanding of the interwar activism of African Americans will also appreciate Armfield’s consistent and careful attention to the surrounding historiography going back many years.

If there is a flaw in this succinct study, it is one that results not from a misstep by Armfield but rather from the limits of the available historical record itself. Not surprisingly, the Jones papers best reflect their subject’s professional matriculation through that organization. Although the contours of this career are well and confidently illuminated here, the voice of the man, as both a public figure and a private person, is much harder to discern. This reviewer suspects that the reason for this originates in what American culture then required of those wishing to act
as racial diplomats, including appearing hat in hand, speaking with a carefully modulated sense of one’s appointed place within an implicitly and explicitly racist society.

University of Oklahoma

Ben Keppel


At present, Texas’s population centers—most notably Houston, the Metroplex (Dallas-Fort Worth), and the Austin-San Antonio region—are the state’s centers of economic power. Through Houston’s oil, Dallas’s finances, Fort Worth’s livestock, Austin’s technology, and San Antonio’s tourism, Texas has risen to prominence as the nation’s second-largest economy. Such growth, however, had quite humble beginnings. Long before Houston or Dallas became synonymous with Texas economic power, the state’s power went through Jefferson, Marion County. Jacques D. Bagur, in Antebellum Jefferson, Texas: Everyday Life in an East Texas Town, recounts the rise of this now-forgotten center of economic power in antebellum Texas.

Bagur covers the first decade and a half of Jefferson’s existence, the time in which the city was the state’s epicenter of cotton transport and leading port facility. Situated in northeast Texas, Jefferson was a major inland port on Cypress Bayou. Due to a blockage of debris known as “the Raft,” Cypress Bayou was deep enough to accommodate large steamships from Shreveport, Louisiana, which made Jefferson the focal point of the cotton industry throughout north, northeast, and east Texas and to all sending freight onto the Mississippi River. As a result, Jefferson rose to an importance that its location and size belied.

The author, however, goes well beyond focusing exclusively on Jefferson’s relationship to cotton and, of course, slavery in the Lone Star State. Drawing extensively from primary sources, including all relevant city, county, and state records, and secondary sources, Bagur details Jefferson’s industrial district directly related to its port status, specifically its wharves, warehouses and warehouse district, railroads, manufacturing, packeries, and commodity markets. Going beyond the industries, per se, the author also puts a face to the city’s economy with illuminating biographies about the city’s earliest and subsequent businessmen.

Beyond economics, the city’s municipal life is detailed. Whether chronicling the city’s Democratic past, noting the campaigning techniques in the city, or
highlighting prominent governmental figures, Bagur reminds us of something that too often gets overlooked in such works: the human element. Jefferson was Jefferson because of the unique menagerie of people who called it home. The author highlights the human element through extensive use of personal records, such as deed records and newspapers, in very useful chapters on such varied subjects as vice, health and medicine, crime, culture and entertainment, sports, and mortality that this reviewer found quite interesting and informative.

Although it lacks the theoretical framework and more interpretative (i.e., what Jefferson meant to Texas development) conclusions so desired by more studied and academic readers, this work, doubtless, will more than appeal to general readers. With the detail of an almanac, yet still readable, Bagur’s *Antebellum Jefferson* instantly becomes a source of reference and thus deserves a place in the library of any student of antebellum Texas history.

*East Central University*  
Christopher B. Bean


In this study, authors David M. Barrett and Max Holland focus on one element of the Cuban Missile Crisis they consider both understudied and crucial: the failure to conduct U-2 surveillance flights directly over Cuba from August 29 to October 14, 1962. Barrett and Holland argue that this self-imposed halt to flights allowed the Soviets to install missiles and shaped the manner in which the crisis played out. The bulk of this slim book focuses on why this halt took place and the largely successful attempt by the Kennedy administration to deflect blame for this intelligence lapse.

Utilizing a host of declassified as well as little-used congressional sources, Barrett and Holland tell an interesting tale of how fear of another “U-2 incident” led to Secretary of State Dean Rusk and National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy, with the support of Robert Kennedy, forcing a halt to direct overflights of western Cuba after the discovery of SA-2 surface-to-air missiles installed there. This decision not only allowed the Soviets to proceed with the installation of missiles undetected but left the Kennedy administration open to embarrassing questions from Congress about why this halt took place. The administration skillfully deflected these questions by emphasizing intelligence estimates that predicted the Soviets would never install missiles in Cuba, blaming the weather,
and claiming the peripheral flights that did take place. In so doing, the authors argue, the Kennedy administration unfairly placed the blame on the CIA and succeeded in defusing this potentially damaging narrative, allowing the dominant tale of Kennedy brilliance and American victory in the confrontation to define the historical understanding of the crisis.

The book adds to the existing literature on the Cuban Missile Crisis by highlighting an area that has not been seriously discussed, as the book’s lengthy historiographical appendix, the longest chapter in the work, makes clear (117–142). That said, although the book is well written and the research is excellent, the thesis of the work is not fully clear. The authors at different points state their purpose as demonstrating the difficulty Congress had in investigating the president, showing that the intelligence community was unfairly blamed for a decision made by Kennedy’s top advisors, and noting that “photo gap” is a crucial point to understanding how the crisis plays out. Additionally, the authors entirely focus on this one part of the larger story, taking it completely out of context. This decision does keep the volume slim, but it leaves the reader with the task of determining exactly where this story fits in the larger narrative.

Finally, there is one key question the book does not address that is fundamental to its case: Was the Kennedy administration justified in fearing the repercussions of a new “U-2 incident” in Cuba? The authors state that this is a primary cause for the “photo gap,” but they never explain whether or not this fear was justified. Nevertheless, this reviewer commends the authors for adding a new and important piece to our understanding of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Richard M. Filipink
Western Illinois University


The aptly entitled *Killer Show* is an excellent, even if horrific, story of the fire at the Station Nightclub, the fourth-deadliest fire in American history. Reading this work brings to life individuals and groups that underwent an ordeal totally outside their normal sets of expectations and perceptions of what would be in place for them as they waited for a memorable performance by the heavy-metal band Great White. In a matter of seconds, many of them died or suffered terrible burns, their lives transformed forever by the fire.

*Killer Show* is based on multiple sources of information, including video of the evacuation; official and unofficial documents; newspaper coverage of the fire; and
interviews with survivors, relatives of those who perished in the fire, and officials from various law-enforcement and fire-fighting departments.

The monograph has a number of chapters, among them one discussing the history of the Station as an iconic setting for the local population. The author analyzes dates and reasons for the club’s increasing dangerousness, including changes in the certification that allowed it to operate without building-code requisites and the illegal uses of foam and other materials. The book includes detailed information about the people who were present, including their names and with whom they attended, where they were at the start of the fire, and the routes they took as they tried to exit from the building, as well as extensive information about the firefighters and law-enforcement officers who responded to the fire. It also considers the continued trauma and suffering of the survivors and their families, as well as their neighbors who lost members of their own families to the fire.

In its concern with the cultural and surprisingly close-knit social organization of the local community this work is more than a summary of the experience. *Killer Show* is truly exceptional, reminding readers how risks are accumulated over time by multiple social actors pursuing their own individual pecuniary interests, how tentative and elusive the chain of causation was that made their behaviors eventually produce the disaster, and how those who paid the consequence were innocent bystanders to a tragic, risk-magnifying process.

The Station fire has attracted attention from scientists interested in the dynamics of fire and smoke propagation and from computer scientists who have created simulation models of the behavior of the people during the evacuation from the building. This monograph helps to round up the details of the disaster and should be a must-read for anyone interested in disaster science and the study of crisis evacuation from buildings.

*University of Delaware*  
Benigno E. Aguirre


The author of this study offers a brisk overview of American constitutional development organized topically around a central theme—that the Constitution has been interpreted and applied with an eye to achieving what Americans thought at each moment was the right balance between power and liberty. Importantly, David J. Bodenhamer emphasizes that Americans have persistently
held the view that power can promote liberty, not merely threaten it. As he puts it a bit indirectly, American views about constitutional rights have been structured around “a tension, always present but increasingly apparent, between individual and collectivist understandings of American guarantees of liberty” (211).

After two chapters on the British antecedents of constitutional ideas in the colonies and on the adoption of the Constitution, both focusing on ideas rather more than interests, Bodenhamer begins his topical survey. Chapters on separation of powers and federalism give the grounds for the author’s argument that these structures of government have “changed not because of fundamental shifts in doctrine but because the nation has changed” (90). Successive chapters deal with such topics as property, representation, equality, and rights, before the volume ends with a chapter on national security. Throughout his study Bodenhamer stresses how social change produces constitutional change. On equality, for example, the author writes, “World War II changed what a constitutional amendment could not” (186).

In general, Bodenhamer provides readers with a state-of-the-art summary of contemporary scholarship on constitutional history. The list of additional reading is comprehensive as to books but understandably neglects the large body of law-journal literature. Readers probably should be directed to some of the most important recent scholarship that has begun to revise our understanding of constitutional history. That literature suggests that Bodenhamer might have been more qualified in his perpetuation of the myth of Marbury v. Madison’s importance and Tocqueville’s assertions about the centrality of adjudication to constitutional law. Recent scholarship has mounted a substantial challenge to the view presented by the author of the so-called formalism of constitutional law in the late nineteenth century.

The discussion of equality contains little on the rights of indigenous Americans or immigrants. In writing that today’s constitutional politics reflects a “constitutionally mandated dysfunction,” Bodenhamer may overlook the particularly hyperpolarized party system we now have (113). More generally, he does not present a thorough discussion of the role of political parties in American constitutional development, though he hints at a broader point in writing, “Congress has often been strongest when a vigorous party system exists, and especially when the same party controlled both executive and legislative branches” (110–111). Readers would benefit from a more complete discussion of how variations in the party system—both organizationally and in terms of substantive commitments—have affected constitutional development.
These cautions do little to reduce the value of *The Revolutionary Constitution*. Scholars will be hard pressed to find a better short introduction to the large story of American constitutional development.

*Harvard Law School*  
Mark Tushnet


In this work, the author, an active-duty army officer, has produced a wonderfully detailed intellectual history of the US Army from 1812 to 1940. He argues that throughout the period covered in the book the army organized, trained, learned, and fought according to an intellectual framework imported directly from the armies of the French Revolution. The French combat method that constituted the army’s intellectual framework consisted of a dedication to offensive operations culminating in an assault, the formation of an infantry army with nonspecialized units, a linear and noncontiguous view of the battlefield, a desire to combine the effects of all the auxiliary combat arms into the main infantry battle, and the adoption of nondogmatic tactics.

Michael A. Bonura begins with a chapter describing the French combat method and its origin in the French Revolution. In the four chapters that follow, he analyzes the army’s tactical and general regulations, its educational institutions, and the images of France, the French military, and especially Napoleon in US popular culture. Throughout these chapters, Bonura skillfully employs a wide range of sources, including circulation records from the West Point library, military regulations, curricula from military schools, articles from professional military journals, and popular literature, to assess the extent of French influence on American military thinking. Each chapter ends with a discussion of US participation in a major war—the Mexican-American War, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, and World War I—and an analysis of the role that the French combat method played in a specific battle in that war. A final chapter details the decline of French influence from 1918 to 1941 as new technology, economic constraints, and German influence led to the adoption of a new intellectual framework that reduced the primacy of the offensive, employed more specialized units, and adopted a nonlinear, noncontiguous view of the battlefield.

Although Bonura demonstrates convincingly the French influence on the army’s regulations and academic instruction, the degree to which nineteenth-century
US Army officers accepted French ideals and employed the French combat method outside of major wars is less clear. Students, observers, and even some faculty at the US Military Academy in the 1820s and early 1830s, for example, were more interested in West Point’s ability to produce civil engineers than young Napoleons. The number of books on civil engineering in the library increased much faster than the number of books on military topics, and the number of books in French declined. Numerous officers failed to absorb the philosophy of state service propounded at the academy and instead left the army to work in private industry. For much of the nineteenth century, those who remained in the army spent their time in garrison at remote outposts or fighting Native Americans—activities for which a French vision of the battlefield may not have been particularly relevant.

This well-researched and extensively documented book will be of interest to students and scholars of French and American military history as well as intellectual history.

*George Washington University*  
Robert G. Angevine

(Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012. Pp. vi, 205. $35.00.)

In a Proustian moment from a 2001 episode of “The Simpsons,” Homer bites into an animal cracker that he knows was made in the 1960s. “Mmm!” he exclaims, “Turbulent!” But Homer is wrong. The animal cracker, like many of the artifacts of any era, was sweetly boring and by now a bit stale. In *Last Season of Innocence*, Victor Brooks sifts through the hit songs, movies, television shows, fashions, and other products aimed at teenagers during the decade. Most of these were intended to have shelf lives scarcely longer than a box of animal crackers, but many live on in the memory of our relentlessly ruminative culture. Unlike Homer, Brooks is not looking for turbulence, so, not surprisingly, he does not find it.

Brooks catalogued the early years of post-World War II childhood in *Boomers: The Cold-War Generation Grows Up* [2009]. This follow-up chronicles the experience, largely as documented in teen magazines and other mass media, of those who were in middle school and high school, or just entering college, during the years between 1959 and 1969. In contrast with some accounts of youth during the decade, politics plays a very small role here. Brooks’s 1960s teens are not, he says, “a small cabal of adolescent Robespierres or Trotskys or Francos” but rather a generation “far more thoughtful than nihilistic” (197). “While there were cracks
in the intergenerational institution,” Brooks concludes, “most teens and adults at least tacitly admitted that their juniors and elders had something to say and that their society was not hopelessly doomed” (196).

The book is strongest in its depiction of the sense of scarcity and overcrowding boomers felt during a time when the society was promising almost limitless growth and opportunity. This disconnect between the society’s rhetoric and the overcrowded schools, stressed underpaid teachers, and anxiety about finding places in college and the workplace very likely fed some of the rebellion for which the decade is so often remembered. Unfortunately, this analysis takes up only a bit more than two of the book’s twelve chapters, while television and music get two chapters each and shopping, the military, and the generation gap get a chapter each. Brooks’s approach is encyclopedic, but his book is short, with fewer than two hundred pages of text. The result is page after page of summaries of pop phenomena that add no nuance or insight to the vast amount of material that is already available.

Brooks is right that watching “My Three Sons” and “The Donna Reed Show” was a far more typical teen activity of the 1960s than, for instance, getting teargassed in Chicago in 1968. The reviewer’s personal 1960s included both. Indeed, each person’s life is more interesting than the clichés about the time when it happened. Unfortunately, in his attempt to debunk the clichés, Brooks has bitten off too much without providing a compelling thesis. The book comes off more as a stale summary of a time that was, if not always turbulent, at least more lively than this book makes it seem.

University of California, Los Angeles

Thomas Hine


This study offers a meticulously researched account of religion as it was lived on New England’s eastern frontier in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. According to Laura Chmielewski, the phrase “the spice of popery” was coined by Puritan minister Increase Mather [1639–1723] to describe and decry the contamination of Puritan orthodoxy by various heresies. In the author’s view, poverty, war, distance from Boston, and proximity to Wabanaki and French settlements made it difficult to sustain a religious life that was coherent, let alone orthodox.
Chmielewski reminds us that we should not conflate Maine’s early colonial history with that of Massachusetts. A relatively larger proportion of Maine’s early settlers were more concerned with fish and pine than religion, and those with firm commitments included Anglicans and Dissenters with ideas of their own. Even as Maine communities were pulled into Massachusetts’s social and political orbit, they were unable to attract and support a settled ministry. Ministers came to Maine either because they were inexperienced or because “Maine’s remoteness [was] a good place to conceal at least temporarily their unorthodox views or less-than-holy pursuits” (174). (If television had existed in colonial America, “The Real Ministers of Colonial Maine” would have been very entertaining.)

To make matters worse, Maine communities were periodically overrun by their French and Wabanaki neighbors. Captives were taken, and their abductions were sometimes of such sufficient duration that they converted to Catholicism. This left numerous Protestant Maine families with a serious quandary: Catholic relatives. Chmielewski delves particularly deeply into the experiences of these captives, tracing their lives in New France and back in New England in impressive detail. Some of these stories are truly extraordinary. In general, they were treated well; converting a Protestant was considered a good work, sometimes spurring affluent families to ransom captives. Moreover, New France needed people, so the government granted favors such as land.

Interestingly, Chmielewski’s description of the captives’ experiences among the Indians bears little resemblance to that of James Axtell’s famous essay, “The White Indians of Colonial America.”¹ Chmielewski finds little evidence of the Indians’ acculturative savoir-faire as described by Axtell. It is entirely possible that this reflects local factors, overstatement on Axtell’s part, or Chmielewski’s weaker grasp of the Indian dimension of her story. Most likely it is a combination of all three.

Over the course of the book, Chmielewski uses a variety of terms to describe the history of English encounter with French and Wabanaki Catholicism. Having scoured not only the documentary record but the material record as well, Chmielewski offers some discrete examples of debate, indoctrination, and borrowing. Ultimately, “entangled” seems to fit best, as religious belief and practice never became truly hybridized (10). As Chmielewski points out, even if Mainers were sometimes forced to confront certain misconceptions regarding Catholicism, their colony was no multicultural utopia. They still identified strongly with

Protestantism, and if that meant anything, it meant opposing Catholicism. The cultural otherness of the region’s Catholic Indians only amplified that repulsion. For most of Maine’s population, the “convergence” alluded to in the subtitle seemed to be more a grudging toleration than a transformative spiritual engagement.

Xavier University

Karim M. Tiro


Since its initial publication in 1879, William F. Cody’s autobiography has appealed widely to those with an interest in the late nineteenth-century American West, from the casual enthusiast to the serious student. The text can be found in an array of reprints and abridgements, but until recently, the 1978 Bison Books reprint, with a foreword by respected Cody biographer Don Russell, held the position of preeminence. This new edition has been published by the University of Nebraska under the Bison imprint as a contribution to the Buffalo Bill Historical Center’s McCracken Research Library’s project of making the collected papers of William F. Cody more widely available.

Cody published his autobiography—a fast-paced narrative of his childhood in Kansas, his scouting expeditions with the US Army, and his career as a buffalo hunter—at thirty-three. As the detailed chronology included in this edition makes clear, by 1879 Cody had already appeared as a hero in dime novelist Ned Buntline’s *Buffalo Bill, King of the Border Men* and as an actor in melodramas based loosely on his own life. The autobiography’s status as an objective account of Cody’s life and historical events on the western frontier has also long been debated. In his introduction, Frank Christianson deftly reviews the evidence and claims surrounding the *Life*’s veracity. He concludes, along with Russell and recent Cody biographer Louis Warren, that although particular episodes in the book are almost certainly pure fiction, the *Life* as it appeared in the original 1879 edition was Cody’s own work. Although it should not be read as a statement of “documentary truth,” it stands as “a formal summation, a codification of authentic frontier selfhood” by its author as he stood on the verge of a new kind of career as a maker and embodiment of western myth (xxix).

The introduction also places the *Life* in broader literary context. Christianson points out its affinities with two other classic American tales of self-making, the
autobiographies published by Benjamin Franklin and P. T. Barnum. He notes as well how the work also fits into the literary regionalism articulated by Mark Twain, whose regular illustrator, True Williams, also created the art included in this book for the first edition of the Life.

The text has been edited with skill. Working from the 1879 book published by Frank Bliss (no manuscript copy of the Life exists), Christianson has provided detailed but unobtrusive annotations for people, events, and places mentioned in the work. This edition also contains three maps and a substantial and varied sampling of the rich visual sources produced by and about Cody, such as photographs and advertising posters. Additional appendices offer selections from press accounts of Cody’s activities, stage programs, and correspondence. This book thus provides access to an unprecedented amount of primary sources related to Cody in one volume. It is an indispensable work for anyone interested in this protean and fascinating American.

*Lawrence University*

Monica Rico


In *Virginia at War, 1865*, the editors bring to a close a series of edited books devoted to each year of Virginia’s Civil War experience. As with earlier volumes in the series, this one covers a wide range of issues affecting Civil War Virginia, including the final months of military operations, emancipation, gender and the homefront, popular entertainments, the politics of Reconstruction, and the economy. Each topic is addressed by a different expert on Virginia history. The book concludes with an extended excerpt from the diary of Judith Brockenbrough McGuire, a wealthy woman who took refuge in Richmond after federal troops occupied her home in the Shenandoah Valley. Although each essay stands on its own, this volume’s overarching theme is the devastation caused by four years of war and the resulting “exhaustion” of ordinary Virginians (vii).

The final days of Lee’s army are recounted by Chris Calkins, who ably explains the absence of viable options for Lee to continue fighting. Ginette Aley explores the homefront through the correspondence of Kathleen Samuels, a well-born Virginian pressed to maintain her home in the face of material shortage and her husband’s absence due to military service. Kevin Levin provides a valuable account of the demobilization of Lee’s army and argues that the hardships experienced by returning veterans predisposed them to oppose Reconstruction
from the minute hostilities ceased. In a similar vein, Ervin Jordan’s account of emancipation in Virginia, a process that lasted until the end of 1865 with the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment, demonstrates the intransigence of former slaveholders towards former slaves and how it boded ill for the future of Afro-Virginians.

There are some surprising stories in this volume as well. Jaime Amanda Martinez shows that the Confederate government of Virginia succeeded against long odds in keeping its people fed and the economy functioning. E. Lawrence Abel shows that rather than lament their failing fortunes, Richmonders thronged to the theater and numerous balls in search of release from the trials of war. Exploring another forgotten corner of the war, F. Lawrence McFall Jr. opens a window on the short-lived Confederate capital of Danville, Virginia, where Jefferson Davis hoped to relocate the government after the fall of Richmond.

Judith Brockenbrough McGuire’s diary provides a fitting end to the volume in that it captures the disillusionment of an ardent Confederate from the planter class and provides rich details on the fall and occupation of Richmond. For McGuire, the defeat of the Confederacy was the end of the world as she knew it. Her family had been dispersed and her property destroyed. Along with these losses, she foresaw a society turned upside down in which former slaves would be her masters. Those fears proved illusory, but the insight into the minds of Virginians in 1865 is invaluable, as are the rest of this book’s contents.

University of Calgary

Frank Towers


The Korean War began on June 25, 1950, when military forces of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea suddenly attacked the Republic of Korea across the 38th parallel. Soon thereafter, President Harry S. Truman made the fateful decision to dispatch US troops to the peninsula to shore up the defense of America’s client state, South Korea. Yet despite the arrival of US troops, drawn primarily from occupation forces in Japan, conditions in the southern half of the peninsula continued to deteriorate. By midsummer, the North Koreans had succeeded in overrunning all but the southeastern corner to the peninsula, where US Army and South Korean troops had dug in along what became known as the Pusan
Perimeter. To stave off a complete defeat, the Truman administration and the Joint Chiefs of Staff decided to rush reinforcements to Pusan. Crucial to this effort was the mobilization of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, officially formed on July 7, 1950, under the command of Brigadier General Edward A. Craig. This temporary unit was comprised primarily of the 5th Marine Regiment of the 1st Marine Division and Marine Aircraft Group 33. By the time the bulk of the brigade arrived in Pusan in early August, it numbered more than six thousand men.

Kenneth W. Estes’s brief account of the brigade’s history—there are just 113 pages of text—is broken into four chapters. The first chapter offers a sketch of the US Marine Corps in the aftermath of World War II and the events that gave rise to the 1st Provisional Brigade. Chapter 2 focuses on the brigade’s first major combat action in Korea, which occurred from August 7 to August 12 along the southwestern edge of the Pusan Perimeter not far from the city of Masan. Chapter 3 traces the brigade’s efforts to beat back North Korean advances farther north, near the Naktong River, on August 17–19, and again on September 3–5. Chapter 4 deals with the brigade’s legacy, especially as it pertains to the history and structure of the Marine Corps itself.

The primary purpose of Estes’s book is not to provide general readers with an action-packed, “Band of Brothers” type of narrative that focuses on heroic deeds. Nor is the book meant to add to our knowledge of Korean history in any meaningful way. Instead, Estes attempts to challenge specific myths that have grown up around this famous Marine Corps action. Contrary to popular belief, he argues—convincingly so, in this reviewer’s opinion—the brigade was not composed primarily of World War II combat veterans, a notion often cited by earlier historical accounts as a basic reason for Marine success in Korea. He also argues that the 5th Marines were not the sole “fire brigade” that “saved the UN Command and the Eighth Army from destruction” (4). He notes that other military units also served as so-called fire brigades on the front lines, including elements of the much-maligned 8th Army. Finally, Estes argues that the much-praised coordination between ground and air units of the Marines has been significantly exaggerated.

Students of military history should appreciate this book. The author demonstrates a solid command of important archival records as he presents his argument in a clear, objective fashion. On the other hand, it would have been helpful to non-military specialists if Estes had explained military terminology and structure in a more straightforward manner at the beginning of the book. Moreover, expanding the focus of the book just a bit more to include some information on
Korea itself—and the impact that units such as the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade had upon Korean communities—would broaden the appeal of this valuable study.

Robert R. Swartout Jr.

_Mortar and Pestle_ 25:1, 2011:

_Robert R. Swartout Jr._

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Korea itself—and the impact that units such as the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade had upon Korean communities—would broaden the appeal of this valuable study.

Carroll College

Robert R. Swartout Jr.


In this new study, the author argues that the National Negro Congress (NNC) played a leading role in the late 1930s through the mid-1940s-era Popular Front: a coalition of labor, civil rights leaders, and liberals who fought to expand New Deal reforms and rebuff fascism (4). Moreover, the NNC moved away from established civil rights groups by envisioning race as a material rather than a moral issue and as national rather than Southern in scope (4–5).

Erik S. Gellman contends that the New Deal brought new government receptivity to African American issues (9). Simultaneously, A. Phillip Randolph’s Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and the Communist Party’s defense of the Scottsboro Boys drew attention to connections between civil rights and labor issues while engaging the curiosity of college-educated African Americans who sought new civil rights strategies (11–12). These trend lines met in 1935 with the founding of the NNC, a coalition of activists who articulated a class- and race-based agenda (16).

Gellman then analyzes the NNC’s early efforts to move thousands of blacks into unions as part of a plan to leverage their power in labor (20–21). He argues that this plan had effects in Chicago, with more Chicago blacks moving into unions even though national-level union leaders did not enact democratic programs.

Gellman then shifts his examination to NNC’s youth affiliate, the Southern Negro Youth Congress (SNYC), and its collaboration with the Tobacco Stemmers and Laborers Union in Richmond, Virginia. This organization drive failed, he contends, but it set the precedent for interracial industrial unionism across the South (63–66, 103–107).

Moving back to the main organization, Gellman focuses on Randolph’s split from NNC in 1940. Randolph’s withdrawal shocked some contemporaries, but others argued that it made the NNC more streamlined for the civil rights fight. Gellman asserts that despite Randolph’s departure, his later successes derived from the NNC’s earlier activism (150–158, 162).

Gellman then tracks NNC’s struggles through the war years. The war prevented NNC from using the tactics it employed in the 1930s. A new generation of
female leaders, however, took the helm, focusing the group on education, creating alliances with unions, and campaigning to keep the NNC at the forefront of civil rights (164–166).

Gellman finishes with another analysis of SNYC and argues that the group linked a domestic civil rights agenda to an international campaign against fascism. Members of SNYC, for example, played key roles in the formation of the South Carolina Progressive Democratic Party, which challenged the nomination of segregationist Senator Jimmy Byrnes to the vice presidency in 1944 (216–222). When they returned to South Carolina they connected with other international youth organizations and utilized Communist Party analysis to critique domestic and international politics.

This utilization of Communist analysis, however, led to a disavowal of the NNC as the Cold War rendered such connections untenable. Fortunately, Gellman’s work has returned the NNC to its proper place within our understanding of the “Long Civil Rights Movement.”

Loyola University, Chicago
Christopher Manning


In recent years, economically pressed book publishers, citing shrinking readership, have reluctantly issued edited volumes. But a number of recent collections about eighteenth- and nineteenth-century US history, including The Economy of Early America [2006] and The Old South’s Modern Worlds [2011], argue for the vitality of the form—at least when their editors assemble essays with common historiographical and thematic concerns. Add John Craig Hammond and Matthew Mason’s Contesting Slavery to this select list of outstanding collected volumes. Editors Hammond and Mason have collected thirteen strong essays that explore the ways slavery shaped ideological and cultural currents, the process of state formation, and the course of partisan and sectional politics in the early American republic. The volume closes with James Oakes’s insightful “commentary” that uses the essays in the volume as a springboard to recast historians’ understanding of the contest over slavery before 1860.

At the heart of this volume—highlighted most effectively by Oakes—lies the insight that the American Revolution offered a contradictory ideological legacy for the United States that ensured continuing conflict over slavery. Although the
patriots’ emphasis on natural rights connoted universal liberty and marked human bondage as anomalous, the notion that private property represented the bulwark of liberty offered slaveholders a compelling ideological defense of slavery.

The first five essays explore when and how these conflicting meanings of the Revolution shaped early national political debates. For Matthew Mason, Americans north of the Mason-Dixon Line acted on their antislavery assumptions only when they recognized a threat to their interests in slaveholders’ defense of slavery. This recognition came late in the North, Robert G. Parkinson argues, because patriots’ efforts to forge a common cause during the struggle of the Revolution singled out freedom-seeking African Americans as unworthy of citizenship and their abolitionist sympathizers as unpatriotic. In a similar vein, Edward Rugemer’s standout essay examines the origins of the gag rule, arguing that it passed because Southern politicians convinced enough white Northerners that abolitionist propaganda had fomented the various US and Caribbean slave revolts over the previous forty years.

The four essays in part 2 explore another of the volume’s themes: the way slavery shaped the American state. Collectively, these essays reveal that before 1840 Southern slaveholders usually looked to the federal government for protection of their human property. As George William Van Cleve argues, American lawmakers forged a “slaveholders’ union” in which a weak national government could not legislate against slavery and positive law superseded natural rights. Brian Schoen’s and David Ericson’s illuminating contributions stress similar themes, portraying Southerners as “shrewd calculators” who used the federal government and the second party system to protect slaveholders’ interests (162). The final four essays explore the complicated intersection of partisan politics and slavery in the early national era, among both party rank and file and national leaders. Rachel Hope Cleves argues that Federalist attacks on slavery combined partisanship and morality, but conservatives’ fear of social disorder hindered their ability to act more forcefully. Padraig Riley’s essay explores the paradox of Northern Democrats committed to democratic reforms in alliance with Southern slaveholders, explaining that a commitment to regional democratization compelled most to abandon antislavery. Finally, Donald Ratcliffe’s insightful essay argues that the rise of radical abolitionism in the 1830s reflected the political marginalization of a once-vital antislavery movement after the creation of the second party system.

Collectively, these essays remind historians of the centrality of slavery to the political economy and politics of the early American republic. They should, as Oakes notes, push historians to rewrite the history of the early national era and see the contest over slavery not simply as prelude to the antebellum struggles that
precipitated the Civil War but as deeply embedded in the life of the nation as Americans debated over competing conceptions of liberty. And maybe, too, this collection will help restore the collected volume to its rightful place in historical publishing.

A. Glenn Crothers

University of Louisville /
The Filson Historical Society


This new book on Plessy v. Ferguson has a number of admirable qualities. In about two hundred pages, it covers a remarkable amount of ground. William James Hoffer offers a thorough account of the legal challenge to Louisiana’s 1890 railroad segregation law, from its inception as a carefully prepared test case in New Orleans through the several levels of appeals that led, in 1896, to the infamous US Supreme Court decision. Writing for the court, Justice Henry Billings Brown reasoned that state-mandated racial segregation did not violate the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Alone among the justices in contesting this conclusion was Justice John Marshall Harlan, whose dissent famously proclaimed, “Our Constitution is color-blind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens.”

This book is much more than just a litigation history, however. Hoffer also provides an extensive and richly detailed consideration of the historical context surrounding the case, describing both national-level developments and the distinctive local experience in New Orleans. He also looks beyond 1896 to consider Plessy’s impact on law and American life generally. His final chapter, entitled “Plessy’s World,” traces the story through the fall of Plessy’s “separate but equal” doctrine in Brown v. Board of Education [1954]. An epilogue presses the story forward still further, touching on the ways in which, according to Hoffer, Plessy is “alive and well” still today.

Those who like their history presented with the author’s judgments in the foreground will appreciate Hoffer’s approach. All historians are necessarily critics, of course, but Hoffer tends toward the more assertive end of the spectrum, rarely letting a historical actor pass from the stage without letting the reader know what he thinks of the choices that person made. As this is a history of the way law was used as a tool of racial oppression, these assessments are predictably harsh. And as Hoffer’s baseline for racially enlightened behavior was an idealized vision
of “a world of fluid racial identities where belonging or not belonging was a choice of the individual,” practically every figure he encounters—Plessy’s lawyers, Harlan, Chief Justice Earl Warren, Justice Clarence Thomas—is chastised for relying upon “race as a category” (183, 181). Hoffer’s account simmers throughout with the author’s anger, frustration, and disappointment at the unfolding tragedy of Jim Crow in America. This is a deeply felt work of scholarship.

This book aspires to a middle ground between academic monograph and popular history. A readable but substantive work of historical synthesis, it locates this ground reasonably well. Yet this achievement does raise the question of the book’s audience. It can be rather dense going for a general audience. Yet it lacks the basic attributes of an academic work—no overreaching thesis, no footnotes, little effort to situate the book among other scholarship, and only intermittent and frustratingly vague engagement with historiographical debates—thus limiting its utility for scholars. Nonetheless, this book overflows with valuable material and challenging insights, both for the general reader and the scholar.

Christopher W. Schmidt
Chicago-Kent College of Law; American Bar Foundation


This book is an important and necessary addition to the historiography of New Mexico for it gives new insight into New Mexico’s over-six-decades-long quest to become a state.

New Mexico became a part of the United States in 1848 as a result of the Mexican War. The Compromise of 1850 fused together what are now New Mexico and Arizona to create the Territory of New Mexico. Eventually, the territory was split into two territories, and finally, in 1912, New Mexico and Arizona respectively became the forty-seventh and forty-eighth states. The story of why it took so long is complicated and difficult to comprehend.

Here is a book with a concise, clear, documented narrative. The author brings together his editorial experience and his formal education as a historian to craft an excellent, well-researched, and much-needed rendition of a confusing part of New Mexico’s history. The story is engaging, and the author draws on new sources to offer thought-provoking insights. He creates some new and much-needed parameters within which to understand why New Mexico (and, in part, Arizona) took so long to be admitted into the Union.
National politics had an overwhelming role in the statehood debate. The Republicans in Congress, at the time long in power, did not want to lose their advantage by admitting more potentially democratic states. Other factors included New Mexico’s well-known corruption. A number of statehood proponents sought the status to cash in on their land investments and influence. They were known in local history as the Santa Fe Ring, and the author insightfully labels these proponents of statehood the generation of 1890, although arguably the year should be 1880. In the legacy of generational leaders and attitudes, the author expertly describes the succeeding territorial leaders as the generation of 1910, which puts the whole story into perspective.

Racism has been considered the major factor in giving Congress pause for voting in favor of New Mexico. The author provides an overwhelming number of examples of such attitudes. Even President Theodore Roosevelt openly expressed his belief in the inferiority of non-Euro-Americans. The words, attitudes, and actions of US senators Albert J. Beveridge of Indiana and Nelson W. Aldrich of Rhode Island could never be tolerated today. Yet, though convenient to their criticism of New Mexico, they became a part of a complex plethora of reasons for why it took sixty-four years for New Mexico to achieve statehood.

The book emphasizes the last twenty-odd years of New Mexico’s attempts at statehood, and this brings the readers to some much-needed and obvious observations. Whereas Roosevelt’s successor, William H. Taft, worked on New Mexico’s behalf, Roosevelt promised to support statehood for New Mexico, but political expediency negated his words. Here Taft receives proper credit for his effort, and in that story another unheralded person surfaces. Taft’s legislative liaison and postmaster general, Frank H. Hitchcock, oversaw all the congressional negotiations and guided through Congress the final passage of the Enabling Act.

This is a lively, interesting, and invaluable book—a perfect example of what good published history should be.

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Thomas E. Chávez


This study is an unusual combination of intellectual, political, and social history. Just as Sean Wilentz emphasized the development of American democracy in New
York’s union halls, John B. Jentz and Richard Schneirov here trace the transformation from the republican ideal of free labor to the fraught question of wage labor in a democracy. In Chicago, they argue, workers shifted their consciousness from producer to wage earner. While the capitalist classes established a new regime, workers’ urban populism was channeled into the traditional party structure.

The book is also unusual in its focus on the Civil War as the crucial period in the building of industrial Chicago. Most histories of the rise of industrial America focus on the post-Civil War period as the point of ignition for massive industrial growth. Jentz and Schneirov, however, see the Civil War and its immediate aftermath as a crucial period in the construction of both the city’s industrial and political systems. For the authors, the Civil War period made the United States into a modern nation-state (56).

Intended for an academic audience, *Chicago in the Age of Capital* traces a familiar story in the history of labor. Grounded in extensive research in the German- and English-language newspapers of the period as well as population and manufacturing census data, the authors argue that the labor shortage created by the war brought power to unions. The craft and artisanal sphere, however, was undermined by mechanization and the resulting turn to wage labor. The eight-hour-day movement, which began in 1867 in Chicago, brought the discussion of the place of the wage earner in a republic into the public sphere. The movement, unfortunately, did not provide a viable alternative to wage labor. After the 1871 and 1874 fires, the new immigrants coming to the city were workers, not prospective farmers or craftsmen; the very act of rebuilding the city helped to solidify ethnic working-class neighborhoods, politicizing and localizing the working class.

The authors spend half their pages on the upper class from 1873 to 1879, uncovering the ways in which it tried to establish its dominance in the city. Repeated attempts to create a docile working class—through religion, temperance, or brute force—taught the city’s rulers to establish a somewhat shaky tolerance of difference, sidelining the Protestant middle class. In addition, the city’s rulers adopted a solid tolerance of corruption. Under Mayor Carter Harrison, the city found a balancing point between the working-class rage and upper-class outright suppression of labor action.

*Chicago in the Age of Capital* will be useful to other historians for its extensive use of newspaper records and its solid grounding in the quantitative analysis of population and manufacturing trends. Its blend of social, political, and intellectual history contextualizes and deepens our understanding of the relationship between capital, labor, and politics. Its focus on the Civil War through 1879, however, is
somewhat jarring; by focusing exclusively on this period, Jentz and Schneirov seem to slight the massive influx of southern and eastern European immigrants who would change the face of ethnic Chicago. They focus only glancingly on the rise of the Knights of Labor, who would win 31 percent of the city’s mayoral vote in 1886. In addition, by focusing on the ruling class’s tolerance for corruption and difference, they elide the questions that would drive the Progressive movement of the following forty years, a movement that had, one could argue, far more importance for our understanding of politics, inclusion, and the proper role of government.

Victoria Getis

Ohio State University


This author’s survey of half a millennium of Latin American religion is monumental and erudite, yet highly readable. Although three chapters are devoted to the colonial era and one to non-Catholics, two-thirds of the book focuses on Catholicism since independence. The church’s search for justice serves as a unifying theme, revealing intimate links between Catholicism and socioeconomic, cultural, and political forces. One of the book’s many fortes is its chronological scope, allowing author John Lynch to trace important historical changes and continuities across historical eras.

For example, he argues that nineteenth-century popular religious practices responding to the plight of the poor created a substrate of faith tapped by liberation theology a century later (171). His cross-national comparisons are equally illuminating. In the century after independence, the Latin American Church was disestablished, divested of most of its wealth, and—after much soul-searching—became more inclusive and attuned to social needs. Lynch reveals how and why the church’s evolution varied from state to state: relatively early regeneration in Ecuador and Colombia; slow, uneven, but ultimately successful rebuilding of Argentina and Mexico; and continued marginalization in Venezuela and Cuba. Lynch’s comparisons of the church’s response to populist strongmen and Cold War conflicts across the region yield more rich insights. In Brazil and Chile the church defended human rights, but in Argentina it remained silent due to state subsidization, ties to the army, and anti-Semitic elements. Lynch recounts how in Central America the church stood against rightist repression at great human cost in El Salvador and Guatemala. Although his characterization of
Nicaraguan Bishop Obando as resisting Marxism’s “false gods” is uncharacteristically less than evenhanded, Lynch’s approach to recent and highly contested church history is, on the whole, judicious (322). This is especially apparent in his chronicling of the Cuban Church’s remarkable evolution from pariah to important, intentional interlocutor and protector of dissidents.

Lynch argues that Latin American Catholicism maintained its core beliefs through the centuries, an interpretation buttressed by defining conversion as acceptance of central dogma without necessarily conforming to church teachings in everyday life. Seen from this perspective, indigenous “idolatry” is cultural, not religious. Many anthropologists, however, would argue that what Westerners compartmentalize as “religion” is for indigenous people an inseparable part of quotidian practices. Archaeologist Patricia McAnany, for instance, argues that for Maya women, sweeping the patio is at once work and a cosmologically significant ritual. Lynch’s description of nineteenth-century popular religious expression as deeply woven into everyday life is a more productive approach to the subject (170).

As a student of postrevolutionary Mexico, this reviewer was surprised to see the Arreglos that ended the bloody Cristero War described as ineffective and both Lázaro Cárdenas and his lasting détente with the church absent. Others could quibble over other omissions, notably those of Camilo Torres and Rigoberta Menchú. To be fair, no single volume could cover every aspect of Latin American Church history. In the final analysis, the book’s ambitious scope, exhaustive survey of scholarly literature, and measured approach make it a work of exceptional value for Latin Americanists from undergraduates to senior scholars.

Colby College

Ben Fallaw


This volume of nine essays investigates the ever-changing landscape of hypermasculinity, known commonly as “macho,” from 1880 to the present. The task of the collection is to dispel the myth that macho is a universal or monolithic concept to which all Mexican men aspire. The editors helpfully summarize classic works on gender by Joan W. Scott and Judith Butler, which describe gender as a series of socially constructed power relations that are performative in nature. The
opening articles focus on masculine identities embraced by some men and contrast them with ambiguous or alternative masculinities embraced by others to subtly arrange for private, homosexual encounters. Kathryn A. Sloan’s article on “Runaway Daughters” makes excellent use of court cases on the subject of *rapto*, which is best described as “elopement through abduction” (75). The agency of young women who emulated masculine tropes to “abduct” their way to marriage provides one example of “masculine women”—the third major theme of the volume. The second section analyzes mass-media depictions of men in folk music, movies, and printed images aimed at the reproduction and distribution of masculine roles.

The consistent strength of these articles is the ability of the authors to introduce the nonexpert to the subject before moving to detailed case studies. Victor M. Macías-González details how the rule of Porfirio Diaz from 1876 to 1911 powerfully shaped definitions of masculinity during the period of the “Porfiriato” and explains that much of the evolution of gender in the modern period either incorporated these ideals or reacted to them. President Diaz and his technocrats, los científicos, instilled a great respect for reason, masculinity, and science in the elite ruling class. The dual embarrassment of territory loss to the United States and French occupation in the nineteenth century led Diaz to redefine masculinity as the embodiment of “civility, refinement, and whiteness” (265). The second section investigates multiple masculinities throughout the regions of Mexico from the “Golden Age” of cinema during the early twentieth century up to the charros gays or “gay cowboys” of the early 2000s.

Throughout the period, members of the proletariat challenged European notions of masculinity as “decadent,” “self-serving,” or “effeminate” (42). To differentiate themselves from these troublesome qualities, lower-class men fortified their macho identity through consumption of tequila, visiting prostitutes, and reading the often-lewd images and commentary of “penny press” periodicals. Robert Buffington provides nuanced translations of the wordplay present in the articles and images of these primary sources from Mexico City (159).

The volume is suitable for use in a colloquium or seminar as an excellent addition for a close study of Mexican masculinity and machismo. The conclusion by Ramón A. Gutiérrez includes an important summary of the historical framing of macho by Octavio Paz and Américo Paredes, and the individual chapters stand alone to provide highly readable insights into specific aspects of the modern period of Mexican history.

_Kent State University_  
Dwight R. Meyer
In 1524, shortly after the fall of Tenochtitlan to the Spanish, a military campaign was sent from Mexico to Guatemala, one in a series led by Spanish subordinates of Hernán Cortés into Central America. Between that year and 1528, thousands of native soldiers from central and southern Mexico followed hundreds of Spaniards into the Maya regions of Central America. Some of these native conquistadors were accompanied by family members, others later sent for them, and many stayed in the lands they conquered as colonists, seemingly by their own choice.

In the outskirts of Santiago (the first Spanish capital of Guatemala), a group of native Mexican conquistadors established a town that was eventually named Ciudad Vieja. As ethnic outsiders, they came to be known by their Spanish and Mayan neighbors as Mexicanos, an identity they accepted with pride as a kind of shorthand acknowledgement of their elevated social status as conquerors rather than the conquered. It expressed their condition as allies of the Spanish and as loyal subjects who had served the Crown with distinction. Laura E. Matthew points out that “the indigenous conquistadors’ special status . . . did not make them equal to the Spanish conquistadors,” but the term Mexicano continued to apply to many generations of their descendants who continued to understand it as a label of esteem for their heritage as descendants of the original conquerors (113).

Matthew makes the natives’ interpretation of their identity as conquistadors and the descendants of conquistadors the center of her analysis through the skillful use of a dossier that some of the Mexicanos began compiling in 1564, consisting of over eight hundred pages of documents they used to defend their legal rights. Among others, these included exemption from most tribute payments and from draft labor. The document takes the format of a probanza de meritos, a type of testimony usually employed by Spanish conquistadors seeking material recognition for their service to the Crown. Matthew also consulted many of the probanzas of Spaniards in order to glean extraneous information about the Mexicanos who served with them. These and other documents consulted make it clear that the Mexicanos considered themselves to be much more than auxiliaries in Spanish expeditions. They saw themselves as allies of the Spanish and the principal conquerors of various Mayan peoples. Their descendants continued to value this heritage, although in different forms, into the twenty-first century.
The book also reinforces our understanding of the Spanish practice of forming alliances with native groups for the purpose of conquest. Cortés was not the only Spaniard who did this; in Mexico and Central America, most of them did. Matthew also emphasizes the importance of incorporating the history of precontact native societies into the history of the colonial period in a way that treats native history as a continuum. Yet the work also demonstrates the value of the analysis of sixteenth-century native documents as sources for understanding the changing lives of Indians throughout the postconquest period.

*Florida Gulf Coast University*  
Michael S. Cole


This book is a fascinating and informative case study of the jury in the states of the antebellum Midwest, with a particular focus on the county surrounding Springfield, Illinois, where a young Abraham Lincoln practiced law.

Through copious use of newspapers, periodicals, and scholarly articles of the day, Stacy Pratt McDermott traces the importance of the jury to residents of the states carved out of the Northwest Territory and the general reverence with which they regarded the institution. She is able to show how practical circumstances led Midwestern practice to diverge somewhat from colonial norms. For instance, although Illinois law restricted jury service to citizens, the Illinois Supreme Court in 1846 took notice of the large immigrant population and held that, in civil cases and misdemeanor criminal cases, the (improper) seating of aliens on the jury would not support postconviction relief. Likewise, the remoteness of many towns from the courthouse made Midwestern practice depart from rotating jury duty to reliance on repeat service of jurors or even on tapping into bystanders to fill the jury pools.

McDermott provides a snapshot of the composition of the jury pool in 1860 in Sangamon County, Illinois. The data graphically establishes just how undemocratic jury selection procedures were. Out of a total population of 32,274 persons, 75 percent were immediately disqualified: 15,007 females, 8,237 underaged males, 513 overaged males, and 311 blacks. In addition, another one thousand were disqualified as aliens and another two thousand for owning no real property as was then required by law. Poor transportation and geographical distance also meant that farmers outside of the county seat in Springfield were not called or did
not attend. In the end, a winnowing process left no more than 4,551 white male residents in Springfield to comprise the jury pool.

In addition to these figures, McDermott offers demographic analyses of the jury pool for both grand and petit jurors in the county at various times from 1830 to 1860—the years of Lincoln’s law practice in the county. A composite portrait shows that the typical juror was a farmer in his 30s or 40s with above-average wealth in real property. They tended to have served multiple times as jurors and might even have served, as did one Zachariah Peter, on trials involving Lincoln, even though Peter himself had employed Lincoln to collect various debts through the years. McDermott’s general conclusion is that juries tended increasingly through the antebellum years to be “more representative of the controlling community elites than of the general populace” (83).

As to the workload of jurors, McDermott finds that Lincoln’s criminal practice was probably typical. There are 150 criminal cases Lincoln took to jury trial in the county for which we know the charge. Thirty-two percent of these involved crimes against the person, 21 percent were crimes against property, 23 percent were crimes against morality, and 24 percent were crimes against the public welfare. Lincoln’s cases included twenty-two defendants accused of murder; the jury convicted only ten of them. Even in those ten, in seven cases the jury opted to convict of the lesser-included offense of manslaughter. McDermott found only one case in which Lincoln’s practice, through his partner, defended African Americans—a case involving an underage, free black youth charged, along with two underage servant girls, of plotting to poison white men.

McDermott offers a mixed assessment of the quality of jury justice in antebellum Illinois. In general, verdicts favored the right of creditors over debtors and reinforced the interests of community elites. But jurors displayed a sense of mercy toward defendants in murder trials and some sympathy for women seeking divorce and the legal right to remarry.

For those interested in the jury as a political as well as legal institution, *The Jury in Lincoln’s America* is a valuable and well-researched monograph on how the jury worked in one Midwestern county in the antebellum years. Through copious examples, the author shows how, even as the law was becoming more professionalized and rationalized throughout the period studied, the jury system still left community representatives with the power to say what the law meant in any given case.

*University of Texas* Jeffrey B. Abramson

Mark Twain and the Colonel may appeal more to general readers than to hard-core academics. The book’s originality comes from Philip McFarland’s organizing principles. Technically, Samuel Clemens [1835–1910] was a generation older than Theodore Roosevelt [1858–1919], Clemens’s reputation just reaching its height around the time that Roosevelt came into prominence, roughly during the 1880s. McFarland brings the two together by focusing on how each man engaged—personally, politically, and economically—in the cultural upheavals of the period between 1880 and 1910.

The book’s weakness lies in its opening chapters, which, seemingly pointlessly, bounce between the two subjects’ early lives. It gathers speed and point when it brings the men together, first over their dual experiences of the far West, then in their common interest in American imperialism. In both cases, they responded very differently: Roosevelt wrote about the life of a hunter and ranchman with gusto; Clemens satirized his Western days as a miner and budding journalist. Even more striking was each man’s response to the annexation of the Philippines in 1899. Roosevelt, then vice president, saw America’s plunge into imperialism as a chance to exercise the courage, manliness, and military strength he revered—as well as to acquire new markets. Twain, newly returned from a lecture tour through the British Empire, thought that in forcing American rule on the Philippines the United States had betrayed its national values. Both men were true believers, both deeply and passionately desirous of securing the country’s future and its honor. But they had radically different takes on how that was to be secured.

As a study of comparative character, this book is admirably evenhanded. McFarland strives to present each man in his own best light; it is clear, for instance, that he is not sympathetic to Roosevelt’s proclivity to “fire bullets into living four-legged creatures,” but he balances his occasional cutting phrase with quotations from Roosevelt’s own richly evocative descriptions of hunting (126). McFarland accurately describes Clemens’s compulsion to invest in hare-brained schemes that the writer expected would enrich him but that instead gobbled his hard-earned money (a typesetter, a steam generator, a steam pulley operator, a marine telegrapher, an engraving processor). However, McFarland details Twain’s follies in a chapter that frames his subject in terms of energy, as a restless American who criss-crossed the country and engaged in, as well as chronicled, a period that Twain himself dubbed the Gilded Age. Neither man is all good; neither
is evil. Even Roosevelt’s passion for hunting is balanced by his creation of the national park system.

McFarland enhances Twain and Roosevelt’s stories by adding briefer vignettes of the individuals who impacted them—such as Andrew Carnegie, Henry Huddleston Rogers (vice president of Standard Oil), Twain’s daughter Susy, and Roosevelt’s daughter Alice. The tissues holding all these personalities together are the events in which they all participated, either in person or vicariously. At over four hundred pages, the book is a pleasurable journey through a period of great personalities and tumultuous change.

Susan K. Harris
University of Kansas


The historiography of the American Civil War’s naval component has undergone a complete transformation since the early 1990s, with dramatic changes driven by important reinterpretations of traditional topics and the opening up of entirely new areas of inquiry. The time is ripe for synthesis, leading to three significant surveys in recent years: Spencer Tucker’s Blue & Gray Navies [2006], Craig Symonds’s The Civil War at Sea [2012], and now James M. McPherson’s War on the Waters [2012].

McPherson needs no introduction as a Civil War historian, but he is most closely associated with the terrestrial rather than the naval war. However, the very nature of the naval war lends itself to McPherson’s considerable talents. The navy fulfilled its traditional roles with the blockade and pursuit of Confederate raiders, but its intimate involvement in riverine warfare, attacks on shore fortifications, and essential cooperation in combined operations played an important part in the ultimate success of Union armies. In fact, McPherson argues, “the war could not have been won without the contributions of the navy” (226).

The Confederate navy is present throughout the book, but McPherson has chosen to focus on the Union navy because of its size, its pervasive presence, and its impact on the war. War on the Waters is an unabashed operational history that focuses on the navy’s major battles and campaigns as well as the blockade and blue-water operations. McPherson’s real gifts are his ability to bring coherence and order to a story that so often seems disconnected and his talent for linking his encyclopedic knowledge of the rest of the war to the naval experience. The latter
is particularly impressive in his discussions of combined operations, and the resulting narrative is among the best this reviewer has read in explaining the successes and failures of joint army-navy campaigns in all of the war’s theaters.

The author’s operational focus leads to some unfortunate omissions. The Union’s ability to mobilize and deploy its industrial resources played an important role in the war’s outcome, especially as the navy developed armored warships, but that story is lost in the operational shuffle. The most famous case of industrial mobilization gone awry, the Casco class monitors, is tacked on at the end of a chapter, but it will be difficult for an uninformed reader to grasp its true significance. Likewise, the social history of the navy’s jack tars receives short shrift. McPherson ably discusses the experience of African American sailors, but the relatively recent literature on sailors in general has not been fully utilized. Finally, more could have been done with naval administration and leadership. Gideon Welles and Gustavus Vasa Fox receive ample coverage, but more discussion of the interplay between President Abraham Lincoln, the Navy Department, and the navy’s squadron commanders might have enriched the larger operational story.

War on the Waters is a welcome addition to the literature. Those new to this aspect of the Civil War will benefit from McPherson’s masterful synthesis, while specialists will find his insights equally intriguing.

University of South Dakota

Sight Unseen: How Frémont’s First Expedition Changed the American Landscape.
By Andrew Menard. (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2012. Pp. xxix, 249. $29.95.)

This book offers a critical explication of John Frémont’s report from his 1842 expedition up the Kansas and Platte Rivers into the Wind River Range of present-day Wyoming. Even though many others had ventured through this region before it, including early immigrants to Oregon Country, Frémont’s expedition was the first to map the region carefully. In the process, Andrew Menard argues, Frémont provided a compelling framework to support the nation’s embrace of the continent’s breadth as its rightful bounds.

An independent scholar who has published widely, Menard situates John Frémont at the center of the Great Plains’ transformation from a desolate desert barrier into a figurative and literal avenue for the nation to pursue its Manifest Destiny of westward expansion. Menard analyzes Frémont’s report in two sections.
The first examines the way that Frémont’s radical form of the picturesque helped to transform the West from a great desert into a national landscape; the second examines the way that his map of the Continental Divide, by aligning the nation’s geographical predestination with the lay of the land and proving that a transcontinental railroad was both necessary and possible, helped to transform the existing space and time of western expansion (xxix).

Menard’s Frémont occupies a place between “scenery and science . . . exploration and emigration, foreground and background, past and future, motion and rest” (34). Menard contextualizes Frémont’s writings through references to Condorcet, Emerson, Jefferson, Thoreau, Montesquieu, and others.

Frémont’s benefactors included Senator Thomas Hart Benton (also Frémont’s father-in-law) and Secretary of War Joel R. Poinsett. He learned much from his association with Joseph N. Nicollet, commander of Frémont’s first trans-Mississippi expeditions to the upper Mississippi Valley region. Trained in France as an astronomer and cartographer, Nicollet immigrated to the United States in 1832. In addition to sharing his skills as a mapmaker, Nicollet influenced Frémont more deeply. Of his benefactors, “Frémont undoubtedly admired Nicollet the most” as “it was Nicollet who taught him how to see” the world (31, original emphasis). Rather than the vast and repetitive emptiness typically noted by earlier chroniclers, Frémont learned to see the ground at his feet, describing the soil, rocks, and plants with a detail unseen by those entrapped within the compelling view of the plains’ distant horizon. At a time when most observers compared western features to a series of castles, walled cities, and ancient ruins, Frémont described escarpments by their size, color, orientation, and geology.

The volume includes twenty-eight black-and-white illustrations, most of which reproduce paintings by artists such as Thomas Cole and Thomas Moran. Only four replicate the work of Charles Preuss, the illustrator who accompanied Frémont’s expedition. An afterword examines the controversy of Jessie Frémont’s contributions to the report, with some scholars charging that she ghostwrote the majority of the text. Menard disagrees with this view, arguing that though she might “have helped to elicit or edit,” the report is “almost surely [John] Frémont’s from beginning to end” (219).

Western Carolina University

L. Scott Philyaw

Immigration historians have recently focused attention on those who have been allowed to settle in the United States and those kept out. Deirdre M. Moloney develops this theme as she investigates those who were deported or threatened with deportation. Focusing on the years 1890 to 1930, Moloney argues that even when immigration laws did not overtly discriminate on the basis of race, gender, or religion, their application often disproportionately targeted women, nonwhites, and religious minorities.

Moloney’s most compelling chapters explore how 1882 and 1891 immigration laws allowing the exclusion of those engaged in prostitution or polygamy, those “likely to become a public charge,” or those deemed to suffer from certain illnesses discriminated against southern Europeans, Jews, Mormons, Muslims, and Mexicans. For example, among eastern European Jews, women immigrating alone were often deported on “public charge” grounds despite the high rate of work force participation by this group. Moloney effectively skewers the category of “poor physique,” a “disease” eugenicists invented to deny entry to those deemed undesirable.

Moloney does not simply decry victimization by entrenched American elites, however, as she details how ethnic and religious organizations resisted deportation attempts. On the other hand, sometimes the impetus to deport particular individuals came from disappointed family members or others within their ethnic community. Moloney draws extensively from National Archives files, other government publications, and the ethnic press. She evinces throughout the study a laudable, albeit simplistic, commitment to use historical experience to inform current immigration policy. A useful twenty-page appendix summarizes relevant immigration, naturalization, and deportation laws.

Unfortunately, this book’s flaws almost outweigh its virtues. It is repetitious, badly written, poorly organized, frustratingly incomplete in its citations, and replete with minor errors and hyperbole. For example, Moloney misstates the name of Marcus Garvey’s organization, gets the colors of his African pride flag wrong, exaggerates the number of years that the US government investigated his activities, and misdates by thirty years the deportation of another Caribbean radical. The author puzzlingly recounts the unsuccessful 1934 and 1940 attempts to deport labor leader Harry Bridges in the chapter before the one devoted to policy changes during the New Deal. This list could go on.
More broadly, Moloney often adopts a reductionist view that attributes policy outcomes to specific intentions even when other explanations are equally plausible. For example, she asserts that the porous border with Mexico in the 1920s resulted from an assumption that Mexicans would be only temporary migrants, valued as low-wage agricultural labor. Fair enough, but patrolling a land border posed more logistical obstacles than monitoring ocean ports—an explanation left unexplored. Moloney repeatedly overstates claims that she breaks new scholarly ground; these assertions rankle most when case studies rely on secondary sources. Although her focus is deportation, much of her concluding chapter on recent years is on harassment of immigrants rather than their expulsion, and she generally fails to differentiate between the treatment of legal and undocumented immigrants.

Shippensburg University

Robert Shaffer


The author of this study provides an interesting examination of the founder of the Kennedy family dynasty, Joseph P. Kennedy. Taking advantage of extensive access to Kennedy’s heretofore unseen files; numerous interviews with family, friends, and enemies; and multiple archival and secondary sources, David Nasaw paints a picture of an immensely ambitious but deeply flawed man whose impact on American history is underrated.

The strength of the work lies in its utilization of Kennedy’s files, providing a fuller picture of his financial and political actions. Nasaw comprehensively discusses his subject’s dealings in banking, the film industry, and the stock market during the 1920s and 1930s. Through a combination of insider knowledge, shrewd selling practices, and access to borrowed money, Kennedy amassed a fortune during the preregulated days of the stock market that made him one of the wealthiest men in the country. Nasaw convincingly argues that the family fortune did not originate from illegal activities or shady associations; rather, it came from exploiting the wide-open nature of the economy at the time. Ironically, it would be Kennedy, as the first chair of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), who would close most of the loopholes and outlaw many of the practices that made his family’s fortune.

The book’s strongest section details Kennedy’s love/hate relationship with Franklin Roosevelt. The president perpetually disappointed Kennedy by refusing
to give him the job he really wanted, secretary of the treasury. Instead, Kennedy headed the SEC and then, because he was one of the few pro-FDR businessmen in 1936, was posted as ambassador to Great Britain. In this position, Kennedy’s overwhelming desire to avoid another world war, which he sincerely believed would destroy capitalism (and his family’s fortune), led him to advocate appeasement even more avidly than Neville Chamberlain. This commitment to keeping the United States out of war at all costs ultimately rendered Kennedy politically impotent when Roosevelt first opened direct contact with Winston Churchill and then recalled the no-longer-useful ambassador after the 1940 election. Kennedy never wavered from his belief that the war was a mistake, a belief that evolved into a public embrace of isolationism rather than Cold War after 1945.

The last section of the book deals primarily with the emergence of Kennedy’s children, particularly John, and the senior Kennedy’s retreat into the background. Nasaw reiterates that although Kennedy utilized his fortune to advance his sons’ (and to a lesser extent his daughters’) careers, his children established independent beliefs and lives. Much of the information in this section is not new, with the exception of Kennedy’s break with the Catholic Church over its treatment of John’s presidential campaign. Joseph Kennedy’s bitterness over the Vatican’s refusal to either encourage Catholic voters to support John or stay out of the campaign caused him to reduce severely his contributions to the Church, before his debilitating stroke in 1961 robbed him of the ability to communicate.

Nasaw’s well-written and equally well-researched book is well worth the read and is a strong supplement to the understanding of the family and the time period.

Richard M. Filipink

Western Illinois University


In 1965, historian David Chalmers published Hooded Americanism, a state-by-state account of the 1920s Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. His focus on a heterogeneous movement spurred scholars to begin case-study investigations at the grassroots level. Almost a dozen books have appeared since then. Moving beyond stereotypes, they discovered a social movement that offered a cafeteria of appeals to white Protestants that perhaps brought four million Americans into the hooded
empire. Based on primary sources, these studies reveal Klan groups fighting lawbreakers; attacking Catholic, Jewish, and African American freedoms; pressing for community improvements; defending traditional morality; seeking political office; and engaging in violence. Rather than presenting marginal men and women on the fringe, these studies suggest a movement that mirrored the white Protestant community culturally and demographically.

Thomas R. Pegram offers *One Hundred Percent American* as a synthesis to incorporate this new scholarship. Strip mining the case studies for examples, he organizes his book topically in search of shared patterns. He reiterates previous findings regarding Klan community building, civic activism, politics, and acts of hatred and terror. His quarrel is with the interpretation. He complains that it is an “overstatement to characterize the second Klan as a mainstream proponent of culturally based reform” (xii). Moreover, Pegram argues that other accounts are unbalanced and do not adequately incorporate Klan violence and bigotry. Although somewhat gingerly, he finds appealing the concept of an extremist Klan that was the “closest American analogue to fascism” (227). This interpretation, raised in the 1950s, had been buried by the fifty years of research on which Pegram depends.

Pegram does well in managing the volumes of data. His topical approach brings clarity to the information, but any sense of issue evolution and change over time is lost. More problematic is his meandering concept of the “mainstream.” Who would deny that the Klan was “outside the mainstream of political compromise and national conciliation” or “ran against the grain of the modern temper” (118, 45)? Or is he referring to the white Protestant community? This is difficult considering the Klan’s grounding and its power as a political, religious, and economic engine. Pegram writes that Klansmen had “mainstream white beliefs” and that “there was a high level of community consensus for moral regulation and on the means to be employed” (59, 164).

In claiming balance, the author must make scholars of the Klan morally neutral. Yet, they all repeatedly condemned Klansmen for their intolerance and violence. Sometimes such tests are applied unevenly. Are those who study SDS or the Weather Underground ever taken to task for not sufficiently condemning extreme rhetoric or violent acts?

Finally, to make his case, the author must paint scholars of the Klan with a broad brush, blurring and exaggerating their interpretation; he writes that the Invisible Empire, “while diverse, was more of a civic exponent of white Protestant social values than a repressive hate group” (225). Such a statement is not only inaccurate but repugnant.
One Hundred Percent American will appeal to undergraduates and graduate students studying for exams. Serious scholars will still have to go to the case studies to understand the Ku Klux Klan.

Robert Alan Goldberg
University of Utah


Alasdair Roberts argues that America’s first great depression was not the economic downturn of the 1930s but actually occurred ninety years earlier between 1836 and 1848. The boom times of the 1820s and early 1830s were supported by state government financed internal improvements (roads, canals, and railroads) and state-supported banks that in turn financed the expansion of farms and plantations. States financed these expenditures by borrowing increasingly large amounts of funds—often from Britain.

Excessive expansion created a bubble that burst in the late 1830s with the collapsing price of wheat and cotton in Europe, the federal government’s new policy requiring land purchases to be paid for in specie rather than paper currency, and British restrictions on lending. With European demand for American commodities evaporating and unable to borrow, by 1842 one-third of the states, from Michigan to Mississippi, defaulted. America’s failure to service its debts was put to song in London’s Literary Gazette,

Yankee Doodle borrows cash,/Yankee Doodle spends it,/And then he snaps his fingers at/The jolly flat who lends it./Ask him when he means to pay,/He shews no hesitation,/But says he’ll take the shortest way,/And that’s repudiation! (65)

Economic problems continued through much of the 1840s, ending only with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. By this time, political crises across Europe, poor European harvests that increased demand for American wheat, and the discovery of California gold reopened British bank vaults to Americans.

However, Roberts’s book is more than an economic analysis of the 1830s and 1840s; he persuasively argues that it was a great depression not solely for economic reasons but because of resulting social and political changes. In the page-turning chapter “Law and Order,” Roberts discusses violent civil unrest in several states. Disenfranchised Rhode Island citizens, supported by some state militia
units, wrote their own state constitution and demanded access to the ballot at the point of a gun. Farther south, in Philadelphia, before the Panic of 1837, unions and a growing economy kept racial and ethnic tensions in check, but union influence collapsed along with the economy; violence between Irish and blacks and between native-born whites and the Irish then exploded. Roberts argues that the violence seen across the nation “raised questions about the capacity of citizens to regulate themselves, and also about the ability of a nation organized on democratic principles to maintain civil peace” (138). Governments found their answer by establishing police forces.

*America’s First Great Depression* is an engaging book that could spark classroom debate on a number of important topics: internal improvements, the changing role of state governments, Anglo-American relations, immigration, urbanization, Jacksonian democracy, the Bank War, tariff issues, and the federal role in regulating the economy, slavery, and westward expansion. Roberts does a particularly fine job of placing this period of US history within a global perspective. As it is only 216 pages of text, this reviewer will assign this book in his Early US History survey class.

*Shasta College*

Dave Bush


Robert O. Self argues that a fundamental transformation of American democracy occurred during the second half of the twentieth century. The author makes this transformation most visible through a focus on the family.

During the 1960s, Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society operated on the assumption of “breadwinner liberalism.” Its programs, such as jobs and jobs training, propped up the white, male, heterosexual breadwinner of the traditional family, in which the husband worked while the wife remained at home with the kids. Such programs were supposed to ease entry of the traditional family into the middle class.

The political Left presented evidence that this version of the family did not match reality. Feminists were encouraging women to realize their potential in the work place, including equal treatment in earning a living, as an alternative to the housewife role. Meanwhile, some women were already heads of households. As such, they were already working—often at low-paying jobs. Many of these women needed state-supported day-care centers and even supplemental welfare payments to make ends meet.
Feminists challenged the view of the traditional family in other ways. They fought for the ability of women to control their reproductive lives, such as the right to an abortion. For those who could not exercise that right because of a lack of money, feminists believed the state ought to provide financial assistance.

Gays and lesbians called for increased rights, which upset the traditional family model. For example, they advocated gay marriage and the right to be heads of households, raising children as part of a family. Meanwhile, gays and lesbians sought equality in a work place that discriminated against them.

As a result, new conceptions of the family emerged, from gay and lesbian heads of households to single, working mothers, also heads of households, requiring support from the state. Conservatives saw a moral threat to the traditional family model. State-supported abortions, gay marriage, and welfare payments to single mothers only encouraged nontraditional families, all too often leading to more and unnecessary state spending. According to the author, Ronald Reagan was able to combine the moral threat with unnecessary government spending to gain the presidency.

Self argues that the political culture transformed from breadwinner liberalism—calling for state intervention in supporting a traditional view of the family—to breadwinner conservatism, which called for a return to the traditional family model without the state intervention that encouraged alternative family arrangements. The author sees the continuing strength of the conservative backlash with liberalism in decline. Minority groups may have gained some rights but little equality.

Self provides a fascinating interpretation of the transformation of twentieth-century America, but he might give the family a bit too much explanatory power. He minimizes America’s problems abroad as a major reason for the Reagan presidency. Self might be a bit too sanguine about recent changes that have aided various minority groups in seeking and gaining citizenship. But he offers a compelling book with solid research and a thesis worth serious investigation. His is a work well deserving of careful reading, especially at the graduate level.

Timothy K. Kinsella


Falling from the “short list of men who could become president,” a bitter Aaron Burr “plunged into talk of insurrection and secession,” contemplating a range of
adventures, from filibustering in Mexico, to leading western secession from the United States, to attacking Washington and killing Thomas Jefferson (2, 89). David O. Stewart demonstrates that though Burr failed in those objectives he is still able to capture the imagination. Sifting through contradictory and confusing sources, Stewart shows that the idea of a “single plan is . . . a mirage”; the chimerical Burr “expect[ed] that men would follow in any direction he might lead them” (10, 138). Still, once it was clear that there would be no war with Spain, at a minimum, Burr’s plans involved the traitorous taking of New Orleans and violating both the Logan and Neutrality Acts (303).

Turning to the treason trials, Stewart’s literary and legal talents are on display. Noting that evidence available to historians (particularly foreign archives) was not available to prosecutors, Stewart credits Justice Marshall with making constitutional protections available even to one “as reviled as Aaron Burr.” Yet, though Marshall won the legal battle, Jefferson was confident that the evidence “will satisfy the world, if not the judges” (224). Burr fled to Europe, seeking to resurrect a western adventure (285).

The duplicitous, treasonous General Wilkinson receives a less detailed treatment, but it may be that he is, in fact, a stock figure. The author handles a mire of evidence well. Still, a breathless conspiracy demanded that the union be on the cusp of dissolution, but Burr’s expected army of thousands floating down the Mississippi barely mustered one hundred young, ill-informed men. Once it was clear that Burr would seize New Orleans, support did not melt away, but ran; a “[s]hocked” Andrew Jackson (counted on for several thousand militia) warned Governor Claiborne in New Orleans (175). Perhaps the union was not as fragile as a good yarn would like, or at least Stewart might have engaged that issue. Though Burr’s European efforts to revive his plans in 1810 were “delusional,” were they even “barely plausible” in Kentucky in 1806 (288)? As Jefferson wrote, Burr’s ambitions were the “most extravagant since the days of Don Quixote” (201).

Similarly, Stewart’s initial treatment of Jefferson may be simplistic. Jefferson “froze out his vice president,” ignoring warnings of a western conspiracy, then overreacted to railroad the prosecution (8, 107, 205). Yet, Jefferson’s “extraordinarily slow response” was, in part, due to his perception that George Washington and Alexander Hamilton had overreached in the Whiskey Rebellion and may have strengthened the public rejection of disunion (304–305). Although this was not Jefferson’s finest performance, and he was “lucky,” perhaps he understood what the Kentucky Gazette predicted: “if [Burr] calculated on withdrawing the affections of the people of the Western States from their government, he will find
himself deceived” (305, 109). The irony, Stewart concludes, is that Burr’s endeavors “roused unionist sentiments,” including Jefferson’s (309).

This is a well-written and insightful popular history.

Hamilton College

John Ragosta


This slender volume on Jonathan Edwards [1703–1758] is a reading pleasure and most suitable to anyone interested in the times and reflections of one of New England’s most notable Puritans. It is well organized, is meticulously researched, and offers original insight into Edwards’s thinking. It is a must read for any serious student or scholar of the Edwardian era in New England.

Ronald Story’s research is based largely on Edwards’s Works as well as several secondary sources such as those of Ola Winslow and Perry Miller, historians whose classical treatment of Edwards is in sharp contrast to that of Story. Story agrees with earlier historians regarding Edwards’s efforts to reconcile the rationalism of Isaac Newton and John Locke with Calvinist theology. But even more important in defining Edwards was his role in “fomenting, furthering and defending” early eighteenth-century revivalism (17). Story asserts that Edwards was a “scold.” His “hellfire and brimstone” sermons focused on the internal torment of the soul and the eternal damnation of hell, which is best exemplified by Edwards’s most famous sermon, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.”

Although Story agrees with these earlier interpretations of Edwards’s thinking, he argues that historians have overlooked the fact that only a small fraction of his thousand sermons reflect his “scold” philosophy. In fact, it is just the opposite. Story documents Edwards’s extensive use of metaphors that involve light, beauty, harmony, and sweetness, all common modifiers in his sermons. This is where Story departs from previous historians and offers the thesis that though Edwards was a “scold,” he was much more. He was “more tender, more sensitive, more poetic . . . to the natural and social world around him” (50). Story demonstrates this point by analyzing Edwards’s sermons in regard to his views on charity, community, and love.

Charity, for Edwards, reflected a true love for God and meant giving one’s material possessions to the poor rather than seeking to enhance one’s own wealth. He advocated both public assistance through taxes and tithing (as much as 25 percent) to aid the poor. Edwards often attacked the wealthy and advocated the
redistribution of wealth. Charity was the visible sign of God’s saving grace, and throughout his sermons Edwards emphasized community and its relationship to charity. Community, he stressed, embodied “social peace, . . . unity, harmony . . . the oneness of mankind” that would enhance voluntary giving (75). Edwards condemned various sins against the community and stressed that the virtues of Christ should be the virtues of the community.

Despite his reputation, Edwards was a preacher of love, not damnation. Love was the crucial ingredient because charity and community were bound by love and reflected man’s love for his fellow man and for God. Love was the single most important concept in Edwards’s thinking. Nevertheless, Story concludes that Edwards remains an enigma because if “you look closely, you will see not only the shadowy judging eyes but also the loving hand” (133).

*Eastern Illinois University*  
Dan M. Hockman

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**For Liberty and Equality: The Life and Times of the Declaration of Independence.**  

The power of the words of the Declaration of Independence resonate to this day. They have both caused and energized revolutions for over two hundred years. Specific phrases such as the need for “consent of the governed” in order to rule and the logical extension of that wording—that this consent could also be withdrawn by the people—have continued to motivate individuals from the time they were written to the recent “Arab Spring” and “Occupy” movements. The Declaration also popularized the right—and obligation—to engage in revolution when faced with tyranny.

In this well-researched and brilliantly written book, Alexander Tsesis details the story of the creation of the Declaration and its long-term impact on America and the world. It consists of chapters highlighting the Declaration’s impact on the Civil War, Reconstruction, civil rights, and women’s issues. Tsesis points out the significant impact of the document in providing “a standard by which government actions could be assessed” (3).

The Declaration is, as the author states, not only a “lustrous artifact” of American history but, more importantly, a “statement of a living creed” (5). As such, it is a treasure that we should continually use for our decisions on the new challenges we face. In this regard, Tsesis skillfully argues that the US Supreme Court’s recent decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, in
which the court ruled that corporations have the same rights to free speech as people, was questionable “because it elevated the rights of corporations, which are artificial persons, with natural persons’ inalienable right of political expression” (317). Similarly, he argues persuasively that the principles of the Declaration when applied clearly were used to resolve the controversial civil rights issues that the nation faced in the 1860s and 1960s.

In his description of the history of the document as it was drafted and moved through the Continental Congress, Tsesis clarifies that the first real action of the Congress declaring independence was the earlier approved resolution of Richard Henry Lee and not the Declaration itself as is commonly believed (17). This is why John Adams mistakenly wrote that July 2, 1776, would be the day commemorated in history. That was the day the Lee resolution was approved, authorizing a break with England. As the author points out, the actual Declaration of Independence became an explanation of the reasons for seeking independence.

Tsesis makes a compelling argument that we need to continue to be guided by the principles stated in the Declaration of Independence and that even in the twenty-first century it remains the best standard for defining individual liberty. Through his meticulous attention to detail and his superb research and writing, Tsesis is very convincing. This is a book that should be read by both scholars and the general public. It should take a place of honor alongside another highly regarded book, now considered a classic work of history, Carl Becker’s *The Declaration of Independence: A Study in the History of Political Ideas* [1922].

*Kean University*  
Frank J. Esposito


Marli F. Weiner’s posthumously published book, *Sex, Sickness, and Slavery,* is an intellectual history of medical science in the pre-Civil War South. In this beautifully written book, Weiner details how physicians wrote and thought about the illnesses of slaves and women.

This is largely a story of how the physicians were limited by their views; they could not see either slaves or women as equal in capacity or health to white men. Those views made physicians less able to view accurately the mental and physical health of slaves and women and presumably stood in the way of providing appropriate medical care. But maybe the real story here is not so much that physicians’ ideas affected their modes of treatment but that preexisting ideas
about the inferiority of slaves and women affected the development of scientific literature. That is, Weiner shows that physicians were so convinced about the inferiority of slaves—of the slaves’ refusal to work and of their mental inferiority—that they could not see a different reality. Similarly, physicians saw women, both white and black, as physically and mentally weak, and they believed that the more refined women became, the more susceptible they were to perceived physical and emotional hardships. Thus, physicians’ expectations limited the development of science. Moreover, the literature that they produced under those constraints further confirmed the ideas of their society: that slaves and women were inferior to white males. Thus the “scientific” literature was deeply affected by Southern culture and helped to entrench further those ideas.

Weiner presents a series of harrowing stories of how physicians and owners treated slaves. Southern physicians, for example, experimented on enslaved patients. Some of the most revealing examples in Weiner’s study are those of slaves who did not fit well as either male or female. Here Southern physicians puzzled over how to classify intersex slaves, how to expect them to behave, and how to treat them. Often the “treatment” involved surgery.

Yet owners, because they needed to protect their investment in slaves, only sometimes consulted physicians. Probably even more frequently, however, owners tortured slaves who they thought were malingering in order to get them to work. In many cases the slaves died as a result of the abuse.

Sex, Sickness, and Slavery joins a distinguished body of scholarship that shows how intellectual power in the South was mobilized in support of slavery. Weiner adds physicians to the groups of professionals—ministers, lawyers, judges, even fiction writers—whose scholarship supported slavery by showing the supposed inferiority of slaves. Science, like law and religion, was about politics and economics. The boundaries of scientific knowledge were set by the culture of the scientists. This is important, for we see yet again how the wealthy and well educated operated in the old South to add their professional status to the institution of slavery.

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Alfred L. Brophy


George Henry Thomas occupies a curious place in Civil War history. A native Virginian, this distinguished soldier refused to resign his US Army commission
even after his state and numerous brother officers sided with the confederacy. One of the war’s most reliable commanders, he has long been overshadowed by the more colorful likes of Grant, Sherman, Lee, and Jackson. Brian Steel Wills offers a biography worthy of this extraordinary figure in *George Henry Thomas: As True as Steel*, highlighting the contributions of a warrior who proved meticulous in preparation, indomitable on the defensive, and (when called upon) nearly unstoppable on the offensive.

George Thomas proved to be one of the steadiest of Union generals in the western theater. After scoring an early victory at Mill Springs, Kentucky, Thomas, as an Army of the Cumberland corps commander, steadied the line at Stones River and most famously held back the entire Confederate army at Chickamauga after the rest of Union army’s collapse, earning him the sobriquet “The Rock of Chickamauga.” Promoted to army command, Thomas faithfully served Sherman in the capture of Atlanta then decisively defeated Confederate efforts to retake Tennessee at the Battle of Nashville.

Wills’s work excels especially in two regards. As a biography, it is scholarly, sophisticated, and readable. Wills combines copious research with active discussion of early and recent Thomas biographies as well as the latest scholarship in Civil War military history. Equally appreciable, Wills presents one of the most balanced and dispassionate accounts to date of the general’s place in the Civil War. Although among the most successful Union commanders by war’s end, Thomas in life and legacy failed to garner as much acclaim as the great Union military triumvirate of Ulysses Grant, William Sherman, and Philip Sheridan that emerged in the postwar era. This imbalance has prompted other Thomas biographers to rail against the talents of the three and exaggerate Thomas’s own considerable abilities. Wills takes a more reasoned approach, defending Thomas’s abilities and assessing complaints by contemporaries and historians of his slowness in the field without engaging in historical histrionics.

Of great interest to the historian, Wills addresses in detail Thomas’s decision to side with the Union over Virginia, presenting it as no less complicated than Robert E. Lee’s decision to side with Virginia. Thomas himself owned slaves and had even survived Nat Turner’s Rebellion in his youth but deplored what he considered extremism on both sides of the slavery question. As Wills suggests, Thomas, a consummately professional soldier whom West Point classmates respectfully nicknamed “Washington,” chose to remain true to his oath to the nation and the Constitution against the forces of disunion.

The author offers a finely drawn portrait of George Thomas as well as nuanced handling of his campaigns and relationships with fellow generals. A better or
fairer biography of the Virginia-born Union general whom Sherman deemed “as true as steel” would be truly hard to find.

*Texas Christian University*  
Jonathan M. Steplyk

*The Chinatown War: Chinese Los Angeles and the Massacre of 1871.* By Scott Zesch.  

Although he is not a specialist in Asian American history, the author has written a compelling book about an incident that is well known in the Asian American community: In retaliation for the shooting of Robert Thompson, who had been warned by Officer Esteban Sanchez not to enter the Wing Chung store, a non-Asian mob estimated to number five hundred stormed Los Angeles’s Chinatown on October 24, 1871, and lynched fifteen Chinese, fatally shot three more, and destroyed Chinese American property. Using local and regional newspapers, court documents, previous scholarship, and other materials, Scott Zesch details what really happened before the massacre and why it was, or was not, significant in history. He brings to the horror story a background on the lawless conditions in early Los Angeles; the racial tensions that evolved; the advent of a significant community of the Chinese and the development of the rivalry between Chinese *tongs*; the issue of Chinese prostitution, which was one of the causes of the massacre; the inaccuracies of newspaper reporting; and circumstances that led up to the massacre. He weaves into his tale specific individuals, their activities, and their character. He clarifies and corrects many of the popular misconceptions and includes how many Euro-Americans protected some of the Chinese during this mob violence, a fact that has been forgotten because of the racial antagonisms.

None of the ten men brought to trial in 1872 were punished for the crime of murder, but eight were found guilty of manslaughter, a charge that was later dismissed due to legal technicalities. Zesch concludes by writing about some of the main Chinese figures, especially Chinese community leader Yo Hing, and the law enforcement officers who were involved after 1872. In his last chapter, he questions whether the riot had an immediate and future impact. Because Zesch is not an Asian American specialist, he did not realize that this massacre set a precedent for other killings of Chinese in the American West with the same result—that no Euro-Americans were convicted for their murders. In the end, Zesch does try to link the mob violence to the race riot of 1992 involving Rodney King in Los Angeles.
The book is well written and aimed at a general audience. The names and backgrounds of some of the Chinese individuals are sometimes repeated in case the reader, unfamiliar with Chinese names, might not recall what had been written earlier. In his attempt to grapple with understanding the huiguan (regional or district association), he erred in thinking that Yo Hing’s Hong Chow Company was a huiguan like the Kong Chow Company that splintered off from the See Yup Association (same as Sze Yup or, in pinyin transliteration, Siyi, “Four Counties/Districts”) in 1891 Los Angeles. In all probability, it was a tong (literally meaning “meeting hall”) whose members were from the rural four districts in Guangdong province but did not have the mandatory membership as the huiguan.

The narrative moves quickly, and the reader is drawn into the dialogue. This reviewer highly recommends reading this book.

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Sue Fawn Chung

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Sufism and Society in Medieval India. Edited by Raziuddin Aquil. (New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 2010. Pp. xxiv, 184. $55.00.)

This volume of nine essays, each backed with ample Sufi archival sources, deals with the different roles Sufis played in medieval Indian society, their conversion work, and their contribution to the expansion of Islam in India. The editor’s balanced summary highlights how earlier studies overlooked Sufis in India as significant social actors engaged with both political figures and non-Muslims.

The Sufis actually helped Muslim conquest and the expansion of Islam in India. Their involvement with the Hindu lower castes led to large-scale conversions. Shrines and dargahs became major points of interaction with non-Muslims, helping the process of Islamic acculturation. This is reflected in the Sufi literature of the time with its accounts of encounters and dialogues with Brahmins and others. But while Sufis worked at penetrating Hindu society, the Hindu bhakti movements rose as popular counterchallenges to their proselytizing work.

Sufis contributed much to mystical Indian tradition with their descriptions of the mystical journey as love, yearning, jealousy, proximity, shame, intimacy, and awe. They upheld nonviolent approaches to all problems of society. “Do not give
me a knife, give me a needle. The knife is an instrument for cutting and the needle for sewing together,” Shaikh Farid, a mystic, told his disciples (8).

Eager for emotional integration with peoples of other faiths, Sufis were more interested in Hindu religious practices than in Hindu religious thought. Their own beliefs, in turn, were influenced by the mystical trends of Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism. There were at times angry polemics with the others, yet the Hindu use of parables, their Tantric practices and popular superstitions, and the phenomenon of the wandering Buddhists were attractive to the Sufis. Sufi folk literature and songs too played a role in the growth of Islam in the Deccan. The Sufis composed poetry extensively in the local languages, hoping to convert many more to their faith. Many of the Hindu customs, festivals, and ceremonies became a part of Muslim social life.

With regard to Sufi personalities, Sirhindi played a major role in the development of Islam in India. He objected to innovations into Islamic culture, belittled the emphasis on reason alone of Hindu intellectuals, and called for their removal from government. The tomb of Mu’ín al-Din Chisti at Ajmer became a rallying cry to portray the presence of Islam in India as “a miracle and grace.” The importance of the shrine grew with the visits of Akbar between the years 1562 and 1579.

The present volume serves well to show Sufis in medieval India as important social actors and as valuable conduits for carrying Islam into the various facets of the Indian religious world. It is a lesser-known period of Indian history. Though this study is well documented, more details of Sufi encounters with others along with reports from the non-Sufi side would lead to the emergence of a fuller picture of Sufi presence in India.

Loyola University, Maryland

Charles Borges


Journeys on the Silk Road is a fun, quick read for those with no background in the subject. The authors work for the Sydney Morning Herald and have constructed a lively narrative centering on Aurel Stein and some of the early Chinese materials he collected (or pilfered, depending upon one’s perspective) from northwestern China. This is not a work of historical analysis. Although there is no driving thesis, perhaps the central theme is resuscitating Stein. The authors say that as
“[i]ndestructible as Stein appeared in life, in death his name has not been so enduring. He has sunk from memory as quietly . . . as one of his sand-buried cities” (241). The book is part romantic re-creation of Stein’s “adventures” and part introduction to the multiple significances of one of Stein’s treasures: the earliest printed text in existence, the *Diamond Sutra*, dated to 868.

The authors have done their archival work and consulted many of the key English-language works, as well as experts ranging from staff at the British Library to the Dalai Lama. The work clearly, if briefly, introduces Stein’s expeditions, the core ideas of Buddhism and its current practice, early printing technology, and the current debate over the ownership of antiquities. The latter deals with the Chinese position that Stein was a thief who plundered China’s cultural heritage, as opposed to the British position that Stein was rescuing important items from neglect. But the centerpiece of the work is Stein and his work for imperial Britain. For the authors, Stein is symbolic of the end of an era; he “died just as the sun set on colonialism, imperialism, and the British Empire, which left their own troublesome legacy. The Great Game ended, India became independent, China and Russia locked their doors and Central Asia was off-limits to the West” (241–242).

The greatest weakness of the *Journeys on the Silk Road* is the lack of historical analysis. There is scant mention of the broader historical context that would have provided complexity: ethnic and political tensions in the northwest, the collapse of central authority at the end of the Qing dynasty, the rise of Han Chinese nationalism after the Qing’s end, etc. Making these connections would help clarify why Stein was able to explore and excavate in northwestern China, removing a wealth of material goods, and why there was (and continues to be) a Chinese backlash against Stein.

The book might be considered an expanded “human interest piece,” which is not to denigrate it. Rather, the authors’ empathy with a variety of people draws the reader into the story in a way that traditional scholarly analysis often fails to do. As they note, “the romance of the Silk Road may have gone, but its imaginative power endures” (271).

For those wanting more analysis, Jeannette Mirsky’s biography of Stein and the Silk Road books by Peter Hopkirk, Liu Xinru, and Valerie Hansen should suffice.

*Berea College*                    Robert W. Foster
In the ongoing debate about Islam, the faith is often reduced to its scriptural sources, especially the Qur’an. This reification of the Qur’an as the essential Islam takes various forms. Whereas critics of Islam read the Qur’an to explain the perceived dangers of the faith, reformist Muslims study the holy scripts as the pivotal guide for ethical conduct. In doing so, both sides tend to downplay the heritage of ritual practice, theological traditions, and personal interpretation.

In his study of the Ahl al-Qur’an (“People of the Qur’an”) movements in South Asia, Ali Usman Qasmi traces the origin of this “Qur’anization” back to the colonial context. The orientalist study of Islam, the Christian mission, and the interreligious dialogue between Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs in India all contributed to modernist reform that sought to rationalize Islam by grounding itself firmly in the Islamic revelations, ignoring long-standing traditions of interpretation and dissemination.

Starting with the late nineteenth-century revisionism of Syed Ahmad Khan, founder of the Aligarh Muslim University, Qasmi proceeds to document in great detail Muslim reformist discourse in twentieth-century Punjab all the way to the Ahl al-Qur’an’s influence on Pakistan’s first nation-builders. He shows how the emphasis on the Qur’an is, in part, a response to similar trends in reformist Hinduism that constructed a scriptural basis for itself by depicting the Vedas as the Hindu bible. Other incentives included the wish to universalize Islam by downplaying the Arab influences on early Islam, to modernize Islam by removing everything that mediates between the individual believer and the word of God, and to diminish the political influence of religious specialists.

Qasmi criticizes the philological study of Islam by scholars like Francis Robinson who distinguish between the “real” Islam of the holy scripts and the “popular” or “local” Islam of ritual practice. However, he also stays aloof of the anthropological emphasis on the religious syncretism of everyday practice. Despite his focus on the Islamic scripts, he does not treat them as unambiguous and unchanging dogmas. He rather shows how interpretations have always been contested and subject to change. The main strength of the book lies in the way Qasmi thoroughly contextualizes religious debate without reducing the theological disputes to Realpolitik alone.

The well-documented study ends somewhat abruptly with the observation that the influence of the Ahl al-Qur’an has rapidly diminished since the 1960s. Since
then, modernist Islam in Pakistan has given way to more radical forms of reformist Islam that include more traditionalist influences. Unfortunately, Qasmi does not analyze the reasons for this decline in much depth, but following his own theoretical framework it stands to reason that this is largely due to the lack of a truly popular base for the Qur’an movement with its roots in colonial times. It is likely that the democratization of Pakistan that started in the early 1970s has contributed to the decline of the Ahl al-Qur’an. Hopefully, Qasmi will take up this issue in his future work as a follow-up to this excellent study.

Oskar Verkaaik

University of Amsterdam


In this study, a former journalist investigates American government interactions with Laos during the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations. Extensive US archival sources and interviews establish the author’s mastery of Department of State, Department of Defense, and Central Intelligence Agency activities, but the absence of Laotian documents makes his work American-centric. Written for acculturated readers, a sea of acronyms and personalities may bewilder nonspecialists.

William J. Rust effectively argues that US handling of the situation in Laos was a key misstep in regional affairs and a precursor to the Vietnam War. But the book is actually a diplomatic process tutorial that explains what happens when government officials and interested parties seek to manipulate circumstances to their own ends. In 1954, an American presence was established in Laos’s capital, Vientiane, not only to counter the spread of Communist Pathet Lao activity in the northern provinces but also to influence Laotian government behavior. Hampering US objectives were the 1954 Geneva Accords, a document that placed restrictions on foreign military presence in the area, other than limited numbers of French forces. A nonsignatory, the Eisenhower administration complied in spirit while creating the Programs Evaluation Office (PEO) to provide direct economic and military aid to Laos and circumvent the French. When the Laotian government sought friendly relations with China, the US ambassador J. Graham Parsons attempted to sway the process by politely mentioning future American foreign aid ramifications if things became too cozy.

What is particularly striking is Rust’s account of the lack of cohesion within the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations in framing and executing policies.
Although all shared a common objective to prevent a Communist takeover of Laos, assessing what was actually going on and how to correct the situation was something else. Rust does an exceptional job in relating the conflicting views that existed not only within State Department channels but also among PEO members, the Department of Defense, the CIA, Special Forces operatives, and a host of other concerned participants. Chapters 8 and 9 are especially important, the former chronicling the ramifications of a 1960 coup led by Kong Le and his paratroopers as Pathet Lao threats increased and the latter telling of US efforts to ensure that an anti-Communist government remained in power while officials figured out who among many Laotians would be “our boy.”

Although Kennedy’s Laotian policies were preempted by his assassination, Rust reveals that the president was bedeviled by the complexity of American foreign aid, Laotian intrigue, Russian and North Vietnamese mischief, and the potential of military intervention involving US and SEATO forces. Though the 1962 Geneva declaration helped to avoid superpower confrontation in Laos, the situation was highly unstable. That Kennedy considered Laos to be more serious than Vietnam to include potential military action against Hanoi helps readers to better comprehend Lyndon Johnson’s 1965 Vietnam policies.

Rust’s excellent account of US-Laotian conundrums fills a historiographical gap and will assuredly be the standard work. It is an essential reference for those interested in the pre-Vietnam War era and America’s general involvement in Southeast Asian Cold War affairs.

Western Illinois University

Walter E. Kretchik

South India Under the Cholas. By Y. Subbarayalu. (Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. xvi, 274. $50.00.)

It is an extraordinary fact that no authoritative book exists on the history of the four centuries of Chola rule despite the name and fame associated with the term “Chola,” whether such fame be attributed to their polity, their expeditions to Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia, their elegant temples and exquisite sacred bronzes, or their literary production in Tamil. K. A. Nilakantha Sastri’s original, celebrated volumes have been set aside, Burton Stein’s “segment state” model has been challenged by R. Champakalakshmi’s studies, and a comprehensive study to replace these is long overdue. The current volume by Y. Subbarayalu, a collection of seventeen essays published by this meticulous epigraphy scholar between 1977 and 2007, contains the type of documentation that will prove invaluable when the
Chola history is written. His essays highlight the crucial importance of utilizing the over ten thousand existing Chola inscriptions, often carved on the walls of temples, that can provide empirical data to help elucidate a range of socioeconomic issues that include topics like taxation, land revenue, property rights, mercenaries, personal names, merchant guilds, and a range of village bodies.

In emphasizing the importance of statistical methods, Subbarayalu insists that individual pieces of information become meaningful only when considered as a group. He takes readers through his arguments point by point, demonstrating the painstaking process involved in clarifying the accurate meaning of a term, and alerts readers to the fact that meanings change over time, even within the four hundred years of Chola rule. Subbarayalu’s work stands up there with the analytical epigraphical work of Noboru Karashima, who has worked on a parallel stream. In fact, it is apt that one of the most useful volumes relating to the Chola period to be published in recent years is the 2002 joint Karashima-Subbarayalu volume, Ancient and Medieval Commercial Activities in the Indian Ocean: Testimony of Inscriptions and Ceramics-sherds: Report of the Taisho University Research Project, 1997–2002, widely spoken of as AMCA.

This is not a book one attempts to read in a single sitting; rather it is a reference book to which one resorts when looking for an in-depth study of the terms used in sale deeds, merchant transactions, land measurements, irrigation rights, and the like or when seeking the exact meaning of a word in an inscription. The most useful chapters for the general reader are likely to be the first, an introduction to the field of Tamil epigraphy, and the last, “The Chola State,” which is an excellent summary of Chola history. Subbarayalu demonstrates how the Chola rulers started out by sharing power with a number of chiefs of varying lineages who ruled territories of differing sizes, moved into the period of imperial expansion, returned to a phase in which local chiefs reappeared, and ended by controlling only the Kaveri Delta and relying on the armies of local chiefs. A fascinating intervening chapter devoted to an inscription of a Tamil merchant guild in Sumatra demonstrates the importance of gold, camphor, and other aromatic substances for Indian trade and alerts readers to the reach of the Tamil merchant world.

Columbia University

Vidya Dehejia
Based on selections from documents that the author assiduously dug out of previously protected archives, this outstanding documentary history adds rock-solid details to a growing scholarly literature of China’s Great Leap Forward Famine. Its eight chapters are organized into representative topics concerning the worst famine in human history, which claimed thirty to forty-five million lives, with an author’s introductory guide to each chapter. This book reveals shocking sufferings and fears of the Chinese peasants who experienced hunger, malnutrition diseases, repression, violence, cannibalism, and death during the famine, significantly in their own voices and from the reports of the grassroots Communist cadres. What makes this book even more valuable is the absurd reality that a large number of those documents have been recently reclassified as “closed” files.

A great strength of the book is its powerful demonstration of the undeniable truth that the famine was the result of policy, of which death was often a consequence of a factor other than food shortage. Although the state’s excessive grain procurement gave rise to widespread starvation among the peasants, the Maoist people’s commune program, which typically forced an entire village to eat in a collective canteen, frequently resulted in incidents of food poisoning and deaths, especially in the times when the canteens were only able to provide food substitutes for their diners. Even worse were the ubiquitous prisons and labor camps established by local authorities at the county, commune, and village levels in which many grassroots cadres and ordinary peasants, who probably resented Mao’s leap programs, were unlawfully detained, interrogated, or tortured to death. Worst of all was the fact that Mao himself and local officials knew of the famine, but they opted for the continuation of the Great Leap even if it meant, in Mao’s own words, “to let half the people die.” The selected documents manifest the truth that, though Mao was ultimately responsible for the catastrophe, the local Communist officials were not innocent.

Another great strength lies in the local nature of the documents. As the Chinese Central Archives are inaccessible, the author has made a great use of provincial and county archives. Thus the documents included in this book tell meticulous stories of the famine in localities. They not only tell tales of how, sometimes on a monthly or daily basis, food rations were reduced or suspended at canteens, private houses were massively demolished to create spaces to build collective houses, and death took place in huge numbers, but they also show exactly when massive deaths happened and what percentage of the people perished in a county,
a town, or a village. The works by Jasper Becker, Frank Dikötter, and Yang Jisheng depict rather a national story of Mao’s tragic famine whereas Zhou Xun’s work shows exactly how bad the famine was at the grassroots levels.

Although this book does not reveal why the famine varied from place to place, it is a good source for scholars, a good-sized read for students, and a great read for a general audience.

University of North Carolina, Wilmington

Yixin Chen

**EUROPE**


There once was a view of history that argued, indeed assumed, that the best of our world developed in the West, especially in Western Europe and Britain. This history emphasized the progress of liberty and enlightenment, which led to (or was the result of) material and economic progress and the (benign) domination of the world by the West. For this Whig interpretation of history (outlined by Herbert Butterfield in the 1930s) to be persuasive, inconvenient or uncomfortable aspects of that history—slavery, imperialism, racism, sexism, economic exploitation—had to be ignored or explained away. The experiences of the twentieth century, from the trenches of the Great War, to the ovens of Auschwitz, to the bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, forced most historians to rethink this essentially optimistic view of human history, even in its strongholds in Britain and the United States. Indeed, that other optimistic, progressive historical tradition, Marxism, has also lost its appeal in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Only in the rarified world of a certain kind of intellectual history does this historiographical tradition sometimes reappear. Richard Abel attempts to revive this tradition in *The Gutenberg Revolution: A History of Print Culture*. To be fair, Abel does historians an important service by returning to an old argument about the importance of the printing press in the development of modern society. As he properly points out, this idea was brought to broad prominence by Elizabeth Eisenstein in *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* [1979]. Abel claims to go beyond Eisenstein by arguing, repeatedly, that printing led to an “epistemological revolution” by giving European intellectuals more texts and more consistent and comparable ones than had been available in the era of hand-copied manuscripts. He also expands the idea somewhat by speaking of “the collaborative efforts of...
several generations of a wide variety of translators, writers, thinkers, and book people scattered across Europe” (123).

These insights would be useful if they were not part of a book that feels very old fashioned. Abel moves across the centuries, discussing the weaknesses of medieval intellectual “renascences” in the Carolingian Era and in the High Middle Ages, focusing on the limited number of texts available and their limited diffusion. The Renaissance is of course an important moment, as printing allowed for the wide dispersal of the cultural legacy of antiquity to a wider group of intellectuals. Abel does not focus on the Reformation in Germany and elsewhere in Europe but does argue that Protestantism was central to the advance of knowledge and freedom in seventeenth-century Britain, which is the subject of the last chapter.

The focus on seventeenth-century Britain as the cradle of liberty and progress leads to some surprising passages. Abel praises, for example, English colonists for using new knowledge to “create a viable colonial empire” that was, as this reviewer follows the argument, good for the economic and cultural development of the world (148). Abel dismisses French and Spanish empires as overly focused on religion and, not surprisingly, makes no mention of the role of slavery in development of the European empires and capitalism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Abel’s stress on the superiority of Western intellectual development, propelled by the printing press, leads him to some simplistic dismissals of other civilizations. Sixteenth-century Islam failed to threaten Europe because of the “faltering and decaying inner core of Islamic culture itself. This cultural malaise was fostered by a rigid, closed, and inward-looking religious/political Weltanschauung” (88). Abel also argues that the “ameliorating cultural formulations then being framed in Europe [that] were soon transplanted into the New World” were good for Americans (102). In this argument, “bestial native religious beliefs and practices were eliminated,” and European slavery was an improvement over, or at least no worse than, subjugation before Columbus (102). These rather startling generalizations sound very much out of place in contemporary historical writing and seem to reflect an ignorance or rejection of recent scholarship in a range of fields.

Because it is marred by a desire to demonstrate the cultural and intellectual superiority of the West and in particular of Britain, this book fails, in this reviewer’s view, to persuade the reader of the significance of printing and the role of “book people”—printers, publishers, and editors—in changing European culture. No one doubts the significance of books and all kinds of other printing in the Renaissance, in the Reformation, in the English and French political disputes of the seventeenth century, in the Enlightenment, and in the French Revolution.
Historians of the stature of Eisenstein, Jonathan Israel, John Pocock, Robert Darnton, and many others have been broadening and deepening our understanding of these issues for decades. Unfortunately, *The Gutenberg Revolution* neither popularizes those advances nor develops them in new directions.

*Connecticut College*  
Marc R. Forster

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All cases of mass murder involve some form of disavowal, but the case of the Armenians in Anatolia in 1915 has given rise to the best-known example of genocide denial. Disputes about what happened still generate strong passions. Taner Akçam, a Turkish-born professor of Armenian Genocide Studies at Clark University, has championed an honest approach to this subject, yet he has been threatened with prosecution by the Turkish government and has appeared on a right-wing death list in his country of birth. This book is dedicated to Hrant Dink, the journalist who was murdered in 2007 because of his antidenial stance.

As the title of the book indicates, Akçam takes an unequivocal position and is clear that the policy of the ruling Committee for Union and Progress (CUP) “toward the Armenians was genocidal” (450). Given this strong stance, it may seem incongruous that the book begins by explaining the gaps in his source material. He acknowledges that the relevant archives have been “purged” by Turkish governments but points out that their sheer size and the duplication of material has preserved important documents (1). The author has found over six hundred of these, and they form the basis for much of the analysis in this book. He also points out that the genocide was administered by the CUP through a dual-track method with the deportation of Armenians organized through official communications but with the annihilation policy conducted secretly through the CUP using special couriers. However, the working assumption of the book is that these invisible orders have left clear traces in the official documents, and they enable the construction of a damning case against the CUP leadership, especially when the analysis is augmented by other material, which include the archives of other states, the proceedings of the criminal tribunals held in Turkey after the end of the First World War, and contemporary accounts.

The Armenian genocide is viewed as part of an official nation-building project to homogenize Anatolia through the forced assimilation of minority Muslim
populations and the “cleansing” of non-Muslims. When this demographic engineering was complete, non-Muslim minorities would make up only 5 percent to 10 percent of the population in all regions. The first targets of this policy were the Anatolian Greeks. The author estimates three hundred thousand fled or were expelled between 1913–1914. The regime then turned on the Armenians with even greater viciousness, because, unlike the Greeks, they represented an “existential national security issue” (124). As well as mapping the path of the genocidal policy, the book also includes groundbreaking chapters on the confiscation of Armenian property and the forced assimilation of potential victims.

One cannot state this is a definitive analysis because the absence of the complete documentary record precludes this claim. Yet despite the limitations created by the gaps in the sources, which the author faces head-on, this careful and detailed scholarly inquiry will quickly establish itself as one of the most commanding contributions to our understanding of this deeply contested topic.

University of Ulster

Stephen Ryan


That Italian fascism would adopt Rome as a fundamental part of its ideology, though it seems obvious now, was not a given at the start of the movement. As Joshua Arthurs notes, Rome was associated with the decadent liberal state and with the Catholic Church. Fascism, in contrast, meant modernity and dynamism. Early allies of Mussolini from the Voce movement to the Futurists scorned retrograde Rome. Only the Italian Nationalist Association, an authoritarian, right-wing party, made the myth of Rome central to its call for an aggressive imperialist foreign policy. Nationalists like Enrico Corradini, Luigi Federzoni, and Alfredo Rocco saw immediately that a refashioned myth of Rome could be shaped into a justification for industrial imperialism and a disciplined, authoritarian domestic order.

The appeal of these ideas to Mussolini was compelling. But the symbolism of Rome had to be reclaimed from the Catholic Church and reimagined to suit the needs of the Fascist regime. Pagan Rome would dominate, and the Catholic Church’s legacy would become merely an extension of imperial power and organization. Education and propaganda were called upon to make a secular vision of Rome triumph over Rome as a religious center. This transformation was complicated by Mussolini’s need for papal support to consolidate power; in the process,
he gave up much contested ground to the Church in the Lateran Treaty and Concordat of 1929.

The most visible aspect of the struggle over the idea of Rome came with fascism’s decision to remake the capital by highlighting the city’s imperial past at the expense of medieval and liberal Rome. A new Rome, Roma fascista, would emerge. The Fascists never quite found a balance between their desire to glorify the Roman past and the modernist impulse of the regime’s own monumental architecture. Thus, it was possible, Arthurs argues, to demolish whole neighborhoods in order to build the Via dell’Impero, but, once cleared, the regime was never comfortable competing against imperial Rome with its own architecture. The major projects of fascism were, with some notable exceptions, located on the periphery of the city. One of those exceptions was the ghastly Piazzale Augusto Imperatore, a square that highlighted the newly discovered Tomb of Augustus. Demolition meant valorizing Rome of the emperors. No interest was expressed in saving any remnants of Rome’s ordinary life from any period. The result is a series of monuments standing in isolation in central Rome and a Museo di Roma, which collected pictures and artifacts from the Rome that had been demolished.

Arthurs shows that though the myth of Rome was a major component of Fascist imperial expansion, it was fraught with contradictions. Rome extended citizenship not on the basis of race, as fascism did after 1938, but on a legal identification with the state. More dangerously, the Fascist interpretation of imperial Rome fed illusions of Fascist Italy as a great power.

Arthurs has given us an excellent, concise summary of what Rome meant to fascism. It is a valuable guide to scholars and to general readers.

North Carolina State University

Alexander De Grand


In searching for rented accommodations for her annual summer research trip to London this year, this reviewer was struck by the way in which the geographic designation “Bloomsbury” automatically conferred a premium in terms of the weekly cost. This suggests that foreign visitors to London are well aware of the intellectual cachet of the area, which for most derives largely from its association with the “Bloomsbury Group” who lived there in the early twentieth century. In this study, Rosemary Ashton seeks to trace how Bloomsbury became “the undisputed intellectual quarter of London” over the previous century, a period, she
argues, during which it acquired its “distinctive, important and above all progressive role in the life of both London and the nation” (ix, 1).

Its history in this role began in the decades after 1800, when the demolition of the Duke of Bedford’s London house led to the development of the area north of Bloomsbury Square and the construction of Robert Smirke’s new British Museum provided an intellectual hub. The subsequent decades saw rapid growth and expansion, though careful planning to attract “wealth and respectability” faced continual “encroachment” from “pockets of poverty” (5). It was the arrival of a number of “progressive institutions,” however, that shaped Bloomsbury’s character as “the intellectual and cultural centre of London”; these included the University of London [1826], the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge [1827], University Hall [1849], the Ladies’ College [1849, and renamed Bedford College in 1859], the Working Men’s College [1854], the Working Women’s College [1864], and the London School of Medicine for Women [1874] (8). Bloomsbury also attracted literary lions long before the arrival of Virginia Woolf and her coterie: Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, Anthony Trollope, William Morris, and J. M. Barrie all resided there. It was a haven for unorthodox religious groups such as the Swedenborg Society, the Catholic Apostolic Church, and the Unitarians. Women, too, found a comfortable home there in which they were afforded a wide range of intellectual and educational opportunities. Bloomsbury’s reputation as a genteel haven for the eccentric, the bohemian, the high minded, the radical, and the progressive was thus established long before 1900.

Though rarely revelatory, Ashton’s study is impressively researched and detailed. The range of sources is breathtaking, and the prose is generally well crafted. Academics and general readers alike with an interest in the history of London will find much of interest and value here. At times, however, the structure of devoting each chapter to a lengthy description of a particular institution distracts from the focus on Bloomsbury as a physical site that inspired diverse but interconnected forms of intellectual activity. The first few chapters, for example, read more like a history of the University of London than of the neighborhood in which it was sited. Readers get an excellent sense of what was happening in Bloomsbury in the Victorian era, as well as of who the people were who made it happen, but the question of why it happened here rather than elsewhere in London remains something of a mystery.

*Stephanie Barczewski*

*Clemson University*

In much of the English-speaking world, Roald Amundsen [1872–1928] exists only as a counterpoint to a contemporary, the English naval officer R. F. Scott. Scott’s fatal attempt to reach the South Pole contrasts with Amundsen’s success. For the British, Scott was an epitome of Edwardian amateurism, his failure a sign of heroism and dignity, while Amundsen’s success seemed too easy and too professional. For too long, Amundsen has been a cardboard cutout figure standing against the British love of amateur failure compared to foreign, professional success; Stephen Bown’s new biography provides a much wider perspective.

Amundsen’s achievements in the polar regions are worth noting. Between 1903 and 1926, he completed journeys through both the Northwest Passage and the Northeast Passage and reached both the North and South Poles. Amundsen developed his skills over many years. He was a member of the Belgian Antarctic Expedition from 1897 to 1899. His bitter experience of a winter in Antarctica made him prepare with great care for subsequent journeys. In 1903, he sailed from Norway, escaping just in time from pressing debts and angry creditors, to find a way through the icy reaches of Northern Canada. The Northwest Passage had long been a goal of many a doomed explorer. In a small ship that wintered in Inuit villages, he reached Nome in 1906. His sensitivity to cultural difference allowed him to see how the indigenous people coped with the extreme cold, and that knowledge guided his planning for the next expedition. His inability to cash in on the adventure—the news was widely leaked before he could sell his story—also made him acutely aware of tightly controlling the news of his explorations. Amundsen’s exploits were widely publicized. He was feted and honored and began worldwide lecture tours.

In 1910, he set off for another polar expedition. He told everyone he was headed for the North Pole, but after leaving Norway he headed south. Using skis and dog sleds and carefully placing supply depots along the route he managed to reach the South Pole on 14 December 1911. Thirty-three days later, Scott’s poorly equipped team—they had ponies rather than dogs and few members of the expedition could ski well—made it to the pole but died in the return. The British press was bitter in their criticism. In Norway, Amundsen’s status as national hero was confirmed. In the USA, he became a popular celebrity, embarking on successful lecture tours and never-ending fundraising trips.

However, Amundsen was always looking to fund the next adventure. In 1918, he set sail from Norway north and east in a small ship, Maud. After numerous
delays, the ship made the Northeast Passage by 1926. Amundsen was injured on the trip and his finances, shaky at the best of times, began to collapse; *Maud* was salvaged by creditors. In 1925, Amundsen, with the backing of rich American Lincoln Ellsworth, attempted to fly to the North Pole. They did not make it, but the next year, as part of an Italian airship expedition, Amundsen was probably one the first people to pass over the North Pole.

Bown tells an exciting story very well. The narrative moves as quick as a sled pulled by strong huskies across the ice. Readers follow both Amundsen’s exploration and his passage across the landscape of exploration, funding, intrigue, and national rivalries. Bown obviously admires the Norwegian, which leads to a very generous interpretation of Amundsen’s behaviors, but this is a necessary prerequisite in any biography. Bown draws heavily on contemporary US press accounts—a reliance that is almost heroic in its assumptions of reliability. Despite these criticisms, this is a fine, engaging biography that recounts the exploits but makes the case that there was little science in the efforts. Amundsen was exploring when there was nothing much else to explore. The polar ice caps and the icy seas of the North Pole were all that was left. The explorations had to be funded and financed, and so the story is as much about the emergence of celebrity culture and the making of national folk heroes as the revealing of new geographical realities. Amundsen, perhaps the last real explorer, was definitely the first celebrity explorer.

*University of Maryland, Baltimore County*

*John Rennie Short*

A few years ago, the contemporary Kremlin political strategist Viacheslav Surkov observed that the massive apparatus used by the Soviet state to inculcate ideological doctrine via the mass media, school curricula, youth groups, fine arts, political education, and so on was one of the greatest achievements of the Soviet regime. At the same time, Surkov and Putin have also acknowledged that the “mighty complex” of Soviet ideological effort ultimately led the regime into a blind alley of distorted information flows and stunted intellectual life.

David Brandenberger’s study concentrates on Soviet propaganda in the 1930s, the period when Stalin’s personality cult was established and dogmatic ideological control was asserted over all forms of communication. As Brandenberger shows,
these impulses were in fact at odds. A system of intellectually coherent doctrine to
guide the study of history and the understanding of contemporary society could
not be elaborated so long as the personal rule of Stalin remained the paramount
source of authority over ideology. The chronic tension between the propagandists’
desire for a consistent set of doctrines and heroes to serve as the foundation for
ideology and the ruler’s need to remain free of any ideological constraints led to
a constant crisis in the propaganda system. Leaders who previously had been
extolled as paragons of devotion to the revolutionary cause were regularly
exposed as counterrevolutionaries. The perverse logic of this system of politically
determined ideological requisites was most brilliantly captured by George Orwell.
Brandenberger employs archival sources to show how much confusion was
created by the frequent changes in the line. The publication of the definitive Short
Course in 1938, far from resolving the contradictions in Soviet doctrine, only
created new problems as a result of its apodictic and confusing style.

The great dilemma for scholars of Soviet ideology, as it was for Soviet ideo-
logical officials themselves, is to gauge the actual impact of its efforts. Although
the postwar Harvard refugee survey project gave us some idea of the effectiveness
of the system, it is difficult to distinguish specifically Soviet influences on popular
values and beliefs from those originating in older cultural templates. By the late
1970s, Soviet leaders themselves recognized how ineffective ideological work was,
findings they based on their own internal public opinion surveys. Archival sources
provide glimpses of popular reactions to the twists and turns of Soviet propa-
ganda but constitute no more than anecdotal evidence. The actual state of public
opinion in the Soviet era remains a matter of interpretation and conjecture.

Ideology is never a closed system; rather, it is given purpose and direction by
a regime’s policy goals. The turn to the broad-tent, popular front strategy in
foreign policy in 1934, as well as the adoption of patriotism and elements of
demotic traditionalism, reflected Stalin’s calculations about the relative priority of
mobilization and demobilization in state building. A more systematic consider-
ation of the relationship between ideology, power, and policy would have
strengthened the book. More attention to Stalin’s own role in determining the
central strategic priorities reflected in propaganda at each point would have
helped give the book a clearer narrative structure. Nonetheless, the book makes a
useful contribution to our understanding of the complexity of building and
operating an ideological polity.

*Emory University*  
Thomas F. Remington

As a subject for writers, Paris is almost as common as the American Civil War. In the last decade alone, dozens of books have appeared on the “Capital of the World.” This new book by Ina Caro, wife of acclaimed biographer Robert Caro, takes an original approach to the subject: traveling by train from Paris to revisit the history of France from the medieval to the modern period. However, it does not really contribute anything new to our understanding of the city or the French past.

A chatty travelogue rather than a serious history, the book is organized around twenty-five sites inside or within a short train ride of Paris, each of which illuminates a different moment in the rise of the nation-state of France. Inspired by a ride on Line 1 of the Paris Métro, which runs from the fourteenth-century Château de Vincennes in the east to the late twentieth-century La Défense in the west, Caro bases her book on the obvious premise that the built environment evokes the past and that a chronological charting of this environment—by means of the modern “time machine” of the train (or car, the device she used in a previous book on the history of France)—helps one to make sense of history.

Visiting the major cities, palaces, and monuments in the Paris region dating from the twelfth to the nineteenth century, Caro covers all of the greatest hits: Saint-Denis, Chartres, Reims, the Louvre, Sainte-Chapelle, Vincennes, Rouen, the châteaux of the Loire, Fontainebleau, the Place des Vosges, Vaux-le-Vicomte, Versailles, the Palais Royal, the Conciergie, Malmaison, and Compiègne. There are no real surprises here. To give these sites a sense of life, she recounts the biographies of key (mostly aristocratic) figures, beginning with the Abbott Sugar, who initiated the construction of the church at Saint-Denis in the 1140s, and ending with the Baron von Haussmann, who remade the capital itself in the 1860s. With a master’s degree in medieval history, Caro is relatively authoritative and vivid in her descriptions of premodern royals and nobles such as the regent Blanche de Castile (mother of Louis IX) and the paramour Diane de Poitiers (mistress of Henri II). However, she gives very short shrift to the nineteenth century, which was so critical in the history of Paris and its region. Moreover, below these elites, no real Parisians appear in these pages. Suffused with nostalgia for the Old Regime and the “order” of Napoleon, this is a much more conservative view of Paris than other recent, more “red” histories of the city.

In sum, despite her frequent visits to France, Caro is not really much of an “authority,” except on herself and her husband, whom she cannot stop
mentioning, even in a footnote on how she bested him in a spaghetti-eating contest at Princeton University soon after they met (18). In this book, we learn more about the eating—and organizational—habits of both Caros than about the imprint of a major figure like Napoleon Bonaparte on Paris. Caro has only a superficial understanding of French history and culture. Relying on English-language tour guides and ten-year-old Michelin guidebooks, plus the occasional Western Civilization course reading, she commits obvious errors—for example, that restaurants originated when chefs lost their aristocratic employers during the French Revolution (26, 328). Readers with a real interest in French history and culture would be better served by any number of other recent histories and travelogues of Paris, including Adam Gopnik’s *Paris to the Moon* [2000], which gives far more insight into the manners of that strange breed, the Parisian. Even better, rather than traveling by train with Caro, they would do better to visit Paris on foot by themselves, examining the traces of the city’s past in its built environment, along Line 1 of the Métro and elsewhere.

*University of North Carolina at Charlotte*

Christine Haynes

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This book is one in a series by the same author entitled “Heritage, Society and National Identity in the European Union,” which aims to analyze the historical and religious trajectories of the nations that make up the European Union in order to show how these might influence its future (1). Already-published volumes on the Germans, French, and British are now joined by this exploration of the Spanish.

The book covers the whole of Spanish history from pre-Roman Iberia to twenty-first-century Spain. A significant proportion of the discussion is devoted to the Muslim conquest and Christian reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula, concentrating on the benefits of the daily coexistence during this period of Muslims, Jews, and Christians with complementary knowledge and abilities. A relatively brief section is devoted to the Spanish Empire and its demise, then the subject turns to the political turmoil of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and, finally, to an examination of Spain’s rebirth as a democratic member of the European Union.

Yehuda Cohen presents three main arguments: that Spain’s failures since the early modern period have as their “first cause” the expulsions of the Jews and
Muslims, whose skills could not be substituted by a Christian population that had never bothered to acquire them; that a particularly Castilian religious fervor was far more important than any other factor in dictating the actions of Spain’s rulers for many centuries; and that Spanish national identity today has finally reached a state of cohesiveness thanks to a civil war that eventually led Spaniards to value their commonalities over their differences (191). The first two arguments—in areas where this reviewer is not an expert—strike one as questionable and certainly are not supported by enough convincing evidence or a lucid argument. The third—one on which the reviewer is much more qualified to comment—is deeply flawed.

According to Cohen, “Spanish society through its sufferings in the Civil War achieved cohesion by overcoming the particularistic tendencies that had plagued it for centuries” (177). Supposedly, Spaniards have become more secure in their Spanishness, which outweighs “even questions of regional autonomy” and creates a “budding” Spanish ethnicity with European nationality (178, 197). These statements are based on a fundamental lack of understanding of contemporary Spain and even of basic scholarship on nationalism and ethnicity. Balfour and Quiroga’s *The Reinvention of Spain* [2007] (not listed in the bibliography but surely a key text on this topic) presents a much more accurate picture of a country whose manifest failure to create a cohesive national identity has, for example, led to desperate attempts by the Spanish Right to reframe ethnic identity as “constitutional patriotism.” Recent events in Catalonia also challenge Cohen’s interpretation: How do his pronouncements on “Spaniards’” new strong and healthy sense of kinship sit with the current growth in Catalan separatism (18)?

In sum, this is a text of questionable usefulness that seems to have been based on a hastily acquired knowledge of the subject, leading to fundamentally erroneous conclusions about the nature of contemporary Spain.

*Kathryn Crameri*

*University of Glasgow*

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This book offers an antidote for anyone suffering from the delusion that the 1960s were responsible for Western sexual liberalism. *The Origins of Sex* tells a story of transformation in English sexual morals and mores in the seventeenth and
eighteenth centuries. Faramerz Dabhoiwala’s central argument is that our present emphasis on sex as a primarily private matter, its morality centered on the mutual consent of parties rather than concern for divine authority, can be traced to sexual upheavals beginning in about the 1660s. Belief in the necessity to rein in, channel, and police erotic activity gave way with surprising rapidity, in this view, to a new celebration of sex among Enlightenment thinkers, novelists, visual artists, and journalists.

Some purveyors of the new ethics of eros espoused views that may still challenge attitudes on the subject. The activities of the “Beggars’ Benison” private men’s club, with branches from Edinburgh to St. Petersburg, whose chief purpose was to engage in group masturbation and ejaculate into a specially designed platter, might be viewed as no more than eccentrically subcultural. However, many eighteenth-century philosophers and Christian commentators argued for the intrinsic worth of sexual pleasure, at least between men and women. How can something that God has created, which perpetuates the species and feels so good, be bad? So ran the thinking. Premarital sex, open relationships, de facto partnerships, divorce, and even adultery could all be condoned. Sodomy and masturbation remained more often condemned (some men were executed for sodomitic acts up to the 1830s), yet not by all: A few authors went beyond conventional appeals to ancient precedents or arguments for sodomy’s “naturalness” and suggested Christ himself had homoerotic tendencies.

Dabhoiwala pursues his argument through six main chapters. The first explores the decline and fall of public repression of sex amid religious and political upheavals of the mid-seventeenth century. Chapter 2 details the rise of sexual liberalism among Enlightenment thinkers. The third chapter addresses a problem raised by Thomas Laqueur’s Making Sex [1990]: why fundamental ideas about male and female bodies and women’s greater lustfulness were overturned by c. 1800. The answer lies, the author suggests, in the growing “cultural prominence” of women as writers and in other spheres (169). The fourth chapter surveys the effects of this new naturalization of female chastity upon marital and gender relations, with long-lasting consequences for modern feminism. A related development—efforts to rescue and reform prostitutes through philanthropic and penitentiary means—is the subject of the fifth chapter, and the sixth studies the cult of “celebrities” such as royal mistresses and famous courtesans through new media of periodicals and cheap image reproductions. The epilogue connects our own age to the eighteenth century by considering the impact of Victorian attitudes, which, though now regarded as less censorious than previously thought, nonetheless did much to suppress the more radical messages of the previous
century. We ourselves are products of both Enlightenment liberalism and Victorian repression and perhaps carry much more of the latter with us than 1960s radicals realized.

Dabhoiwala’s book, written for educated general readers as much as academics, presents its account in readable prose studded with vivid anecdotes and links large themes in a manner that is audacious and seductive. It could be criticized for presenting normative, imaginative, or ideological material as representative of the wider culture in a way that might be modified by use of more sociological materials. For this reader (a medievalist), perhaps the least convincing element was the appeal to a linear narrative of centuries-old repression overturned by early modern revolution. The prologue on medieval and sixteenth-century background, where the evidence presented regularly refuses to fit Dabhoiwala’s arc, is problematic. Western sexual histories seem better to fit a cyclical or elliptical pattern than a clean narrative of repression to liberation. Still, *The Origins of Sex*’s account of transition from public sexual morality to private sexual ethics is intriguing and bound to have strong influence on future scholarship.

*University of Auckland*  
Kim M. Phillips


Since antiquity, Herodotus and Thucydides have frequently been considered together or set directly against one another, as if praise of one always entails criticism of the other. As the two strongest candidates for the title “Inventor of Real History”—each of whom had a quite different approach to writing an account of the past—they have enjoyed widely varying reputations in different eras, as ideas on the nature, aims, and methodology of historiography have changed. In the eighteenth century, Herodotus’s work was felt to be congenial by those developing wide-ranging and comparative “universal histories”; in the nineteenth, Thucydides’s strictures on the need for critical analysis of evidence and eschewal of rhetoric saw him hailed as the originator of modern “history as science”; in the twentieth, Herodotus rose again as the original cultural and anthropological historian, while Thucydides’s alleged reductionism led to him being favored by political scientists rather than historians. The contention of this volume of essays is that historians will understand both of these authors better by considering them together in a more constructive manner, comparing as much as contrasting, in relation to the same questions and themes.
As ever, there is insufficient space in a review like this to offer more than a summary of the topics considered for this purpose. Different chapters look at the ways that each author received Homer; their literary techniques, such as the use of speeches and depictions of decision-making processes; and their respective treatments of a historical character like Themistocles, of a common topic like the Persian Empire, or of similar incidents such as the battles of Thermopylae and Pylos. Sometimes these studies echo the established tradition in highlighting differences between their historical ideas and methodologies—not least, as becomes clear, because Thucydides is often responding directly to his predecessor’s work. More often, the essays reveal similarities in their attitudes and conceptions—above all, by emphasizing the ways in which both were very much writers of their own time rather than being, as some later commentators have thought, precursors of truly modern historiography. None of the chapters engages directly with this habit of constructing polemical accounts of “the essence of history” based on tendentious readings of one or both of these ancient authors (though several consider their reception by different ancient authors), and the discussion is more measured as a result. Because no one is trying to establish either Herodotus or Thucydides as a model for present practice, each can be considered properly in his own terms and in relation to his original context.

This is not, it must be said, a volume for general readers or even for undergraduates; most of the chapters assume close familiarity with the works of the two historians and the relevant scholarship, and much Greek is left untranslated. For scholars of ancient Greek historiography, however, it offers a range of insightful and stimulating ideas and arguments and fully supports its editors’ claim that comparisons of Herodotus and Thucydides need not always constitute a zero-sum game.

University of Bristol

Neville Morley


In the 1750s, in the throes of the final conflict that stripped France of its North American empire, British and American forces deported thousands of Acadians—some of the earliest French-speaking settlers in the New World—from what are now Canada’s Maritime provinces. A human tragedy on a massive scale, the deportation inspired poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow to create the fictional heroine Evangeline and generations of historians to debate whether Acadian
treachery, British callousness, or French indifference was to blame. Less has been written, however, about the hardships the uprooted Acadians endured as they were scattered to far-flung locations on both sides of the Atlantic. Some made their way home and reestablished the Acadian community that thrives today on Canada’s east coast, while others settled in Louisiana, where the vibrant Cajun culture was born.

Historian Christopher Hodson fills in many missing details in The Acadian Diaspora, which (as the subtitle makes clear) concentrates on the first fifty years of the Acadians’ arduous journey from refugees to survivors. The “Janus-faced theme” of the book, as he puts it, is the role deportees played “in building empires, and the role of empires in transforming Acadians” (10). He traces their dispersal to the American colonies in 1755, where they received a hostile reception from authorities preparing to fight the French and their native allies. More than 1,500 drowned in shipwrecks or died of disease in a second major deportation in 1758. The survivors, as well as thousands of other exiles, sought refuge in France, where the court of Louis XV was ill prepared for their arrival. In the 1760s, they became pawns in France’s effort to retain the few overseas possessions it had left after the disastrous Seven Years War. The hardy Acadians were seen as the perfect settlers for outposts in present-day Haiti and French Guiana, where they suffered miserably in the tropical climate, and a few families were recruited to bolster France’s short-lived colony on the Falkland Islands. Others were dispatched to Belle-Île-en-Mer off the Brittany coast or left to eke out a living on neglected estates in western France.

Hodson’s focus is on how exiled Acadians found a place in “the labor market undergirding the eighteenth-century Atlantic world” and in particular how France’s empire builders exploited them as an alternative to African slaves and recalcitrant peasants (120). Extensive archival research provides fresh insights into how the Acadians interacted with British and French authorities and allows Hodson to re-create the ordeals of individual deportees, giving a human face to the tragedy. But it is a narrow focus. Little attention is paid to the mass migration of thousands of exiles to Spanish-held Louisiana in the 1780s, a success story amid the many failed resettlement schemes. And, surprisingly, Hodson devotes just thirty pages to the Acadians’ century-long history prior to 1755 and the horrors of their round-up and banishment. The predeportation bonds of family and community and a shared sense of injustice—not just their ability to adapt to the eighteenth-century labor market—ensured the survival, against incredible odds, of the Acadians as a distinct people.

University of King’s College

Dean Jobb
The author of the work describes how magnificence became part of the Florentine identity in the early Renaissance through vernacular preaching, which justified and inspired great expenditure on architecture and art. Peter Howard traces the theory of magnificence, hitherto thought to be a secular one dating to the mid-fifteenth century, back to religious writing and sermons of the 1420s and links it to the great commissions for building and art of the period.

Howard concentrates on the preaching and *Summa Theologica* of Antonino, the Dominican friar who became Archbishop of Florence in the 1450s. These works related the abstract ideas of Aristotle and Aquinas to the issues of the city, creating a local “theology of the piazza” (68). Drawing on earlier Dominican writing, Antonino spiritualized the virtue of magnificence that led to munificent spending on churches, monasteries, libraries, hospitals, chapel decoration, and also private palaces that beautified the city. He conceived of *magnificentia* as a virtue for the republic, for corporate groups, and also for individuals motivated by the common good rather than self-interest. Further, he argued that human magnificence imitates the divine and that man magnifies God with magnificent works. Magnificence became at once a theological, moral, and aesthetic value and a part of a local theology that informed the Florentines’ vision of themselves and of their city.

Howard’s theory that magnificence was established as a Florentine tradition in the early Renaissance is persuasive, especially as he points out antecedents in fourteenth-century Dominican preaching on urban renewal projects and the common good, which is again public theology. Antonino was closely involved in the traditions and life of the city, hearing confessions of the laity, managing the business of monasteries and convents, deciding on the patronage rights of influential families, and being a friend of the chancellor Leonardo Bruni and confidant of Cosimo de’ Medici. He understood the Florentines and was in a position to adapt theory to the experience of the city.

Howard discovered that Antonino’s theory of magnificence was largely compiled from the treatment of the virtues by Henry of Rimini, whose own *Liber* of the late 1290s adapted the theology of Aquinas for preaching to the Venetians. Antonino redacted the text, omitting issues of particular concern to Venetians and addressing those relevant to Florentines. His *Summa*, a source for mendicant preaching, put into public discourse the values expounded in texts and treatises, not only transmitting ideas but also creating an ethos.
Antonino’s theory of magnificence includes spending on private palaces as well as civic and religious projects because it contributes to the honor and splendor of the city. His writing on the subject preceded the boom in palace building in the second half of the century and also Don Timoteo Maffei’s dialogue of the 1450s, *On the Magnificence of Cosimo de’ Medici Against [His] Detractors*. (Maffei’s text with a lively English translation is included in the appendices along with excerpts from a sermon and the *Summa* of Antonino, also with translations.) As Howard notes, the dialogue, thought to mark the introduction of a theory of magnificence, treats private and individual patronage, not civic, and its arguments are secular. As he has demonstrated, the discussion as well as the pursuit of magnificence began decades earlier.

Howard’s thesis would explain how a city full of envy, according to Dante, and disdain for excess and spendthrifts embraced a theory of magnificence. Antonino condemned extravagance in art, as did Alberti, who wanted architects to build works that would “be praised by the magnificent, yet not rejected by the frugal.” Howard’s “local theology” with its idea of *magnificentia* as an Aristotelian mean between miserliness and squandering also illuminates the distinctive Florentine aesthetic of restrained magnificence.

*Creating Magnificence in Renaissance Florence* is thoroughly researched, has important texts in the appendices, and is so lucidly argued as to appeal to students as well as scholars interested in the culture, history, religion, and art of the early Italian Renaissance.

*University of Detroit Mercy*  
Sarah Stever

(Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012. Pp. xi, 236. $27.95.)

When this reviewer was first in Kyrgyzstan in 2001, he attended a public celebration of the nation’s national day. The center of the celebration was a music and video production recounting Kyrgyzstan’s history from Manas to the twenty-first century. Everything from the “primitive” past (which epic poetry claims to be one thousand years old and historical research claims is no older than the seventeenth century) through Russian imperialism to Soviet control and finally independence was portrayed as a part of the glorious march of progress in the country. The only villain discussed in the presentation was Stalin, who was blamed for all evils. Coming, as the reviewer did, from experiences with eastern and southern Africa coping with the fallout of British colonial domination, this generally positive,
struggle-free recounting of Kyrgyz history was puzzling. Ali Igmen’s book fills in many of the historic details that make this event and others like it understandable.

One of the commonalities between Russian/Soviet colonialism and British or French colonialism was the sense of being engaged in a civilizing mission, bringing enlightenment to a backward people. However, their central goals and methods were very different. This is especially marked for the seventy-five years of Soviet control. Though it can be said that European colonialists in Africa used “cultural enlightenment” as a cover for a variety of capitalist exploitations and that Imperial Russia was impelled by simple imperial competition with Britain, the Soviets were truly trying to build a new Soviet person and a new Soviet culture.

Because Soviet Russia was geographically so large and ethnically so diverse, there seems to have been a true grasp of the importance of local cultures in the process. However, the Soviet grasp of ethnography stemmed, as did that of Marx and Engels, from the simplistic, unilinear evolution of Lewis Henry Morgan. British and French versions derived from the work of Edward Tylor, which was only marginally better. In any case, Kyrgyz tribes saw themselves (and the nonurban still do) as nomads. The Soviets saw the Kyrgyz as nomads who were in need of cultural development, which seems to have meant an appreciation of arts and letters from Europe and, as the Soviet system grew stronger, European Russia. To that end, the Soviets built a series of “culture clubs” whose main foci were presenting and encouraging participation in artistic, broadly conceived endeavors, leavened with ideas of socialist and Soviet universalism.

Much of Igmen’s book is a straightforward, linear history of Soviet efforts to create a Kyrgyz version of Soviet culture. In the process, he lays bare a conundrum that seems to be at the heart of all colonial enterprises, the conflict between traditional culture and modernity. In the Kyrgyz case, traditional culture consisted of nomadism, and the first step in developing nomad culture was settlement in more-or-less permanent villages. But doing so also created a change in traditional constructions of sex and gender. And here is the heart of the conundrum (not yet resolved): Modernization requires changes in the statuses and positions of women, but women are also the necessary preservers of tradition. In that sense, Igmen’s book is one more example of the extent to which the forces of modernization and globalization put women and ethnicity in contradictory positions. The net result in 2013 is that although no one speaks Soviet any more, they do speak independence with a Kyrgyz accent.

University of Louisville

Edwin S. Segal

This volume is an unabashedly sympathetic invocation of Marxism taken from a vantage point at the early years of the twenty-first century. With confidence that Marxism provides the most valid and hopeful critique of capitalism, Paul Le Blanc pleads for the relevancy of Marx and Lenin in an increasingly polarized and globalized world. While heralding the eventual demise of capitalism and imperialism under their own self-contradictions, Le Blanc sounds the additional alarm that the world is on the eve of destruction in the face of escalating environmental degradation due to these evils.

To Le Blanc, the coup of the Bolshevik Revolution led by Lenin is an ideal template. The author views the cause of Lenin as one of the most legitimate roads that movements striving for human liberation can follow. As he defends Lenin’s personality and strives for a historical reinterpretation of Lenin as a democracy-centered leader, mistakes made under Lenin are admitted. Acknowledging the Russian Civil War and the Red Terror as unfortunate, but necessary, aberrations, Le Blanc justifies the bloodshed in the war as a reaction to the White and interventionist forces who intensified and brutalized the conflict. To dissuade common revulsion against Soviet power, Le Blanc concedes the bloodletting under Stalin and the totalitarian bureaucratization that took a hold as anathema to Lenin’s then dictatorship of the proletariat.

Le Blanc’s challenge is also to distance the vision of Marx and Lenin from the real, existing socialism established in former communist states. He identifies the failure of these states as a misguided thoroughfare, comparing such differences to those between the purity of Jesus’s teachings and Christianity’s brutal history of murders and persecutions. Hoping to find commonality between Marx and Jesus, Le Blanc emphasizes the desire of both to realize a kingdom on earth far removed from exploitation on which mankind can achieve its full potential in humane service to each other. Just as Le Blanc justifies the failure of communism as an elitist takeover of popular revolution, Christianity and Judaism are perceived as revolutions from below that over the course of time became top heavy and oppressive. Both convictions were subject to a fall from grace: a brutal medieval authoritarianism under the Catholic Church and a brutal modern totalitarianism under Stalin.

The purpose in all this appears to be an unsubtle plea for communists and the religiously inclined to form a kind of united front. At times virulent and character-bashing, objections to this stance are dismissed as absurd, and an underlying
vitriol is reserved to those in opposition. Anticommunists are depicted as pathetic and former communists as confused apostate backsliders. To ally this cause, anarchism is also invoked as sharing similar goals with Marxism but lacking in organizational focus and susceptible to a descent into terror, as in the Spanish Civil War. After considering the peculiar periods of popular radicalization of the American public in the 1930s and 1960s, the work closes with recommendations for a possible revolutionary future.

Provo, Utah

Victor Barraza


This edition of documents, produced for the Navy Records Society, usefully draws together a wide range of source material relating to the activities, personnel, and administration of the mid-Tudor navy. There are, as the editors acknowledge, gaps in the surviving archival record, but the editors have endeavored to be as comprehensive as possible, drawing on extensive extant material in the National Archives and British Library as well as documents surviving elsewhere in England. They have also included material available in print, albeit not always previously available in as full or accurate a form. This will make the volume highly valuable to those interested in the mid-Tudor navy, especially those without easy access to the archives.

In their introduction, the editors give a bracing overview of developments in the Tudor navy that helps to contextualize what follows. The edition is then organized into subsections within each reign, arranged chronologically, each of which is prefaced by a short introductory overview designed to aid readers’ navigation of the sources that follow. These sections allow readers to explore the role of the navy in events such as Edward VI’s campaigns against Scotland, the succession crisis of July 1553, and the loss of Calais in 1558, as well as its business in more peaceful years. Meanwhile, the documents also help to give a sense of different regions’ contributions to the various naval campaigns and English operations in Ireland. The separation of accounts and finance into their own section does mean that readers will have to draw links between the financial records and the correspondence themselves, but this has its benefits too; by keeping such documents intact, the editors give readers a better sense of how naval administration operated.

The editors have also helpfully provided a range of material to aid users of the edition, including a guide to weights and measures and several maps, as well as
four appendices. The appendices include a glossary explaining the technical terminology and antiquated words used in the text, which nonexperts will find invaluable when consulting the edited documents. A list of royal ships gives, where known, information such as when the ship was built, its type and tonnage, its capacity for crew and cannon, and its ultimate fate. Short biographical notes, which understandably focus on the military and naval activities of their subjects, are provided for key naval and administrative personnel ranging from the more familiar figures of Lords Admiral John Dudley and Thomas Seymour to lesser-known administrators, such as Thomas Wyndham, and commanders, such as William Drury. These latter two appendices contain information about personnel and ships that is beyond the scope of the edition under review as they are intended to also serve a volume on Elizabethan naval administration that is scheduled to follow in 2013. Though the appendices may not all be of immediate relevance, they do help to situate the mid-Tudor navy in longer-term perspective and will be of interest not only to many readers of this volume but also to those who encounter the ships or people they concern in other contexts.

Tracey A. Sowerby

Keble College, Oxford University


Nearly twenty years ago, Roderick Conway Morris claimed that “almost everything that was going to happen in book publishing—from pocket books, instant books, and pirated books, to the concept of author’s copyright, company mergers, and remainders—occurred during the early days of printing, the subsequent centuries offering but variations upon a theme.” In this erudite and lucid study of the European scholarly book trade in the period c. 1560–1630, Ian Maclean signals his broad agreement. Illustrating the structure and vagaries of an industry that in its early stages existed in a continuously precarious state, Maclean shows how lofty intellectual and scholarly ideals rubbed up against religious-political sectarianism and, with results that are depressingly familiar today, increasingly strong commercial pressures.

Maclean has spent his career immersed in the learned culture of the Renaissance and has developed a special expertise in issues surrounding the transmission of knowledge. Drawing on a large pool of primary sources (including letters and diaries, account books, catalogues, and bibliographies), he covers each stage of
book production—from the point where authors contacted publishers; through
the processes of manufacturing, copy-editing, censorship and licensing, advertis-
ing, and distribution; to the sale of the finished object—each of which varied from
one publisher to another and posed problems for all parties involved. As Maclean
observes, the conjunction of scholarship and mercantilist-driven commerce was
“not always a happy one,” a point illustrated by the career of the Swiss Calvinist
scholar Melchior Goldast von Haiminsfeld (17). Goldast—who was the rough
equivalent to a literary agent, mediating the worlds of scholarship and the book
trade—exemplified the tensions of this milieu: ready to engage in sharp commer-
cial practices and quarrels with rivals, he was nevertheless committed to the
dissemination of truth as well as economic gain. More generally, the imperatives
of mercantilism combined with older informal practices, such as imprecise
accounting, as well as a sense of religious and moral obligation, and the “culture
of the gift” evident in the practice of widespread Tauschhandel, or bartering.
Meanwhile, confessionalization had striking and sometimes surprising effects and
could even be exploited by publishers for commercial gain.

In the course of his wide-ranging analysis, Maclean proposes some interesting
arguments and hypotheses. If publishers emerge with their reputations somewhat
tarnished, correctors are the heroes of this story, essential parts of the process of
scholarly publishing that mitigated the demise of the humanist printer-publisher.
Law books, which have hitherto been neglected by book historians, are shown
to be quantitatively the most substantial sector of the international trade in
learned books. Maclean also speculates, with some plausibility, that the decline
of that trade after 1620 can be attributed as much to the intrinsic weaknesses of
a narrow and saturated market as to external factors disrupting manufacturing
and distribution.

A brief review cannot do justice to the range of this magisterial study, which
elegantly balances synoptic generalization with nuanced detail. It will be indis-
ispensable for anyone seeking to understand the dynamics of learned discourse in
early modern Europe.

University College London

Angus Gowland
In this volume, Alison K. McHardy provides students with more than 225 original sources, some of them translated into English for the first time, offering a window into a turbulent and highly consequential reign.

Following a brief introduction that outlines the main contours of the reign and provides background information on the most important contemporary chronicles, McHardy divides the work into four main sections bookended by a prologue and epilogue. The prologue covers the last year of the reign of Edward III during which the young Richard was thrust into prominence. She provides a nice balance of documents reflecting the charged atmosphere, particularly in London, occasioned by the death of both the Black Prince and Edward III within a year of each other and the uncertainty regarding the succession.

In her section on the minority, McHardy provides documents for each year from 1377 through 1381, beginning with the accession and coronation of Richard II, followed by the first Parliament of the reign and the appointment of the first “continual council,” and culminating in the dramatic events of 1381. More than twenty-five pages are devoted to the Peasants’ Revolt, including a lengthy and previously untranslated account from the *Vita Ricardi Secundi* along with unpublished material taken from the plea rolls.

“The Struggle for Power, 1382-87” begins with coverage of the king’s marriage to Anne of Bohemia and Richard’s growing attachment to Robert de Vere. Considerable space is devoted to the “crusade” of Thomas Despenser, bishop of Norwich, as well as to the Radcot Bridge campaign. Next, one of the pivotal moments of the reign is thoroughly covered in section 3, “The Rule and Fall of the Appellants, 1388-89.” Aspects of the “Merciless Parliament” are presented in twenty-five different documents, giving students a variety of contemporary perspectives. In contrast, nearly a decade is covered in section 4, “From Appeasement to Tyranny, 1389-97,” including Richard’s increasingly strained relations with both the city of London and many of his nobles and his triumphant first campaign in Ireland. As McHardy remarks, “Had Richard died in the summer of 1387—or even a year later when he had killed and scattered his enemies in the ‘revenge’ parliament—he would surely have been regarded as a successful king” (322). The epilogue contains the will of Richard II.

This edition is nicely balanced in terms of the breadth of coverage and the types of primary source documents provided. As one might expect, pride of place goes to the great chronicles of the reign: the *Anonimalle Chronicle*, the *Eulogium*, the *St. Albans Chronicle*, *Knighton’s Chronicle*, and the *Westminster Chronicle*, but there is also a nice assortment of other types of documents, governmental and
private, domestic and foreign. This is an excellent supplementary text for any course on medieval Britain.

Baylor University 

J. S. Hamilton


The subject matter of this monograph is mid-nineteenth-century transatlantic trade and passenger traffic, before sailing ships finally succumbed to the cheaper fares, faster times, and greater safety of steam-powered vessels. The story centers on the Jeanie Johnston, a three-masted barque that was built in Quebec, Canada, in 1847 by the Scottish-born shipwright John Munn. On completion, the vessel was sold in Liverpool, England, where it was purchased by an Irish merchant, Nicholas Donovan, who operated out of Tralee, County Kerry. These locations, in addition to various ports, cities, and settlements in the United States, reflect the volume’s geographic range.

The Great Irish Famine [1845–1852] is the narrative’s propelling agency. This catastrophic event in Irish and world history was responsible for the emigration of some 2.1 million Irish people in the famine decade 1845–1855, the vast majority of whom settled in North America, mostly in the United States. Although the Jeanie Johnston carried only a tiny fraction of this migratory efflux, it did so with an exemplary passenger-safety and survival record.

The often-meandering content of this short book is presented in thirty-one chapters, interspersed with several others in italic font that trace the American careers of some of the original Jeanie Johnston passengers, especially the Reilly family and their relatives, for a half century and more after their arrival in the United States. In these interjectory chapters, the author’s creative deployment of Reilly and O’Brien family lore helps to flesh out her narrative, but in resorting to phrases like “[t]he story of the Jeanie Johnston is indisputably the stuff of legend,” the author does so in a banal, clichéd, and rather jaded fashion (xviii). The publisher classifies All Standing as history, but the volume defies easy categorization, straddling, as it does, some twilight historical zone where fact, fiction, and fancy intertwine.

In addition, the rather one-dimensional approach to Ireland and its history and, particularly, the number of egregious errors relating to the Great Famine and its trappings undermine confidence in the volume’s accuracy and integrity. The
Famine is unquestionably the most significant event in modern Irish history, but it was not an atrocity, as the author claims, “One of the greatest human rights atrocities in recorded history,” and the publisher repeats (blurb, rear cover) (xv).

There are more rewarding possibilities open to readers of history, such as the recently published, multiauthored Atlas of the Great Irish Famine (Cork, Ireland: Cork University Press, 2012). For those who like their history wrapped in fictional guise, Joseph O’Connor’s Star of the Sea [2004] and Redemption Falls [2007] explore similar themes to All Standing: famine in Ireland, migration to the United States, settlement and family life in a new environment. O’Connor’s linked novels offer literary style and panache, authentic period detail, and a compulsive and focused narrative—attributes that are only occasionally glimpse in the volume under review.

Laurence M. Geary
University College Cork


This new book will surely stand as the definitive account, in any language, of Breton migration to Paris from the nineteenth century into the twentieth. Building on a considerable body of work on immigration to Paris, Leslie Page Moch provides a model study of the last major group of French migrants to travel from the countryside to the capital, a group whose arrival overlapped with a series of waves of immigration from foreign countries and the French empire. Although Moch nods toward recent work on nationality and citizenship status, the primary contribution of this book is to situate Breton migrants in the context of family and labor market networks that connected the Breton peninsula to Paris and to explore the exclusions they endured, especially in terms of gender.

After a brief framing chapter that addresses the migrant traditions in Brittany, Moch moves on to the establishment of a migrant community in the capital. Building on her own earlier work in migration history, Moch makes particularly effective use of marriage contracts to shed light on the immigrant experience and to show how the Breton community evolved over time, from the late nineteenth century until the middle of the twentieth. In the early years, the 1880s, Bretons—especially the Breton speakers from lower Brittany—were more likely to marry one another than people from other regions, including Paris. Those from franco-phone upper Brittany were understandably more likely to find spouses from elsewhere in France. Within the city limits, in the fourteenth arrondissement,
women outnumbered men, reflecting the demand for domestic labor on the part of the city’s expanding ranks of middle-class families and showing diversity within the Breton community; they were relatively much more likely to find a spouse from somewhere else in France than among Bretons in the industrial suburbs.

With this sociological detail, Moch demonstrates the close-minded prejudice of Parisian elites. She is withering on the writings of Jean Lemoine. “They are not Frenchmen,” he wrote (36). The insular tendencies of Breton migrants, especially in the industrial suburbs, struck him as evidence of pathology—of primitive ways imported from the countryside that left the newcomers incapable of coping with modern urban life. A subsequent chapter takes up bourgeois representations of Breton domestic servants, most famously Maurice Languereau’s best-selling Bécassine stories about a simple-minded chambermaid with a heart of gold and her misadventures among the Parisian bourgeoisie.

The heart of the book provides a counternarrative to such well-worn clichés about the pathologies of country bumpkins. It explores their mutual assistance efforts, associational life, and daily labors. Women were domestic servants, cooks, workers in the needle trades, and hospital workers. Men were generally unskilled laborers, digging ditches, cleaning septic tanks, sweeping streets, and working in transportation (railroads and the metro). Endogamy rates, if they remained relatively high at the turn of the twentieth century, gradually broke down. Bretons moved into white-collar work and gradually blended in to the Parisian community.

City College of New York

Clifford Rosenberg


The title of this collection of conference essays is a bit of a misnomer because the scholarship is confined almost exclusively to literary criticism, with little attention given to culture in a sociological or historical sense. In fact, some of the essays would have benefited from utilizing a more interdisciplinary approach inasmuch as textual readings tend to be very much from a particular perspective and are often disconnected from the lived experiences in which the works were produced. Overall, these scholars avoid such detachment and provide some highly suggestive interpretations of both well-known and more obscure works of the Tudor period.
If there is a running theme in the thirteen essays included here, it is to challenge C. S. Lewis’s famous pronouncement of the sixteenth century as a “drab age,” or literary wasteland, at least until the last quarter (see Kinga Földváry’s contribution in particular); and yet, Tudor literary culture in this volume still tends to begin as a trickle within Henry VIII’s coterie of humanists before cascading into a flood by the late Elizabethan period. Although some attention to the first Tudor would have been welcome, the authors do spotlight certain other little-known facets of the age. For example, Kate Roddy, in upholding the conclusions of revisionist historians who argue that Mary Tudor’s reign was far from a failure, demonstrates that contemporary writers, such as Hogarde, Forrest, Proctor, and Udall, effectively constructed a powerful image of the queen as a providential mother to her people, possessed of love and discipline, both essential traits of good rule. In another essay, Gabriella Reuss makes a convincing argument for the author of *The Lamentable Tragedy of Locrine*, an anachronistic tragedy about ancient Huns trying to conquer England, purposely employing pseudohistory on the stage as propaganda during the brief time when the Spanish Armada threatened. These studies take us beneath the rather subjective surface of texts as cultural mirrors and identifiers and help delimit their potential historical impacts. Sue Simpson does much the same when, through some clever detective work, she depicts the rise and decline of the Accession Day tournament as a meaningful form of royal entertainment.

Though it is difficult to capture the full breadth of scholarship in these very diverse essays, they all offer insightful analyses into a variety of works, from Surrey and Shakespeare to the somewhat lesser-known Thomas Sackville and Sir Edward Dyer. One clear advantage is that because most of the essays are by academics working in non-English-speaking countries, they tend to integrate other important, yet less-familiar, scholarship, like that of Hungarian writer Lajos Bodrogi, who did not write in English. This awareness is exhibited in Zsolt Almási’s excellent introduction where, drawing from the work of Gérard Genette and using Thomas More’s *Utopia* as a case study, he offers a fascinating look at how editorial choices about which paratextual elements to include in new editions of literary works can contribute significantly to the overall “production of meaning.” Therefore the reader should enjoy the insightful mélange of Tudor literary interpretation this collection provides, as it repeatedly suggests new possibilities for opening up the age.

*Florida Atlantic University*  
Ben Lowe

This book purports to offer a new perspective on Elizabeth I of England by situating the Queen within the wars of religion that tore apart much of Western Europe during the second half of the sixteenth century. Susan Ronald is a competent writer and sensibly leads her readers through her text with compact, bite-sized chapters. Alas, there is little else to recommend this book. Heretic Queen is overwhelmingly based on historical scholarship that was obsolete at least thirty years ago.

Ronald’s account of the creation of the so-called Elizabethan Religious Settlement in 1559, which determined the institutional framework within which religious issues were subsequently fought out in England, rests upon speculations from the 1950s that were overturned in the early 1980s. The assertion that “around a quarter of the members of Parliament” that made the Settlement in 1559 were Marian exiles (i.e., English Protestants who had gone into exile on the continent during the reign of Mary I) was categorically disproven in 1981 (32). In fact, there were only nineteen former exiles in the House of Commons (out of a total membership of 405). There were far more Catholic and Catholic-leaning members, who also dominated the House of Lords. Ronald is no more credible in her description of the Elizabethan Court and Privy Council in the decades following 1559. Again, her narrative recycles claims and perspectives that were current in the 1950s and that have been substantially rejected by historians since the 1980s. To read the Heretic Queen is, unfortunately, to enter into a historiographical time warp.

The book also suffers from some factual errors. To cite one especially egregious example, the Earl of Essex’s famous expedition to Ireland did not result in his defeat at the Battle of Yellow Ford in August 1598 (302). In fact, Essex and a very large army were sent to Ireland in 1599 in response to the disaster suffered at the Yellow Ford by Sir Henry Bagenal. These flaws in the book are not redeemed by any significant new insights into Elizabeth or her reign. Ronald tells the reader precious little about the actual religious views of her “heretic Queen.”

Above all, this book is frustrating because a new account of Elizabeth’s role in the wars of religion that draws effectively upon recent scholarship would be valuable. In a gesture to contemporary concerns, Ronald describes Pius V’s excommunication of Elizabeth in 1570 as a “papal fatwa” (162). If only Ronald had the courage both to embrace this fleeting conceit and to expand her perspective to consider more fully how Elizabeth’s regime appeared in the eyes of her Catholic contemporaries. From a Catholic viewpoint, Elizabethan England in the
1560s and 1570s was “a rogue state,” illicitly supporting religious war abroad by its encouragement of oceanic “piracy” and the infiltration of thousands of Protestant “jihadis” into the civil wars of France and the Low Countries. Exploring this unfamiliar perspective on Elizabethan England and the Queen’s own complicated and sometimes duplicitous role in these affairs would have produced a far more compelling and significant study than this retread of outdated, old historical narratives.

*University of Colorado at Boulder*

Paul E. J. Hammer

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Tom Scott has written an extremely valuable book. The political and economic issue of the relationship of towns to their hinterland is essential for understanding early modern Europe. Further, the book is a bibliographical tour de force, introducing American readers to a host of Italian and German authors who should be much more widely appreciated in this country than they are. Finally, the book provides a valiant attempt to understand what is common and what is unique about how various European towns were related to their hinterlands. The definition of a city-state is rather slippery. Scott tends to assume a city-state would be any city that could claim some sort of autonomy. This may be true, in some sense, of Spanish or French towns, but, as a practical reality, he is concerned with Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Germany. Common to all these areas was weak or intermittent central authority.

Scott begins his story with the emergence of Italian communes after 1000, and his method throughout the study is to lay out the problem in terms of work done in Italy (Giorgio Chittolini, Antonio Ivan Pini, and Maria Ginatempo provide much of the conceptual frame for analysis) and then move out, generally to the north. What is the story? Scott wants to consider why and how—and with what consequences—cities in Europe chose to dominate their hinterlands to the point where, in a clearly discernible belt of civic territories stretching from central and northern Italy over the Alps to the German-speaking lands and the Low Countries, they succeeded in constructing polities (1).

For an older generation of Italian historians, the story would be founded on a juridical revolution that began around 1000 and that created conditions of freedom allowing for the commercial revolution that followed. Scott largely reverses the story.
The early autonomy of towns was based on economic connections to their hinterland and only later on international trade. Throughout the book, Scott argues that economic and commercial interests predominate and only later did towns worry about jurisdiction, fiscal and military policy, or settlement. Yet one of the key distinctions really is juridical in nature. In the north, many towns regularly enrolled rural citizens or “outburghers.” These could be nobles, peasants, or even convents who would be given citizenship rights in a town. This often included the access to urban markets. Scott underlines that rural citizenship could vary in significance, but it was found throughout the north. This could mean that the countryside was peppered with tiny islands of competing jurisdictions and rights.

At first glance this seems to differ dramatically from Italy, where towns tended to dominate their contadi. Yet Scott believes that a territorium clausum was not so common in Italy as Giorgio Chittolini, for one, has tended to believe. This, in fact, may be a weakness in Scott’s approach. Older ideas of a unified contado tied together by roads, rural communes, and market structures do seem to predominate, especially in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but he is certainly correct to point to mixed jurisdictional patterns in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. But in any case, as Scott shows, outburghership in the north or “sylvan citizenship” in the south really were rather different.

In the end, Scott analyzes a host of theories about city-states and finds them all wanting in one way or another. The basic problem is that scholars quickly look to north-central Italy or Flanders without realizing that models generated there rarely work in complex areas like Switzerland or southwest Germany—his treatment of Switzerland and south Germany really is a great strength. In the end, he seems most happy with Maria Ginatempo’s emphasis on a regional model, which emphasizes the relative strength of rural lords. In places like Lombardy, where rural lords remained largely independent, political power always was mediated by their interests. The author prefers this model because it deemphasizes ideological terms like republic or despotism—and in this he recalls Philip Jones’s classic study.2

In the end, Scott admits there is no entirely satisfactory model for the European city-state. But then this is not a book that depends on a clearly demonstrated thesis. His elegant description of European city-states, their experiences, and their limitations is a wonderful survey of early modern Europe. One can quibble with

some conclusions, but Scott is always clear and fair in his discussions. This reviewer’s only real complaint concerns the bibliography; it contains nearly seven hundred entries but is subdivided into eleven categories and even more subcategories. It is so complex one cannot always follow up on the work of various scholars. That said, students and researchers will find this book extremely valuable.

Duane J. Osheim

University of Virginia


Known for several important articles on the libraries of various medieval Franciscan convents, the young Turkish scholar Neslihan Şenocak has now written a comprehensive monograph on the issues of study and education in the Franciscan order in the thirteenth century. The subject is a thorny one, not in the least because of the alleged antipathy toward the learning of its founder, Francis of Assisi [d. 1226]. Prescinding resolution of this question, Şenocak sets herself the task of countering much of the historiography of the last century, first, by separating the later negative attitudes of the Spiritual Franciscans towards studies from the actual development of the educational system of the Friars Minor in the thirteenth century and, second, by refusing to fill the gaps in the Franciscan documentary record by imputing Dominican practices onto the Minors or by imposing later Franciscan developments onto their earlier history. She is then able to unfold, in abundant detail and with a remarkably judicious use of the sources, the history of the development of the early Franciscan approach to study and education from 1209 to 1310.

Following this historiographical prologue, the author sketches out in the first three chapters the fundamental lineaments of that system from the time of Francis’s return to Italy from the Levant in 1220 to the beginning of the generalate of Bonaventure and the publication of his Constitutions of Narbonne in 1260. In these chapters, she not only integrates into a cohesive whole data, events, and sources hitherto not understood in relation to each other but also offers an array of important insights. To wit: that, according to the Later Rule [1223], the provincial ministers must have had some form of education in the faith to be able to examine new recruits; the roles played by Gregory of Naples and Haymo of Faversham in developing the initial structure for friar education in the convent in...
Paris (and its extension into England and beyond); and the centrality of the system of lectors in provincial and custodial convents in furthering the educational enterprise (and serving as the primary pool for future leadership in the order). Convincingly, the author asserts that the new orientation towards study was not, at first, motivated, as for the Dominicans, by the ministries of preaching and care of souls (until after the 1260s) but rather by a deeper understanding of the faith and the prestige that study would bring to the order, resulting in vocational recruits. She also underlines how study became an integral part of the new definition of Franciscan identity as “evangelical perfection.” In this process, the simplicity of St. Francis is reinterpreted (through the theory of illumination) from a lack of cultural formation (simplex et idiota) to an exemplification of the most direct path to God. The author thus shows how Anthony of Padua, not the Poverello, became the paradigmatic Franciscan saint!

The final two chapters move the story into the early fourteenth century, where particular attention is given to Ubertino da Casale’s attitude towards study. In yet another surprising insight, the author posits that during the debates of 1310 the friar was not railing against study per se but the abuses (especially the possession of books) of a system then well established and accepted in the order.

The content of the volume may have grown out of a doctoral dissertation as the first few chapters in particular contain some nonessential information that could have been streamlined (e.g., the discussion of Joachimism). One is also dismayed at the author’s occasional citation of general works for important points (rather than the sources themselves) and an inconsistent use of italicized script for foreign terms or titles. Several proper names should also have been changed to more standard appellations for an English-reading audience, and a few words inevitably went missing from sentences. Nonetheless, this is a tour de force of scholarship that will be the standard text in the field on the question of Franciscan education for years to come.

St. Mary’s Seminary and University

Michael F. Cusato


This book is a well-written and compact contribution to the growing scholarship on the impact of Athens’s imperial activities on the culture of the city. Athens, as the imperial city, is posited as a hegemon (absent the tyrannical implication of empire), a position emphasized through its openness to suppliants and its ability
and willingness both to defend those suppliants attacked unjustly and to integrate the polluted or hostile into its civic/religious structure. The suppliants come willingly and volunteer to subject themselves to Athens in return for benefits that only Athens can provide them—justice, safety, or even a new home. This process is played out, Angeliki Tzanetou argues, against the backdrop of Athenian-Spartan conflict and especially the Peloponnesian War. Tzanetou explores in particular Aeschylus’s *Eumenides*, Euripides’s *Heraclidae*, and Sophocles’s *Oedipus at Colonus* with a brief mention also of the *Suppliants* of Aeschylus and of Euripides, respectively.

After an informative introduction, Tzanetou uses the *Eumenides* in chapter 1 to introduce the primary themes she sees in the suppliant plays—voluntary submission to Athenian power in return for benefits to the ally and, simultaneously, integration of a hostile and/or polluted enemy as a benefactor and defender of the city. In *Eumenides*, Orestes is the suppliant-turned-ally, and the Furies-turned-Eumenides are the hostile and polluted foe. The analysis of the Furies is insightful and establishes the pattern continued with Eurystheus in *Heraclidae* and on Oedipus, who is both suppliant and polluted foe.

Tzanetou frequently considers the plays with comparison to the funeral oration, an Athenian panegyric genre that includes suppliant narratives within the framework of hegemonic discourse. It is especially prominent in her discussion of *Heraclidae* (chapter 3). Acknowledging different contexts for tragedy and funeral oration, however, would have helped explain the differences in the representations of foreigners. Funeral oratory was only for Athenians, though drama was performed before foreign residents and allies alike, a dynamic important for her analysis.

The discussion of *Oedipus at Colonus* (chapter 4) argues for a vision of a less secure empire. The hegemonic ideology Tzanetou identifies was evident by 407/406 BCE, when the play was likely written, and on the decline as the Peloponnesian War turned increasingly against the Athenians. It would have been appropriate, though, to explore the play under the circumstances of performance in 401 BCE, after the Athenians had lost their empire and Greek city-states were realigning, with Thebes and Athens joining together against an increasingly imperial Sparta, all dynamics that might have impacted the play’s reception.

This book is not for a general audience but for readers knowledgeable of fifth-century-BCE history and the plays in question. As one such reader, this reviewer found the analysis invigorating but abbreviated and requiring previous knowledge. Tzanetou has demonstrated clearly and elegantly how the suppliant plays are both impacted by and impact the understanding of Athens’s imperial
ambitions. She adds yet another argument for viewing Greek tragedy in an imperial context as the Athenians themselves must have done.

*Denison University*  
Rebecca Futo Kennedy


In Percy Bysshe Shelley’s sonnet “Ozymandias,” titled after the pharaoh’s throne name User-maat-ra, the inscription on a colossal statue of Rameses II (the Great) declares the transience of even mighty rulers and their works. Oblivion did follow Rameses’s grandchild Ta-Usret, “The Powerful One,” whose death ended the New Kingdom’s Nineteenth Dynasty. A trace of the grandchild appears in a historical synopsis compiled by the Byzantine chronographer George Syncellus [ca. 802]. Drawing upon royal lists recorded in an epitome by the Hellenized Egyptian priest Manetho (third century BCE), Syncellus arranged rulers of the Nineteenth Dynasty, ending with a pharaoh whom Homer (Odyssey, IV, 126) called Polybus but according to Manetho’s epitomator, Julius Africanus, was named “Thuoris.” Who was “Thuoris”?

The volume under review comprises chapters by leading Egyptologists. The authors identify Ta-Usret, currently transliterated Tausret, as the granddaughter of Rameses II; disclose her behind the name “Thuoris”; and reconstruct her roles as Queen [of Sety II, 1200-1194 BCE], as regent [to Siptah, 1194-1188 BCE], and as a female pharaoh ruling on her own authority [1188-1186 BCE]. Archaeology has cast some light on Tausret as sole ruler. Her preeminence as the pharaoh entitled her to be buried (tomb KV 14) not in the Valley of the Queens but in the Valley of the Kings, west of the Nile, across from the dynasty’s capital, Thebes (modern Luxor). Her empty sarcophagus, reworked and reused, has turned up in the nearby tomb (KV 13) of a powerful chancellor named Bay. Like male pharaohs of the New Kingdom, Tausret began to construct a separate, distant temple (a “Temple of Millions of Years”) to complement her tomb. Until recently, prospects for studying the temple were bleak because later pharaohs demolished and removed its stone blocks for their own buildings; further, partial excavations in 1896 by archaeologist William Flinders Petrie led to the misapprehension that the temple had not been completed and that more excavations would be fruitless. From 2004 to 2011, however, the University of Arizona Egyptian Expedition (UAEE) Tausret Temple Project successfully deployed ground-penetrating radar to identify subterranean features of the destroyed temple. Investigators conclude
that Tausret’s temple was nearly completed, and they can now discern the phases of its construction. Research of the past few decades has placed Tausret’s name and her works alongside women of ancient Egypt who are more familiar: Hatshepsut, Nefertiti, and Cleopatra VII. Her deeds as regent and pharaoh and her undisclosed death, however, remain uncertain.

Although Egyptologists will most benefit from this book’s extensive references and conclusions, the contributors to *Tausret* offer much to all readers interested in New Kingdom Egypt [ca. 1550–1050 BCE], coeval with events like Akhenaten’s solar monotheism, the Exodus, and the fall of Troy. All the essays are clearly written, enhanced by line drawings, black-and-white photographs, inset boxes on topics like “The Sarcophagus of Queen Tausret,” and eight pages of color plates (86).

*University of Missouri*  
Lawrence Okamura

**General, Comparative, Historiographical**


The editors of this volume bring together a variety of essays on the relationship of food and faith in Christian communities throughout time. In so doing, they provide an interesting historical look at the way in which food has been used to construct identity and reinforce cultural norms in a Christian context. The work covers a large area both in terms of time periods and denominations of Christians: from the fourteenth century to the nineteenth and from the New Zealand Maori missionaries to the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Each essay offers a comprehensive analysis of the role food played in that particular faith community. The attitudes towards food that are explored include fasting, feasting, prohibitions, shopping, eating in silence, and the agape meal, to name a few. In each case, the historical and cultural understanding of the eating practice is explored as well as the sociological role the practice played in the community. As Trudy Eden writes, “Altogether these chapters open up for examination the topic of food and Christianity and show how Christians used food and its associative practices to shape, strengthen, and spread their faith” (5). Since there are no mainstream dietary requirements in Christianity, unlike Judaism and Islam, this work demonstrates the breadth of the dietary restrictions adopted by different subgroups throughout Christian history.
What the work as a whole could benefit from is an ethical inquiry as to what the Christian relationship to food should be. Although the historical examination of vegetarians in the Unity Movement in the late nineteenth century contained a short exploration of why parts of the movement adopted vegetarianism on moral grounds, an overall discussion of the morality of food in Christianity is conspicuously absent. The range of topics is impressive, but the lack of moral consideration of the role of food is unfortunate as it begs the question: Are any of these attitudes to food morally preferable as a Christian? Although this is not one of the questions that the authors set out to answer, some consideration of this issue would have added depth to an otherwise excellent historical work.

Overall this is a thoughtful and interesting historical look at the relationship between food and faith in Christian history, and as a historical reference work it has much to commend it.

*Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics*  
Andrew Linzey and Clair Linzey


In this well-researched and wide-reaching book, Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein examine Jewish history from the rabbinic through the medieval periods, utilizing an economics lens that addresses the apparent Jewish demographic decrease in this period. The authors challenge a variety of now-standard assumptions related to the occupations practiced by Jews. In many cases, they provide thoughtful revisions, suggesting, for example, that persecution did not necessarily dictate the occupational decisions of medieval Jews. At the core of the book, the authors assert that the transformations related to the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE shifted the religious leadership within the Jewish community and transformed Judaism from a cult based on ritual sacrifices in the temple to a religion whose main norm required every Jewish man to read and to study the Torah in Hebrew and to send his sons from the age of six or seven to primary school or synagogue to learn to do so (2).

The resultant spread of literacy among an initially and predominantly rural Jewry (along with other developments such as a unified code of Jewish law in the form of the Talmud and rabbinic courts) created comparative advantages in urban, skilled occupations and a voluntary diaspora; it also led to increased
conversion from Judaism (and so population decrease) by those not prepared to invest in the required education. The costs associated with sending children to school meant that Jews who remained Jewish needed to find more lucrative work in order to invest in education.

Like other persecuted minorities, Jews were often forced to migrate, and so they preferred to invest in portable human, rather than physical, capital. Jews moved into occupations that benefitted from education, such as moneylending and finance. This development should not be ascribed to guild restrictions, which often came later, but rather to the rise of comparative advantages—capital, networking, literacy and numeracy, and contract-enforcement institutions.

The authors spend less time grappling with the practical implications of the rabbinic position toward education. Relying heavily on limited secondary accounts and prescriptive legislation, they conclude that education was pervasive in medieval Jewish communities. But what exactly did it mean to send children to school, what were the curricula, what were the specific costs, did everyone actually adhere to the requirements of the decree, and were Jews in fact particularly literate? In short, even as they provide useful reconstruction of the situation Jews faced in a number of important contexts (such as Tuscany in the fifteenth century)—and offer very welcome overviews of the Jews in Persia and Europe—the authors often remain at the theoretical level in describing anticipated behaviors and implications.

The authors further face challenges with an uneven depth and accuracy of information for various periods and locations and at times appear to relativize external factors and underestimate other noneconomic conditions, particularly religious conviction and interreligious permeability. The book includes some limited but lengthy economics formulae that will be (literally) Greek to the uninitiated. In the end, the authors provide a useful synthetic overview of some demographic and broad historical developments and some enticing economic theory. Still, the union of the two is more intriguing than completely convincing.

*Spertus Institute for Jewish Learning and Leadership*  Dean Phillip Bell


The author of this study has produced a truly comprehensive and authentic summary of warfare. His work serves both scholars and general readers as a concise encyclopedia of tactics, strategy, weapons, and methods of warfare from
the earliest days to the present. John France gives clear explanations of how all the major developments in warfare came about.

His work has tremendous importance because he provides deep insights into the transformations of warfare and how they have changed the course of history. For example, France points out that the horsemen of the great Muslim warrior Saladin adopted the fast cavalry methods and weapons—especially the powerful compound bow that could be wielded on horseback—developed by tribes of the Eurasian steppes. These tools allowed Saladin to inflict a disastrous defeat on Christian crusaders at the Horns of Hattin in Palestine in 1187. This battle led to the ouster of the crusaders from the Middle East.

In another example, France notes that the heart of Chinese civilization lay in the great northern plains opening into the Eurasian steppes. This forced the Chinese to develop powerful cavalry to counter the steppe horsemen, especially the Mongols and the Turkish tribes. These horsemen presented a great and lingering peril to Chinese civilization. Europe, on the other hand, was far removed from these steppe horsemen, and their forays into the West were not decisive. This fact allowed Western civilization to develop largely unmolested.

France’s chronological approach to the development of warfare is exceptionally wide ranging and coherent. This is particularly noticeable in his description of warfare in the West from the days of ancient Greece and Rome through the Middle Ages to modern times. He chronicles the changes that led to revolutions in warfare. For example, France tells the remarkable story of the Wagenburgen or “wagon fortresses” developed by John Zizka in the Hussite wars of Bohemia in the 1420s. At that time, gunpowder weapons were in their early stages and took a long time to reload. Zizka saw that his untrained rebel infantry could not stand against assaults by German heavy cavalry. He hit upon placing his infantry within a circle, or laager, of wagons chained together. The firepower of the Wagenburg decimated attackers, stopped German cavalry, and gave the infantry a safe place to reload their arquebuses. These wagon fortresses were widely copied. They gave raw troops cover to use their gunpowder weapons, and this led to the rapid demise of the knight on horseback.

France describes how the seventy-four-gun ship of the line developed as the primary naval weapon in the eighteenth century. This multidecked wooden box was designed to carry as many guns as possible while retaining maneuverability at sea. France shows that this ship paralleled the infantry battle formation of the time—lines of musket-armed men who marched up to within fifty or so yards of the enemy. In a period of single-shot weapons, the aim in both cases was to deliver savage, close-range volley fire to shatter the enemy.
France shows how the simplest of ideas can lead to profound changes in warfare. In the eighteenth century, cannons were usually twelve feet long so that the muzzle would project beyond fortifications and the muzzle blast would not damage the masonry. This made cannons extremely heavy and awkward to use on the battlefield. Frederick the Great of Prussia sharply reduced the length of his barrels, attached wheels to the much lighter cannons, and used horses to keep them up even with his cavalry. The French seized on this idea and developed highly efficient light artillery. Napoleon often rolled these light cannons up to within two hundred yards of an enemy line, blasted a hole in it, and threw the enemy into chaos.

The author depicts how, in the wake of the great movements toward democracy in Europe in 1848, the Prussian officer corps sided with the king against the liberals to give decisive power to the monarchy. By the time of the unification of Germany in 1871, the German military had separated itself from the civilian population. “Throughout recorded history,” France writes, “with very few exceptions, armies have been isolated from social culture” (240). The Prussian officer corps expected the state to enforce its wishes. Other officer corps felt much the same way. The result was contempt for the mass of the population and a feeling by officers that they could win wars quickly and cheaply. This attitude contributed to the ease with which the powers entered World War I and the disasters that followed.

France shows that none of the European officer corps had drawn the proper lessons from advances in weapons in the nineteenth century. These weapons included field fortification perfected in the American Civil War [1861–1865], much more powerful explosives after Alfred Nobel invented dynamite in 1866, the magazine rifle with an effective range of over one thousand yards, smokeless powder, the machine gun perfected by Hiram Maxim in 1884, and the new science of hydraulics that allowed cannons to absorb the recoil of discharged shells and thus to remain in position after firing instead of rolling backward.

All these developments ensured that massed attacks by infantry against prepared defenses were essentially impossible. But none of the Western powers had yet drawn this lesson, and they sent their troops into frontal attacks. This caused enormous casualties and led to stalemate on the Western Front for four years during World War I. In 1896, the French compounded the error by putting their faith in a 75-millimeter gun with lightweight hydraulics, prepared cartridges, and a firing rate of twenty shells a minute. This gun was designed to operate in the open against enemy infantry. Though this weapon had a shield that deflected small-arms fire, it was highly vulnerable to enemy shellfire. Other armies had
solved this problem by developing long-range howitzers that could be located far beyond the range of infantry weapons but whose shells could be directed onto enemy positions by forward observers up with the infantry.

France records events of World War II with excellent detail. He describes the development of many new weapons, including radar, methods of tracking submarines under water, radio-directed bombs, the first effective jet aircraft (the German Me-262), the V-1 cruise missile, the V-2 ballistic missile that flew faster than the speed of sound, and the atomic bomb. He also records the vast technological developments in weapons since World War II, including weapons directed by the Global Positioning System (GPS), radar, laser, radio, and other devices.

This study provides the most complete collection of information about warfare that exists in a small volume. It should be on the shelves of historians and students, and it is a superb source for anyone interested in the effects of warfare on human history.

Longwood University

Bevin Alexander

Fear of Food: A History of Why We Worry about What We Eat. By Harvey Levenstein. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2012. Pp. ix, 218. $25.00.)

Had a nutritionist written this book, a history of nutritional science in the past century, it might have included stories of hard work, obstacles to research, wrong turns, and controversy, but ultimately it would have been a triumphal tale including the discovery of vitamins, conquering germs, the birth of the FDA, and unlocking the secrets of dietary fats and the roles of cholesterol, fiber, and antioxidants. It would describe the cooperation of researchers in universities, government agencies, and manufacturers all trying to educate the public to make better dietary choices.

In the hands of Harvey Levenstein, however, we have quite the opposite: a parade of optimistic charlatans and pseudoscientists, industrial money grabbers, faddists, huckster journalists, ignorant policymakers, and a doltish public willing to believe and buy just about anything. Perhaps we have been that gullible, considering the sheer number of major dietary changes in the past century prompted entirely by the fearmongering food police. Maybe our current obsessions really have been generated by a handful of colorful, if misguided, visionaries inspired by the wackiest notions of natural living, who forged ahead despite the skepticism of their colleagues and the lack of scientific proof simply because they found funding, wrote a best seller, were exploited by food industries touting
products based on their ideas, or got some government agency excited. These were not just weight-loss diets; one would expect those to come and go. This was mainstream nutritional science that insisted people cut out dietary fats and red meat, carbohydrates, or sugar and instead pop vitamin pills or drink milk or orange juice every morning—or both. These were the same folks who convinced a whole generation to eat margarine instead of butter and then one day found out they were completely wrong. If you had simply ignored every stitch of dietary advice of the last century, you might have been fine.

Levenstein is a fabulous storyteller, and this book is a delight to read. Perhaps he does not give enough credit to good, healthy skepticism coupled with plain apathy. He is right that these dietary crusades were mainly directed at affluent consumers, but what of everyone else, the gluttons and gourmands or those who simply could not afford to be so choosy about what they ate? These fads were very real; many people did follow them. Countless low-fat cookies and pints of ice cream were sold. But can a prescriptive literature be read as purely descriptive?

On the other hand, this is a history of ideas, not practices per se. Many of the characters and stories will be familiar if you have read Levenstein’s other superb books. He could also have taken the story into the present simply by strolling the grocery shelves to find the latest crazes—raw, paleo, probiotic, pomegranate, and goji- and açai-loaded functional foods. Much more could have been made of our current fear of food additives, radiation, food-borne pathogens, and recent recalls, let alone so-called frankenfoods. In other words, do not expect a comprehensive account of our current food fears but rather a selection of choice vignettes told with real panache.

University of the Pacific

Ken Albala


Alchemy is one of the occult sciences but has received somewhat less attention than astrology or magic during the last three decades and still suffers from a degree of old-fashioned or ill-informed publicity. It requires of its historians a wide and perhaps unusual range of abilities, and here the topic is well treated by Lawrence M. Principe, who combines linguistic expertise, historical subtlety, and laboratory experience to a degree that makes him one of the finest and most trustworthy exponents of the subject.
This book is a history of alchemy in the West, beginning with Hellenistic Egypt and ending with the psychologizing and occultist formulations of Jung, Eliade, and Regardie in the twentieth century. These last, however, hold little interest for Principe, who concentrates on alchemical practice, particularly its intentions, divagations, and developments, especially during its golden period of the fifteenth to the seventeenth century. In this regard he is particularly good at demonstrating the old cliché that alchemy’s only interest for historians of science is in its incidental discoveries in chemistry. He devotes one of his seven chapters to deciphering texts by Basil Valentine and George Starkey to show, through his own laboratory experiments (illustrated in five of his twelve color plates), that their obscurities actually make good sense and that their instructions work.

One of the principal strengths of this book is this kind of disentanglement, made possible because from the start Principe makes every effort to interpret his sources according to the visions and expectations of their authors, rather than, as he puts it, “projecting our own knowledge and expectations on to the past as measures of its value” (42). This approach, too rarely done in the past and not done enough even now, allows Principe to illuminate his subject and excite the interest of his readers in spite of the complexities with which he has to deal. In addition, he also seems to want to communicate the story to those readers—again a contrast with the attitude of too many historians who seem to enjoy speaking jargon unto jargon—and so his aim of explaining and representing the past to the present is amply achieved.

At one point, after discussing alchemy during the Middle Ages, Principe suddenly leaps to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He himself acknowledges that this may be disconcerting, but actually it works. By clearing away a period of decline in which practical alchemy was treated with contempt and then rediscovered as a form of spiritual self-transformation, Principe is able to return to alchemy’s flourishing golden age and end his historical journey on a positive note, leaving the reader with a sense of optimistic fascination with the subject rather than the disappointed disillusionment that a strictly chronological narrative might have produced.

Secrets, then, is a triumph and by far the best available history of alchemy. It is full of fresh insights, cuts away dead wood, and provides a coherent narrative that is accessible to the general reader and specialist alike.

University of St. Andrews

P. G. Maxwell-Stuart