BOOK REVIEWS

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WORD PROCESSING: Laurie George
Among the many fine contributions of Maimonidean scholarship, this new monograph stands out for its fresh approach and promises to make a lasting impact on the field. In keeping with a growing scholarly trend, Mark Cohen’s book situates Maimonides’s work within the context of Egyptian and Mediterranean societies. But unlike those studies that examine Maimonides’s writings within the framework of Arab thought or Islamic law, Maimonides and the Merchants focuses on the intersection of law and reality in the Mishneh Torah, arguing that Maimonides subtly yet substantively updated the Jewish legal apparatus in order to accommodate economic norms current among medieval Mediterranean traders, Jewish and non-Jewish alike.

Cohen draws from a wealth of Genizah documents, Gaonic responsa, and Islamic legal texts to illustrate the nature of the mercantile system that prevailed from at least the tenth century, known in some Gaonic sources as the “custom of the merchants” (hukm al-tujjār). A key element of this system, generally known in Arabic as qirād, was defined by its partnership structure, according to which a “passive” partner supplied the primary capital for the joint venture while an “active” partner supplied the labor in the form of travel and trade. The Arab qirād bore some resemblance to a commercial partnership known in the Talmud as isqa, yet the qirād differed in that only the silent partner bore any risk for financial loss. This was a distinct advantage in attracting active partners in a commercial network dominated by long-distance trade and, as such, was adopted by most Jewish traders between the tenth and thirteenth centuries, notwithstanding its deviation from Talmudic law. Another perceived advantage to this system was its relatively informal character, allowing partners to make arrangements on the basis of trust and business ties, without requiring contracts to formalize these far-flung and often fluctuating relationships.

Both the system of Mediterranean trade and Maimonides’s first-hand knowledge of it are well documented and have been known to scholars for decades. Yet Cohen is the first to leverage these historical data in order to examine how they served as a catalyst for legal change. He frames his study with the theoretical question posed by Alan Watson, as to whether legal codes may serve to update the law by closing the gap between conservative legal systems and shifting
social practice. Cohen convincingly demonstrates how Maimonides creatively adapted Talmudic law to the socio-economic realities of his day.

Among Cohen’s most striking conclusions is that the element of originality in Maimonides’s code is most effective when it is all but imperceptible to even the most trained rabbinic readers. Maimonides’s additions to, or rewordings of, classical rabbinic tradition were enacted without fanfare precisely so as not to draw attention to their originality. Cohen is the first to observe that the missing source for Maimonides’s unique formulations is not a rabbinic text but the Sitz im Leben of medieval Mediterranean trade. Through a variety of examples, Cohen traces the manner and method by which Maimonides integrated his modifications into the fabric of preexisting rabbinic tradition.

Among Maimonides’s key concerns in his code was to formulate the law as eternally applicable and, as such, adaptable to all times and circumstances. Whereas Talmudic law was first formulated for a primarily agrarian economy, Maimonides sought to articulate the law in terms that would equally apply in an urban and mercantile context. This method of updating and adapting the law was presented as a natural extension of its Talmudic source yet the potential impact of closing the gap between law and reality was no doubt profound.

It seems likely that Maimonides’s reworking of Talmudic language reflects his method of reading rabbinic law as addressing general principles by means of specific or local examples. Read this way, Maimonides may have seen part of his task as a jurist as an interpreter of the law, including extracting the full implications of Talmudic legal discourse. This may help to explain why he sought to integrate the new economic conditions as a seamless extension of the original.

Maimonides and the Merchants is the first work to bridge the fields of Jewish law, social history, Genizah scholarship, and comparative legal theory and ought to be required reading for scholars in all these areas. Through its combined attention to socio-economic practice and the creative construction of the law, Cohen’s book enriches our understanding of the Maimonidean code as a model of legal adaptability in response to daily life.

New York University

Elisha Russ-Fishbane


Only a scholar with years of experience could possibly have composed this magisterial work. Peter Jackson’s decades of painstaking research on the Mongols, the
medieval world, and northern India are clear. Broadly speaking, he addresses the relationship between the Mongols and the Islamic world. Major themes include the Mongol conquests of and destruction throughout Muslim lands, Mongol techniques of governance, the effect of infidel rule across Islamic territories, and the uneven acceptance of Islam throughout Muslim-majority regions. The work contains seven illustrations, eight maps, six genealogical charts, and a glossary.

After two introductory chapters—a useful summation of Islamic and Christian sources and a survey of Muslim territories and Inner Asian peoples—Jackson presents the Mongol invasion of the Islamic world, innovatively, as a prolonged wave spanning thirty-five years (1218-1253), not a series of individual campaigns. He creates seemingly effortless narratives out of the sources’ confusion of names, dates, and battles; analyzes each campaign thoughtfully; probes rulers’ decision-making; and theorizes convincingly about changing Mongol attitudes towards conquest.

Next Jackson addresses Mongol government, focusing on Chinggisid appanages over time; succession and authority; the role of imperial women (in brief); and the nuts and bolts of administration, taxation, and law. He probes inter-Mongol conflict and the dissolution of the united empire, examines the real reasons for political strife, and detangles competing Chinggisid political claims. He scrutinizes Mongol devastation, taking a sensible approach to hysterical authors without minimizing the (appalling) death toll, and considers refugees, economic decline, and whether rebuilding campaigns ever worked.

Throughout the volume, certain topics reappear: taxation (whose?), law (Chinggisid or Islamic?), warfare (of course), trade (vigorous, yet interrupted), the so-called Pax Mongolica (worthless), and authority (Chinggisid). A central topic is conversion. Advocating that “conversion” be replaced with “acceptance,” Jackson addresses the chicken-and-egg question: Did rulers accept Islam first, leading the way? Or did the rank-and-file, influencing the leaders? What gradations of acceptance existed, and what motivated new Muslims? Belief? Realpolitik? Opposition to rivals? Jackson highlights whether rulers allowed Islam to influence their governments or merely their personal practices, and notes when the difference led to success (Ghazan) or failure (Tarmashirin). He interrogates the frequently misunderstood Mongol “tolerance” policy, which reduced Muslims to “mere” equality with others, and ponders whether the Mongols helped Islam spread across Eurasia, or not.

The uneven historical sources force Jackson to focus on the Ilkhanate, which he acknowledges. But the book nevertheless stands out for its treatment of the Chaghatayids and the Jochids, which Jackson manages to extract from the slim pickings on those regions. Jackson also excels at eking out a vision of nearly invisible yet critical topics: the Mongols and client rulers; languages spoken by
Mongol Khans and Muslim ministers; Muslim authors rewriting Chinggis Khan; the Mongols’ real effect on the Black Death; and many others. Throughout the work, we watch the author distinguish reality from distortion in the tricky sources, and alternate between firm conclusions and tempered hypotheses. Graduate students will find dozens of dissertation ideas worth pursuing. In so doing, they will better grasp the magnitude of what Jackson has accomplished in this truly impressive book.

University of Massachusetts Amherst

Anne F. Broadbridge


Adam Mestyan takes a creative and innovative approach to studying the origins of Arab nationalism in Egypt. Though standard histories examine the writings of nationalist thinkers, the author approaches the topic through the lens of cultural production and ritual performance. He assesses theatrical productions, journals, and history texts during the reign of Khedive Isma’il Pasha [r. 1863-1879]. He attributes nationalism’s origins not to forces opposing Ottoman rule or defying colonialism but to a patriotic sentiment that emerged between the Egyptian province and the Ottoman empire. *Arab Patriotism* argues that the elite needed to reframe their national narrative in an imperial context to confront the paradox of the khedive—nominally an Ottoman governor (*wali*), whose rule no longer depended on the Ottoman empire. The compromise came through the discursive production of patriotism (*wataniyya*). For the Arab elite in Egypt, such as impresarios of a nascent Arab theatre, theatre-goers, and writers, patriotism was an empire-wide ideology that allowed Arabic speaking elites to negotiate cooperation with the khedive within an imperial Ottoman system. As a result, patriotism was not born through the influence of Europeans but rather as a form of “Ottomanization/localization strategy” (8).

Based on extensive archival research in various languages on the Egyptian state, including newspapers and diplomatic as well as personal correspondence (such as impresarios petitioning the khedives for funding), the author demonstrates how the elite defined Egyptian patriotism. They disseminated these ideas through new public spaces, such as the Khedival Opera House opened in 1869, as well as journals and historical texts. They culled the rich repertoire of Arab and Islamic notions of rulership, Muslim memory, and
Ottoman poetry to calibrate the relationship between the khedive and the elite. In theatres, Egyptian spectators transformed into a “citizen audience.” They watched plays about Arab rulers, such as the famed Abbasid Caliph Harun al-Rashid [r. 786-809], which served as a metaphor for the khedive and their own status in the new Egyptian polity. The author challenges Edward Said’s understanding of the Opera House and Giuseppe Verdi’s Aida performed in 1871 as products of cultural European imperialism; rather, these new public spaces drew upon European aesthetics to subvert the Ottoman face of Isma’il and highlight him as a sovereign to a European and Arab audience.

Muslim intellectuals also defined the khedive as an Arab ruler by promoting fusha (standard) Arabic in journals and historical texts. They retold the history of Egypt through an Arab narrative that was based on Arabic linguistics, Islamic literature, and references to the khedive as an Islamic ruler. After the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, Egyptian nationalist Mustafa Kamil’s drama The Conquest of Andalusia exemplified this imagined patriotic unity through its use of pan-Arab themes. Ultimately, these ideas of patriotism allowed Egypt to transform smoothly into a nation-state framework, though this was not its original intent. Arab Patriotism is an original contribution to the field of nationalism in Egypt and the larger Middle East, testifying to the value of examining these topics through approaches to ritual and cultural studies.

Wright State University

Awad Halabi

Medical Imperialism in French North Africa; Regenerating the Jewish Community in Colonial Tunisia. By Richard C. Parks. (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2017. Pp. xvi, 196. $55.00.)

This new study of French efforts to modernize the Jewish community in Tunis looks at early twentieth-century policy related to urban planning, education, and maternal health, offering a welcome addition to the study of French colonialism in its smallest North African colony. Situating the work within European ideologies about the body and health, with attention to racial science and its anti-Jewish stereotypes, the book alternates between France and Tunis, with occasional reference to colonial policy and the French stronghold in Algeria. With attention to Tunis’s Jewish community, an in-between group courted by colonial officials, the author provides another interesting instance of the colonies as laboratory. Though less directly engaged with Middle East
studies, it stands to contribute to research in the history of science and medicine, and the relation between sectarianism and modernity in the Middle East.

In five concise chapters engaging with the concept of “regeneration,” Richard C. Parks describes how Tunis was transformed from “a diverse city” characterized by generally peaceful interaction to one divided into “ethnic, religious, and class-based enclaves” (29). To explain this shift, Parks turns to public health. Ideas about disease transmission and sanitation were selectively applied by colonial officials to develop Jewish quarters and justify French domination, with the neglect of predominantly Arab and Muslim neighborhoods reinforcing notions of Oriental backwardness. The subsequent demolition of Tunis’s predominantly Jewish neighborhood in the name of urban planning, with the acceptance of similar housing conditions in Jewish neighborhoods in Paris, leads Parks to conclude “hygienic reform depended less on scientific and medical imperatives than on effective lobbying and the expenditure of political capital” (64).

As Parks sees it, a number of Tunis’s Jews sympathized with the goals of public health and communal improvement promulgated by colonial officials, though he is careful to suggest class or regional differences. Moving to what Parks terms “self-regeneration” in reference to education and civic organizations targeting the Jewish community in Tunis, chapter 4 considers the Alliance Israelite and the Zionist movement. Viewing the secular assimilationist approach of the Alliance as more conservative than the national and colonial project of the Zionists whose language of scientific modernity “resonated strongly with young Jews” demonstrates the multiple ideological poles within the community (109). Though only hinted at, debates to this effect in the press must have been lively, as other Tunisian Jews were involved in socialist circles and the Communist Party.

A vignette on the Tunisian singer Habiba M’sika introduces the tensions surrounding women’s roles within the Jewish community. Male reformers made flitting attempts to control women’s bodies and medicalize birthing, though the French government did not invest in colonial health care or hospitals (and contraception was illegal in the pronatalist metropole). Instead, charitable organizations reiterated the language of scientific motherhood, funding a few birthing centers, which Parks suggests influenced the social and cultural perception of maternity.

The work is written in accessible language providing background and context sufficient for the nonspecialist. It would be interesting to consider whether Arabic or Judeo-Arabic newspapers, archives, memoirs, and scientific journals might lead to different or more nuanced conclusions. The choice to concentrate on relations between Tunis’s Jewish community and France, and reliance on francophone sources, is only unfortunate in that it precludes questions about Tunisian Jews’
involvement in conversations about public health, medicine, and scientific mother-
hood that have been extensively demonstrated in the Arabic press of the era.

*Syracuse University*  
Amy Kallander

*South Sudan: A Slow Liberation.* By Edward Thomas. (London, United Kingdom:  

This is a remarkable book. It offers a complex and nuanced analysis of South  
Sudan’s prolonged and troubled march to political liberation—first from Anglo-
Egyptian colonialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, then from hege-
omonic Arab rule in post-independence Sudan [1956-2011], and now from South  
Sudan’s internal political and economic contradictions.

Edward Thomas’s primary methods are historical framing and analysis of South  
Sudan’s long and problematic liberation. The book takes a long historical  
view of patterns of uneven development within the Sudan (and later, South  
Sudan) between the “center” and the “peripheries,” and between the Sudan and  
global markets for slaves and commodities. One of the book’s recurring themes  
is the continuity of asymmetric economic and administrative development  
between the central state and the peripheries in pre- and postindependence South  
Sudan; and the resulting violence, justified by ethnicity, "as constructed"  
historically.

The author’s theoretical framework is deliberately neither Marxist nor neolib-
eral. Rather, he proceeds from notions of dependency theory, such as the idea of  
uneven development. Thomas then moves beyond this framework, as he seems to  
view it as too narrow and insufficient to explain the complex dynamics of South  
Sudanese history within the Sudan and the global economy and unto itself.

Jonglei, a large, swampy and diverse region of South Sudan, is the focal  
point—the lens through which Thomas explores South Sudan’s as yet unfinished  
liberation despite the country’s formal independence in 2011.

One of the great strengths of the book is the author’s reliance, for primary  
sources, upon hundreds of interviews with a diverse range of indigenous South  
Sudanese, from government officials and party leaders to militia members and  
laypersons who have experienced firsthand various defining moments in South  
Sudan’s long and troubled liberation. Many prior works on South Sudan fall  
short in this respect.

Thomas’s secondary sources include many prior historical works on South  
Sudan. Here, again, he prioritizes works (books, articles, dissertations, etc.) by
South Sudanese authors. He also presents official South Sudanese statistics, such as government revenues versus expenditures, to illustrate the autonomy of the state vis-à-vis the means of production in South Sudan and the constraints such autonomy imposes on liberation, and data on violence casualties, to illustrate the impact of internal conflicts, for example.

Several features distinguish this book from other recent books on South Sudan. A major strength, as noted, is Thomas’s primary emphasis on South Sudanese works and voices. Another strength is the book’s rich historical overview of South Sudan’s terrain, diverse people, development, contradictions, and conflicts. From the vantage point of Jonglei, Thomas provides a vivid bird’s eye view of the historical continuity of South Sudan’s uneven development, political and military contradictions, and resulting ethnoregional conflicts.

Finally, though the text is dense and makes for intense reading, Thomas forces readers to broaden their understanding of South Sudan’s struggles from the typical narrow framework of racial and religious marginalization of South Sudanese in Sudan to a more complex understanding of South Sudan’s internal agency and contradictions.

*A Slow Liberation* is a phenomenal book and should be read by anybody who desires a serious understanding of South Sudan.

*University of Michigan Law School*  
Laura Nyantung Beny


In the high-level Ottoman bureaucratic jargon, the term “republicanism” was generally used in a pejorative sense and held to be antithetical to the deep-seated underpinnings of the Ottomans’ administrative philosophy. The scholarly consensus on the subject has long contended that Turkish republicanism emerged after the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 and was the natural consequence of a dramatic revolution led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founding father of the new state. Moreover, it maintained that Atatürk singlehandedly introduced republicanism to a credulous and uninformed bureaucratic cadre class, denying that even his close associates had little acquaintance with the concept of republicanism.

Banu Turnaoglu deftly challenges the consensus view in her new book *The Formation of Turkish Republicanism*. She argues that approaching
Turkish republicanism in exclusively Kemalist terms would be misleading and counterproductive. Modern-day Turkish republicanism, in her opinion, represents the outcome of centuries-long intellectual debates and interchanges. By conceptualizing “republicanism” as a concept that encompasses a complex set of values, a sequence of thought, and a way of political life, and not as an emotive term, Turnaoglu claims that traces of republicanism might well be encountered in the late Ottoman era. She further contends that many Ottoman intellectuals advanced “republican” views, especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, without necessarily uttering the term “republic.” This is indeed a refreshing and original approach to the discussion of republicanism in Turkey.

The author proposes a new approach to the study of Turkish republicanism. It puts forth three major arguments. First, Atatürk and his colleagues did not construct Turkish republicanism ab nihilo, rather it emerged as the final product of long-lasting intellectual debates. Second, republicanism as an ideology predated the establishment of the republic. And third, the Kemalist version of republicanism was one of the competing projects; however, it was not the sole one.

The book is written with precision and authority. Indeed, it represents an intellectual tour de force demystifying Turkish republicanism. Turnaoglu unambiguously shows that a vibrant republican debate took place during the post-1789 Ottoman Empire. She also demonstrates convincingly that the authoritarian republicanism that Turkey adopted in its early years was not the sole available variant. Other, more liberal, options existed in the last one hundred and fifty years of the empire; designs ranging from the Islamic republicanism of the Young Ottomans to the positivist universalism of the Young Turks were afloat and widely circulated in the Ottoman intellectual circles. As Turnaoglu states in different parts of the book, this was a republicanism debate without a republic. Though only a handful of intellectuals and bureaucrats made explicit references to republicanism as a distinct regime, the debate acquired a meaning that went far beyond a discussion of systems of administration.

The book is carefully researched, logically structured, lucidly written, and persuasively argued. Particularly impressive is Turnaoglu’s sophisticated and far-reaching use of original sources, which enables her to portray a multilayered account of the longue durée that she examines. Truly it is a work of depth, narrative power, and substantive importance.
This study will start a fresh discussion on Turkish republicanism, which has long been viewed as a tabula rasa construction miraculously crafted by a state founder.

Princeton University

M. Şükrü Hanioglu

The Americas


James Madison’s Notes, published after his death and later compiled with observations from other delegates into four volumes—The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787—by Max Farrand [1911], form the indispensable core of what scholars know about the Constitutional Convention of 1787. The notes describe the Convention’s proceedings, summarize arguments from varied perspectives, and sometimes include information (for example, John Dickinson’s admonition that Madison had pushed proportional representation too far) that could even be embarrassing to the author. Moreover, throughout a long political life, Madison earned a reputation in debates for fairly summarizing the arguments of others before presenting his own, and he preferred to allow contemporary understandings to shape early constitutional law rather than his own recorded debates.

Nonetheless, Mary Bilder, a law professor at Boston College, argues that Madison altered his notes for political purposes. In making her arguments, Bilder has combined meticulous examination of the original documents and their watermarks with constant conjectures. The book is replete with such words as “may,” “might,” “likely,” “appears,” “suggest,” “presumably,” and “probably,” which, though showing commendable caution, significantly undercut her underlying argument.

The author makes a number of questionable assumptions. She asserts, for example, that Madison likely recorded his notes twice a week, whereas he said that he did so every night. She suggests that he wrote the notes for Mr. Jefferson, whereas Madison said that he wrote them for posterity.

Even accepting some of Bilder’s caveats, Madison’s Notes are far more contemporary than almost all other sources from the period, except for the skimpy notes of resolutions by the Convention’s official secretary, which Madison himself used to correct his own notes. Clearly, scholars should compare his notes to others, which evinced their own perspectives and biases. Arguably, the most important argument for according such high respect for Madison’s Notes is that they so ably explain the many compromises embodied within the US
Constitution, while showing that he often argued for positions (like a Council of Revision and proportional representation in both houses of Congress) that the Convention eventually rejected.

Scholars have long recognized that no observer has an Archimedean perspective (even the Bible contains four different accounts of the life of Jesus). By contrast, Bilder frequently surmises that Madison’s perspective must have been the result of conscious distortions of the record.

Colleagues have honored Bilder’s book with a Bancroft Prize and other awards. Although it will undoubtedly stimulate years of scholarship, her scholarship is unlikely to withstand historical scrutiny as well as Madison’s Notes already have. Lynn Uzzell published an article in *American Political Thought* suggesting a more elegant solution to questions that Bilder has raised about a speech that Madison recorded in notes for June 6, 1787, and has produced a manuscript copy of a book entitled *Redeeming Madison’s Notes* scrutinizing many of Bilder’s assumptions. These suggest the need for great caution before discounting the validity of Madison’s handiwork or significantly rewriting accounts of the Constitutional Convention.

*Middle Tennessee State University*  
John R. Vile


Even in a time of Romantic hyperbole, Jacksonian-era tariff debates swept Americans to new heights of verbal—and even physical—vehemence. Southern slaveowners swore that tariff rates over the 20 percent needed to fund the government meant their own enslavement. Northern protectionists countered that rates below 33 percent would ruin the country. One Tennessean called Jackson’s 1833 threat to South Carolina’s tariff nullifiers “without Doubt the greatest Document that was ever written by man,” while an Ohio paper praised the simultaneous reduction of US tariffs and abolition of British Corn Laws in 1846 as “the greatest event of our age” (125, 185). While debating Henry Clay’s pro-tariff nationalism two years earlier, two congressmen went after each other; in the ensuing melee, a third congressman shot an entirely innocent fourth man. The two combatants then shook hands.

William K. Bolt’s achievement in this valuable new study is calmly to assess the shifting motives and subtle machinations beneath the sound and fury. Between 1816, when the first protectionist schedules were established, and 1846,
when the free-traders largely prevailed, tariff rates distilled a wide range of regional, social, and partisan interests. At first, many Southerners wanted a tariff to pay for the kind of government that could fight the next war with Britain, whereas New England’s Anglophilic ship-owners denounced barriers to international trade. But by the early 1820s, Yankee capital had moved into textile manufacturing, while Southerners doubled down on cotton exports to Britain. New England thus gravitated to pro-tariff Pennsylvania while the Deep South followed the free-trade firebrands of South Carolina. New York and Virginia were big and diverse enough to chart their own ways; westerners wavered between active and limited models of government.

Although much of the action in his book unfolds in Congress, the author also shows how private citizens and pressure groups drove tariff debates. Put simply, Jackson-era congressmen often did what their constituents told them to do. Of course, they also cut backroom deals, set legislative traps, and just plain lied about their intentions to raise, lower, or modify rates. Presidential candidates also played this game, especially to placate the Keystone State. Here too, Tariff Wars is careful and convincing, weaving together congressional records, manuscript sources, and newspapers.

Bolt makes clear that tariff disputes spread democracy, moving ordinary people to consider economic and social policy rather than just one or another candidate. Anti-tariff agitation was “a grassroots movement,” while pro-tariff conventions typified “democracy in America” (118, 73). The debates clearly encouraged more people to vote in national as well as state elections. And yet public figures claimed a democratic mandate for irreconcilable ends. For Southern Democrats, “democracy” meant the absence of restraint on the buying or selling powers of property-owning men, especially slave-owners. For the first Republicans, on the other hand, democracy signified public policy on behalf of all white men except slave-owners. No wonder they fought so passionately over tariffs.

McGill University

J. M. Opal


This study is a welcome addition to the historiography of political ideology, the culture of consumption, and the development of capitalism in America from the Revolution to the Civil War era. As Joanna Cohen notes, there is a gap between
studies of the late eighteenth century, such as T.H. Breen’s *The Marketplace of Revolution* [2004], and those of Jackson Lears, Daniel Horowitz, and others that pick up the efflorescence of American consumer culture from the Gilded Age onwards. Though marvelous works such as the late David Jaffee’s *A New Nation of Goods* [2010] reconstruct the material culture of the Early Republic, there has been less attention to the political significance Americans attached to the expansion of material possessions and prosperity. Cohen traces changes over the course of the century that bridged this gap and created what she calls a “collective culture of consumer democracy” (9). *Luxurious Citizens* offers an important guide to our understanding of one of the most powerful, yet subtle, transformations in nineteenth-century American life.

Successive chapters deal with the Confederation and Constitution period, the Jeffersonian Embargo and 1812 War, the debates over public auctions once the war was over, the promotion of American manufactures and the tariff debates of the 1820s and 1830s, the emergence of a new middle-class culture of retailing and shopping in the antebellum decades, and the effect of the Civil War in stamping this culture on the American future. Four contentious themes thread Cohen’s account, their relative rise and fall mapping the process by which consumption achieved cultural and political prominence and “personal desires” came to be “said to serve the body politic” (12). Revolutionary and republican culture emphasized self-restraint as a civic virtue. Nationalists and, later, many promoters of industry advocated American economic self-sufficiency. Yet recognition of the benefits of imported goods as a source of government revenue underscored the US Constitution’s provision for a federal impost and formed a background to tariff and other debates. Throughout, a realization that individuals’ tastes and demands would outweigh efforts to constrain them fostered a growing understanding that consumption and citizenship were linked.

Events shaped the relative prominence of these themes. Federalists championed the imports that would furnish revenue but saw elite refinement as a necessary curb on excess. Republican administrations pursued restraint between 1806 and 1815, but were challenged by popular demand and the trade in smuggled goods. Merchants sought to curb postwar auctions that undercut their businesses, but could not obstruct the flow of cheaper and more varied possessions to a wider population. Manufacturers’ associations tapped into demand as they developed American industry, but faced popular and sectional opposition to the tariffs they promoted. By the 1850s, a burgeoning press, growing advertising, and new technologies were creating a middle-class consumption culture whose future importance, Cohen suggests, was secured by the Civil War. While the
Union promoted individual possessiveness as an aspect of loyal citizenship, the Confederacy—partly through necessity, partly on account of class and race—reverted to older concepts of restraint that suffered a deathblow with the South’s defeat.

University of Connecticut

Christopher Clark


Historians refer to the 1780s as the “critical period” for the American experiment in republican government. Understanding precisely how America veered from the nadir of war at the beginning of the decade to the compromise of constitutional settlement by 1787 is crucial for understanding the nature of American founding. In Tom Cutterham’s first book, he explores the tensions of class and social status driving America’s transformation across this period.

Cutterham argues that “in the wake of the Revolutionary War,” and after the rejection of English-style nobility, “a new national elite created itself through a process of debate and struggle” over “gentlemanly ideals” like the preservation of property, the sanctity of contract, and justice (3). This new elite included landed gentlemen like George Washington, as well as upstarts and army officers like Alexander Hamilton, and their postwar values reflected America’s new place in the international and interdependent commercial world. In the American elite’s new configuration of gentility, their interests were inextricably bound to interest rates, commercial creditworthiness, and banking, rather than independent land-holding.

The exposition and narrative of this book are outstanding. Each chapter explores a particular gentlemanly ideal and demonstrates how American elites struggled against democratic populists over “the question of how social order should be preserved and reproduced in a republican country” (6). The frontiers for these battles ranged from education (found in the excellent chapter 2) to banking (in the reviewer’s personal favorite, chapter 4). Though the chapters are organized by theme, they provide extensive coverage of the period. Cutterham masterfully weaves together the clashing ideas, rhetoric, institutions, and politics of the elites and the egalitarians, oftentimes focusing on a few key personalities—for example, John Laurens and Noah Webster—to highlight the elites’ adherence to their new code of gentlemanly ideals.
In terms of analytic usefulness, however, Cutterham’s thematic ideals can sometimes be unhelpful. The substance of law runs as an undercurrent throughout the book, but Cutterham does not seriously engage with it. He deploys legal concepts—like contract, property rights, inheritance, and justice—vaguely, and portrays them primarily as values and tools exclusive to the elites. “Justice” is the most egregious example; justice—whatever this means, as Cutterham does not define it, but merely invokes it—appeals equally to elites as well as to populists.

_Gentlemen Revolutionaries_ is a good book, and it demonstrates that even in the midst of war and experimental constitution-making, conservative forces prevailed. Its insights lie mainly in the author’s focus on the making of American gentility as a main point of contention during the critical period. Cutterham then concludes by suggesting that these tensions resulted in the elites’ bold, strategic gambit to preserve social order through the drafting of the US Constitution. But few will be surprised that the Constitution aimed to preserve elite interests, or that the Constitution was the fairly conservative product of the struggles, hardships, and experimentation of the 1780s. Still, Cutterham delivers a new and worthwhile retelling of the tensions that led to the Philadelphia Convention.

_Huntington University_  
Kate Elizabeth Brown

**Jefferson Davis’s Final Campaign: Confederate Nationalism and the Fight to Arm the Slaves.**  

This new book takes a fresh look at Confederate plans to free and arm the slaves during the Civil War. As historians have long been aware, the final year of the war saw an increasingly desperate Confederate government consider the prospect of enlisting thousands of black men in the Southern armies. Although some have seen such a gambit as evidence that slavery was not, in fact, central to Confederate identity, others have cast it as an effort to maintain some degree of planter-class control over a process of emancipation that had begun to seem inexorable. Philip D. Dillard compares newspaper coverage of the question in Virginia, Georgia, and Texas, and finds that the Confederate public sphere played host to a nuanced and dynamic debate about the extent of the sacrifices necessary to achieve Southern independence. In particular, he draws attention to the participation in the debate of nonslaveholding Southerners and suggests that their Confederate nationalism trumped fears about emancipation’s cost to the local elite.
Dillard argues that the debate over Confederate emancipation unfolded over three distinct phases. The first began in the aftermath of Jefferson Davis’s call for 20,000 black laborers to assist the Confederate army in November 1864. Although the Confederate president framed his request as an attempt to release white men from noncombatant roles and thus make them available for battlefield service, the idea of black men in the direct employ of the Confederate Army inevitably raised the prospect of putting them under arms. The second phase of the debate commenced in the atmosphere of gloom following Northern victories at Nashville and Savannah when the complete destruction of Hood’s army in Tennessee and the culmination of Sherman’s March to the Sea in Georgia forced many Southerners to rethink long-held assumptions about the cost of independence. The third phase was ignited by the collapse of the Hampton Roads peace negotiations in February 1865, at which point it became clear that the South would only win its independence on the field of battle.

Dillard’s prose is crisp and for the most part admirably terse, and his argument proceeds at a brisk pace. His apparent mastery of the newspaper sources is compelling, and the book does a fine job of recreating the literary public sphere of an embryonic Confederate nation. The decision to compare the debates in the newspapers of Virginia, Georgia, and Texas allows the reader a sense of the diversity of public opinion on the question of Confederate emancipation. Dillard’s findings are not wholly surprising: It seems logical, for example, that residents of Texas, where slavery continued to thrive and the war felt very distant, remained much more skeptical of black military service than their counterparts in war-torn Virginia or Georgia. Nor is it a major revelation that nonslaveholding Southerners were more open to the possibility than wealthy planters, or that all Southerners warmed to the idea as military collapse loomed closer. Nevertheless, this clear and well-written book adds an important dimension to our understanding of social and political change in the Civil War era.

Freedmen and Southern Society Project

James Illingworth


At the beginning of this book author Martin Doyle states the obvious fact: “Rivers have shaped the basic facts of America” (1). He notes that not only have most state boundaries been laid out by rivers but the great cities of the
nation tend to be laid out along the banks of rivers. Although rivers have obviously been important in US history, save for the mighty Mississippi they are not commonly the subject of historical study. An exception was the Holt, Rinehart Company’s “Rivers of America” series begun in 1937, which, through the 1940s and 1950s, published scores of biographies of waterways large and small, from *The Hudson* [1939] to *The Winooski* [1949]. The publication of volumes in the series slowed in the 1960s and ended in 1974 with *The American: River of El Dorado* by Margaret Sanborn. A distinctive feature of the series was that authors were selected for their literary ability, not their academic credentials, and the volumes sang with a love of nature and an ear for regional folklore.

Doyle’s *The Source* is distinctly different than that older tradition of scholarship. His writing is certainly as graceful and digestible as the artists of the “Rivers of America,” but his purpose is not to celebrate the distinctive character of America’s many different rivers. Doyle’s goal is to explain the evolution of US river-management policy, how we have transformed our waterways, and how the attempt to manage rivers changed American political culture. To do this he ranges broadly over American history. Part one begins with George Washington ranging over the upper reaches of the Potomac River and ends with the government’s response to the great Mississippi flood of 1927. In the course of this Doyle explains the role rivers played in the evolution of federalism as an American concept of governance. Part two presents the evolution of American water rights law with reference to the Colorado River to explain how rivers shaped the nation’s concepts of sovereignty and property rights. Part three zeros in on Chicago’s long battle for clean drinking water to explain how the pollution of rivers shaped municipal taxation. The question of water power is explored in part four with the Tennessee Valley Authority as a case study. The volume concludes with what Doyle describes as a look forward to “a hopeful future of environmental conservation” through a series of examples of governmental and market-driven approaches to river conservation (14).

Martin Doyle is a professor of river science at Duke University. He has a light touch when it comes to handling material that could easily be weighted down under legal or natural science detail. Parts of the book follow a journalistic style of reportage as Doyle visits various waterways and narrates his contemporary encounters with the people who live and work along river. This is not the type of book that would likely come from an environmental historian in that Doyle is more concerned with people and policy than nature. It is a book that will reward
the reader in search of a lucid account of America’s water policy history with all its myriad complexity explained in a deft manner.

_Loyola University Chicago_  
Theodore J. Karamanski

_Revolution Against Empire: Taxes, Politics, and the Origins of American Independence._  

This new book examines why Britain insisted on taxing American colonists after the mid-eighteenth century, and why Americans so feared British taxation. Studies of Revolutionary America traditionally view imperial taxation through the prism of politics or ideology, following the lead of scholars like Bernard Bailyn, Jack Greene, John Phillip Reid, and Gordon Wood. But Justin Du Rivage’s interests lie primarily in political economy, an approach more characteristic of imperial studies of the Revolution. He examines taxation primarily from an economic and financial perspective. He focuses on economic, commercial, and financial benefits that taxes offered Britain and the dangers they posed to colonies’ trade balances, revenues, fiscal integrity, and economic policies. Sincere anxieties—British and American—over the rule of law, the imperial constitution, arbitrary power, liberties, justice, and criminal justice are presented through the lens of political economy, as mere manifestations of economic and financial concerns, fears, and interests.

Du Rivage begins by surveying British criticisms of Whigs’ management of the economy and public finances during the War of Austrian Succession. During and after the Seven Years’ War, the colonies joined this debate on military strategy, spending, taxation, commerce, and public finance. These chapters record imperial efforts to subordinate and shape colonial economies, colonial efforts to resist, and each side’s efforts to articulate an ideological framework to legitimize its policy preference.

Channeling the work of imperial scholars, Du Rivage guides American readers through Britain’s intricate political map, extending it also to the colonies. Displacing the outdated Whig-Tory dichotomy, he identifies three camps—establishment Whigs, radical Whigs, and authoritarian reformers. He traces Britain’s tilt toward authoritarian reform, charting a collision course with radicalism in the colonies. The modern usage of the label “radical” can mislead readers, though Du Rivage attempts to situate radical Whigs within
the context of premodern English politics. Unfortunately, this effort is sometimes confounded by his habit of categorizing authoritarian reformers as conservative. Whereas radicals saw themselves as resisting change and restoring an old order, authoritarian reformers were agents of change and harbingers of the modern nation-state.

Du Rivage points out correctly that Americans rebelled not against monarchy as such but against the British Empire’s authoritarian turn in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Thus, Americans created constitutional structures that safeguarded against the new model of centralized governance, whereas Britain continued on the path of authoritarian reform after the Revolution, becoming richer and more powerful than ever.

Overall, Du Rivage sees British America as English in its culture and identity. Contesting narratives of Americanization, he sees American separatism not as a product of changes in American society but in the culture of the imperial government. This explains why this study’s center of gravity is England—Parliament, Whitehall, the City of London—more so than Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Williamsburg, and Charlestown. It is part of Du Rivage’s mission to cast the American Revolution as a British and global event, rather than the national event it has retrospectively become in Americans’ historical consciousness.

University of North Texas

Guy Chet


This volume contains fourteen essays on a series of cultural conflicts that played out in and around North America between the 1780s and the 1830s. The authors highlight issues of race, slavery, gender, and identity, often to the exclusion of other matters that might have received more attention, such as class, religion, and patriotism. Only four essays focus exclusively on events between 1812 and 1815. Consequently, the subtitle of the volume—Cultural Contests in the Era of 1812—is perhaps questionable. As the editors note, many of these conflicts have already been discussed as outcomes of the American Revolution that persisted into the era of the early republic. Certainly, the second war with Great Britain provided renewed definitions for these contests without necessarily settling them. From that perspective, the War of 1812 becomes an even more inconclusive conflict than many historians have believed, so much so that it hardly seems right to
suggest that it was an “era” in its own right. Nevertheless, the essays collectively make an important statement: that as individuals and groups ceased to fight for or against America, they continued to contest what America might or should mean.

Of greatest interest is David Waldstreicher’s essay on the origins of blackface minstrelsy, which he locates in the 1814 song “Backside Albany” rather than in the performances of Thomas D. Rice in the 1830s. The historical memory of this song underlines how white Americans diminished the contribution of the struggles of “black Jack Tars” for freedom to the American war effort. Another valuable offering is Jonathan Todd Hancock’s demonstration of how the course of the war in the Old Northwest was shaped as much by the internal politics of Native American groups as it was by the conflict between these peoples and white settlers. Rather more problematic is Christen Mucher’s essay on the Atlantic slave trade. There is no need to doubt her arguments that neutral trade concealed more illicit slave trading than has been realized and that this greatly displeased the British pamphleteer James Stephen, whose antislavery credentials are undeniable. But whether Stephen “framed” the 1807 Orders in Council that “caused” the War of 1812 for antislavery purposes is a suggestion that other studies of Stephens’s career have not been able to nail down conclusively.

Students of both the early republic and the War of 1812 will find many insights in this volume worth pondering. They might wish for a better integration of the variety of materials that scholars of these subjects consult. Historians of the War of 1812 still rely heavily on sources of a diplomatic, military, and political provenance; the sources cited in these essays are predominantly literary in their nature. As a result, a truly satisfying synthesis between the events of the second war for independence and the larger developments in the early republican era remains elusive. But progress is being made.

University of Virginia

J.C.A. Stagg


In the introduction to this volume, the author claims that the rationale for his study might be summed up by a single year: 1905. It was then that Walter
L. Fleming published *Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama*, a book that casts a significant shadow over Reconstruction historiography, both for its exhaustive scope and its anachronistic racial views. Indeed, although Reconstruction scholarship in the twenty-first century looks far different than it did at the beginning of the twentieth, Fleming’s work nevertheless remains a point of departure for any student of postbellum Alabama. Michael W. Fitzgerald seeks to provide a rendering of Reconstruction in the Yellowhammer state that might finally supplant Fleming’s work as the definitive single-volume history of the subject.

Fitzgerald follows recent scholars who have challenged the traditional periodization of Reconstruction. His insistence that the conditions that shaped Reconstruction necessarily sprang from antebellum and wartime fissures based on class, race, and region frames much of his analysis. Early in Reconstruction, the question of wartime Unionism and disloyalty marked politics in the state. Following military occupation and Alabama’s new constitution, Fitzgerald finds that these divisions again manifested themselves in the most important political battles that Alabamians experienced during Reconstruction, from conflict over state-sponsored economic growth, public debt, education, and how to maintain white supremacy. Unfortunately, the book only briefly mentions how the political battles of Reconstruction shaped the memory of the era. Though his study certainly has to end somewhere, it seems that if one is to focus on how the antebellum and war years shaped Reconstruction, it would logically follow that the memory of Reconstruction warrants more than the handful of pages that the author provides.

Elsewhere, the author departs from recent works that emphasize topics such as memory, medicine, environmental history, and culture. He focuses instead on political considerations and the material conditions that drove them. For Fitzgerald, material concerns were the prime engine for change, conflict, and contestation after the war. He emphasizes the Whiggish proclivities of Alabama’s postwar governors and especially their attempts to use the state to create economic prosperity. To the extent that white Alabamians resisted Reconstruction, the author also places this opposition within the context of their attacks on Republican fiscal policy and the economic trough that undermined railroad expansion and the state’s finances. It was this trough and the dire fiscal position of the state that Fitzgerald contends allowed Democrats to conflate Republican misgovernment with black civil rights and the invidious influence of Northerners. He even contends that economic concerns drove antiblack terrorism, as this violence was most pervasive when labor relations were unstable, while
economic growth often brought about a racial detente. Such is the extent to which the author privileges economic concerns as the most salient causal force in Reconstruction that he goes so far as to argue that during the Democratic administration of Robert B. Lindsay, stable economic conditions brought the freedmen a modicum of social, economic, and political stability that exceeded that of some Republican administrators.

This interpretation neglects the role of ideology. Economic matters might have shaped antiblack violence, but this violence grew from a long history of racial terror that existed independently from the booms and busts of a market economy. Moreover, given Fitzgerald’s emphasis on formal politics, one could read the book and wonder whether historians’ turn toward social history in the 1970s ever happened. Nevertheless, Fitzgerald has produced a book that any serious student of Reconstruction should read, and one that undoubtedly is the best single-volume history of its subject.

Auburn University

Jake Clawson


This concise military history of the American Revolution adds to a growing historiography supporting the claim that the Continental Army won the Revolution through persistence and the growth of military professionalism. Although other historians have focused on the administration and organization of the Army or the combination of American successes and British failures, Thomas Fleming argues George Washington was largely responsible for the outcome of the war because he rejected New England’s faith in local militias and reliance on defensive strategies (what Fleming calls “Bunker Hillism”). Instead, Washington favored a Fabian strategy that sought to avoid large-scale defeats while building a professional force that could “look the enemy in the face” (41).

To make his case, Fleming begins his narrative at the end of the war, during the Newburg Conspiracy. With Major General Horatio Gates in the lead, American officers contemplated a mutiny against the Congress that Washington defeated by shaming the officer corps. Beginning the story in this way allows Fleming to build a case that pits Gates and his New England patrons against Washington and his supporters, particularly Nathanael Greene and Congressional leaders more willing to support a standing army. From that point, the author then investigates
numerous battles to illustrate how the commanding general managed to increase the professionalism of his army despite the lack of logistic and financial support from either Congress or the state governments. The Battle of Bunker Hill sets up the internal struggle between Gates and Washington when New England militia exacted a heavy toll on British forces and Americans learned the wrong lessons from the event, leading to a desire to rely on local militias and a war of posts. Following the disastrous defeats in New York the following year, Washington decided to shift to a Fabian strategy that required a standing army, a policy that many in Congress resisted. After the battles at Saratoga and in Pennsylvania in 1777, Washington and Gates competed for Congressional favor, a struggle that did not end until Gates’s defeat at Camden in 1780. The Battle of Monmouth proved Washington’s theory that a trained Continental Army could succeed against the British in a general engagement while Nathanael Greene and Daniel Morgan brought victory in the South by adhering to Washington’s Fabian strategy. The narrative ends a bit outside the normal boundaries of the Revolution, as the Battle of Fallen Timbers serves to illustrate how this strategy remained necessary to continue the expansion of the new nation on the frontier.

Those readers familiar with other histories arguing in favor of Washington as a strategic leader will find little particularly new in Fleming’s argument. Rather, the novelty found in this new work is the choice of focus. Fleming links battles together that are not usually chosen for such a brief narrative of the war. Though Bunker Hill and Saratoga are mainstays for most military histories, it is unusual for battles like Connecticut Farms, Springfield, and Cowpens to receive the same attention provided here. At the same time, other major operations (like Sullivan’s Campaign) are ignored or mentioned quite briefly. Although it is unusual for a book claiming to be a “grand strategic overview” to focus so much of its narrative on the very tactical investigation of smaller engagements, students of the war will find much that is informative to their greater understanding of the conflict.

*United States Military Academy*  
Seanegan P. Sculley

*The Mayflower: The Families, the Voyage, and the Founding of America.* By Rebecca Fraser.  

Of the myriad of challenges confronting those who teach the American history survey these days, none is perhaps more vexing—and perplexing to students—as describing and differentiating between Puritans and Pilgrims. Puritans were ardent English
Calvinists (read: predestinarian Protestants) who labored relentlessly to rid the Established Church of all vestiges of “popery” beginning in the 1560s. Their task became more daunting when, in the 1620s, the hierarchy and head of the Church of England (i.e., William Laud and Charles I) appeared to embrace Arminianism (read: free-will Protestantism). Puritans regarded such a course as a rapid retreat into popery and a quick march into the throes of Babylon. By the 1630s, Puritans were in disfavor and under duress at home to the extent that they would commence a systematic “Great Migration” of some 30,000 of their number to the New World. The Pilgrims of Plymouth fame, of course, arrived in what became Massachusetts in much smaller numbers a full ten years before the migration began. They were, by contrast, a tiny group of Separatists who had determined a full decade and a half ahead of the Puritans that the Calvinist position in England had become both theologically and socially untenable; hence the fabled voyage on the Mayflower. So, the Pilgrims’ taking exception to the English establishment in 1620 would over time become the rule of mass English Calvinist migration to the New World.

If nothing else, Rebecca Fraser’s *The Mayflower: The Families, the Voyage, and the Founding of America* provides an eminently readable narrative of the Pilgrim and Puritan odyssey. Fraser is uniformly adept in telling the Pilgrim story, relating the details of the acute hardship and mortality experienced during that awful first winter of 1620-1621. She is no less able in describing the Puritans’ English background, including the social and religious struggles that led them to undertake the arduous trip to the New World. All of the usual characters are included, like John Winthrop, in addition to those with whom we may be less familiar, such as Edward and Josiah Winslow. The author is particularly skilled, however, in describing the sensibilities and experiences of Puritan women and the Indians, two groups who certainly and lamentably have been underrepresented in previous narratives of this time and place. Fraser’s thesis—if there is one—is that the Pequot War [1636-1638] marked the real turning point in English-Indian affairs. Thereafter, unceasing anxiety, constant warfare, and relentless brutality characterized relations between the two groups.

As pleasant a read as this volume is, there are nevertheless a few problems. Fraser has a jarring habit of using colloquialisms in her depiction of the settlers, e.g., “The Pilgrims were on a roll” (83). She also has a tendency to employ terms without defining them, e.g., “Tudor and Stuart despotism” (95). Still, the reviewer can see assigning Fraser’s book in the American history survey as an accessible and readable introduction to the personages and issues that demand additional exploration in more analytical works.

*Miami University* 

Michael L. Carrafiello
Civil service reform does not have much standing in the annals of the evolution of American democracy. An obscure political cause compared, say, to women’s suffrage or to the everlasting struggle against big money’s control over politics, the requirement that appointments to office should be based on proven merit rather than party loyalty was nonetheless thought by upstanding citizens of the late 1800s to be the most urgently needed remedy for the dreadful ills of public life. Equally obscure in popular memory is the president who signed and faithfully executed the nation’s first civil service law, Chester A. Arthur of New York. The subject of a weighty and still authoritative biography published more than forty years ago by Thomas C. Reeves, Arthur has now been favored by a slender, consistently engaging volume by Scott S. Greenberger, who renders a sympathetic portrait of an often-forgotten president.

Chet Arthur was, to put it mildly, an unlikely champion of civil service reform. He went into politics for power, money, and prestige, and as the top lieutenant of New York’s Republican party boss, the lordly Roscoe Conkling, Arthur secured all three. Serving as Collector of the New York Custom House from 1871 to 1878, he managed a vast font of patronage jobs for the Conkling machine and garnered for himself more total income (including his cut of fines and forfeitures) than any other federal employee, even the president. Although a damning report on patronage practices in the Custom House led to Arthur’s dismissal as Collector, astonishingly in 1880 he became his party’s vice-presidential nominee—because the Republicans were desperate to carry New York for their standard bearer James A. Garfield. With Garfield’s assassination by a disappointed office seeker in the summer of 1881, Arthur became the unexpected president.

Exhibiting startling fitness for his high office, Arthur embraced an overhaul of the US Navy, preservation of national forests, and civil rights for black Americans. But his signature achievement was the enactment and enforcement of the Civil Service Act of 1883, the legislation that launched an inexorable transformation of office holding in America. Reformers who had considered Arthur to be utterly unsuited for the presidency were now “shocked—and thrilled” by his conversion to their cause (187). Greenberger depicts Arthur’s metamorphosis in the same lively, captivating style that he brings to every element of his story. Especially noteworthy are the author’s portrayals of life in mid-century New York City, where Arthur first made his mark in politics and society, and of the haughty, despicable Roscoe Conkling.
Through no fault of his own, however, Greenberger is handicapped in explain-
ing his subject’s surprising political transformation, because late in life Arthur ordered the destruction of nearly all of his letters, journals, and private papers. Among the small number of documents that he preserved are twenty-three missives from a woman named Julia Sand who began writing to Arthur when he was vice president and continued to send him letters while he was in the White House. Bluntly calling attention to Arthur’s unsavory political past, she urged him to chart a new course. “Rise to the emergency,” she implored. “Disappoint our fears. Force the nation to have faith in you” (169). Unexpectedly he did.

Rutgers University

Richard L. McCormick


The author of this book has revisited the same subject (the election of Dwight Eisenhower to the presidency in 1952) on which he wrote an earlier book thirty-two years ago. The reason, he explains, is because in the intervening decades so much new evidence became available that he changed his mind about what had happened. In John Robert Greene’s earlier book he contended that Eisenhower and his Democratic opponent in 1952, Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson, had been dishonest in claiming that they really did not want to run for the presidency. On the basis of new evidence, Greene now concludes that he was wrong. Both Eisenhower and Stevenson, he now contends, found themselves pushed by events beyond their control into running for the presidency that year. I Like Ike also tells the story of the 1952 presidential campaign from start to finish. Among the highlights of the book are Greene’s perceptive discussion of Eisenhower’s and Stevenson’s styles of speech making, and why Eisenhower, seemingly the less articulate of the two, ultimately outperformed Stevenson. Greene gives Ike high marks for connecting better with the ever growing American middle class through simple yet effective television “spots.” These featured the amiable Ike addressing the major issues of the day—most notably inflation—in an accessible way that helped him attract votes from centrist Democrats of modest means. Stevenson, in contrast, persisted in giving speeches that, though witty and intelligent, could not come across completely on TV, given its cost structure, and were aimed over the heads of the crucial middle-class part of the electorate. The picture that emerges is of Eisenhower, despite being the older of the two candidates, as more up to date than Stevenson, whose approach to communicating with voters was shaped by the radio era.
Greene’s book is not without flaws. It misses the key role played by IBM CEO Thomas Watson Sr., the most influential member of Columbia University’s Board of Trustees, in bringing Ike to Columbia as its president in 1947, and Watson’s goal of using that appointment to get Eisenhower out of an army uniform and thus make him more acceptable as a candidate for the civilian office of the American presidency. *I Like Ike* also contains one major factual error. Greene says that Eisenhower’s first declaration of his GOP affiliation and willingness to accept the party’s nomination was in a letter that “has not survived” but that is wrong (35). It was found in General Edwin Clark’s papers in the early 1990s and reprinted in full in the *New York Times Magazine* on 14 November 1993. Despite these problems, *I Like Ike* is a useful book, which those interested in its subject will want to consult.

David Stebenne

Ohio State University

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*For God, King, and People: Forging Commonwealth Bonds in Renaissance Virginia.*


Scholars of the Atlantic world and the English empire will find a wealth of resources within Alexander Haskell’s important and meticulously detailed study of the foundations of the Virginia colony, its religious impulses, and the justifications with which writers of the era wrangled. Haskell’s closing epilogue is a short study of the founding historiography of the Virginia colony, Richard Bland’s writings on the origins of the colony and its Renaissance and its Christian humanist beginnings, claiming “Bland was highly alert to the nuances of the past” (354). So, too, is Haskell in this remarkable work. In an era of great economic and worldly opportunities, Haskell’s study makes clear that previous historians were shortsighted in their understanding of the Virginia colony as merely a secular and economic endeavor. Beginning with a nuanced study of Walter Raleigh and Humphrey Gilbert, and the ways in which “God’s will converged happily with what Raleigh called human ‘invention,’” Haskell’s study will be required reading in upper-division undergraduate and graduate courses alike on early modern politics and the fledgling Atlantic world (2).

Throughout the work, it is clear that the question of colonization and God’s will was ever present for the adventurers, captains, and eventually, planters of the English colonies in North America. Colonization in this case was “the mechanism by which God propelled humans in their essential duty to establish dominion over the earth” (9). Interwoven throughout remarkably detailed textual
analysis is a study of the English commonwealth as the nascent global power sought to define its role in the Atlantic and to establish dominion. Instead of viewing the colonies as mere satellite settlements, Ralegh and others sought colonies that “were themselves newly planted commonwealths and churches” (16). Framing the conquerors and colonizers of the era, the captain was a complement to the power of the monarchy, “to the steadiness of the heavens, standing strong against the caprices and confusions of a fallen world … a paragon of sovereignty itself” (91).

In great detail, Haskell examines the literature of the era such as Robert Cecil, earl of Salisbury, who “regarded American colonization as vital to giving the imperial crown the strength it needed to pin down lawfulness in a world filled with sin and error” (139). The stormy weather of the tempestuous Virginia endeavor and King James’s reign provided Haskell with ample prose to wade through, and he does so with a keen eye for detail and analysis. The Virginia colony found itself in the heart of great tensions between church and state, particularly the role of secular government and state sovereignty in the English Civil War and the subsequent political writings such as Hobbes’s Leviathan. Haskell situates the role of Hobbes in Bacon’s Rebellion, a case study in the evolving ties that bound the people to the secular government and the evolving visions of godly commonwealth in an era of uncertainty. Haskell’s work is bolstered by studies by Karen Ordahl Kupperman, Douglas Bradburn, Rebecca Goetz, and others.

University of Southern Indiana

Kristalyn Shefveland

By Christopher Lane. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016. Pp. 224. $28.00.)

After being told in the 1952 presidential campaign that he had been invited to address a group of Texas Baptists only as a courtesy because they had already been told by Norman Vincent Peale not to vote for him, Adlai Stevenson began his speech, “Well, speaking as a Christian, I find the Apostle Paul appealing and the Apostle Peale appalling.” It is fair to say that the author of this book also finds Peale appalling in this slim book focusing fairly tightly on the preacher’s anticommunist crusading and his efforts to join religion and psychiatry together to fix all the mental ills of men, women, and society by bringing them to faith in God and self.

Though Christopher Lane’s book is the product of fresh archival research, there is the tendency to give Peale more credit for the religious resurgence than is warranted by either the broader historical record or by the evidence of Peale’s critical
reception at the height of his popularity referenced in this book. Peale was quite popular and useful to Republican politicians and corporate capitalists, but was a lightweight. Indeed, many of the criticisms Lane offers were first offered in the 1950s by Donald Meyer and William Miller and widely noted then. Lane’s book does contribute, however, to a growing consensus (given work by Kevin Kruse, Darren Grem, and Matthew Sutton) that America’s postwar preoccupation with God and having a strong personal faith had a prehistory in anticollectivist thinking that made patriotic Christian capitalism the source of every strength, whilst unionism, the New Deal, and international communism were portrayed as godliness’s contraries. Peale was the business CEO’s chaplain and cheerleader, and Eisenhower, J. Edgar Hoover, and Nixon his chosen standards of political piety, as Lane demonstrates.

Peale himself is, of course, most remembered for the *Power of Positive Thinking*, a self-help book that sold millions in the 1950s and 20,000 a year still. Its principal teaching is that negative thinking inhibits success, while positive thought brings forth the objects of one’s desires, be they love, material success, or confidence. The book and others like it were only one product of a long emphasis on what Peale and his psychiatrist partner Smiley Blanton called religio-psychiatry, an effort conducted in a clinic and through sponsored associations to (among other things) put God and belief in God at the center of therapy and healing. Blanton, who had undergone analysis by Sigmund Freud in the 1930s, possessed his own idiosyncratic views about using transference for God (instead of the therapist) for healing, and together Peale and Blanton were able to attract considerable attention for a more positive relationship between medicine, religion, psychiatry, and the cure of persons—particularly through the years of peak religious interest.

Lane’s own interests appear to peak as the fever of religious enthusiasm as a form of healthiness finally breaks. The last chapter and conclusion attend to the rebalancing of the relationship of religion and mental health and continuing questions of identity down to the present time.

*Vanderbilt University*                 James Hudnut-Beumler

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**The United States and the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the Americas, 1776–1867.** By Leonardo Marques. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016. Pp. xi, 313. $40.00.)

In one of history’s remarkable juxtapositions, both the United States and Great Britain abolished the African slave trade in 1807. The two bicentennials were a study in contrast: Whereas the British event was a moment of national celebration, its American counterpart passed almost without notice. Since the 1896 publication of *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America* by
W. E. B. Du Bois, many historians have questioned whether the US measure constituted a serious commitment to end the trade or whether it should even be considered historically significant. These questions can now be answered decisively in the affirmative, thanks to this compelling new book by Leonardo Marques.

The author draws primarily on the Transatlantic Slave Trade Database for quantitative evidence. This remarkable resource is open to the public, but the author displays considerable skill and ingenuity in cross-tabulating relevant information—voyages, slaves, points of departure and arrival, national flag, and country of ship construction—for various historical periods. He supplements this statistical superstructure with extensive research in primary sources.

The African slave trade was never a major component of the US economy, but the illicit commerce was vigorously pursued at two enclaves in Rhode Island, the towns of Newport and Bristol. The latter featured many members of the prominent D’Wolf family. Even in the 1790s, participation in the trade by US citizens was illegal under both state and federal law, but as Marques shows, the number of slaves disembarked in the Americas by vessels from these two ports surged between 1792 and 1807 (37). The traffic to Cuba during this period was dominated by British and US merchants.

During a transitional period between 1808 and 1820, the majority of US traders switched into other pursuits (including the domestic coastal slave trade), though the D’Wolf family persisted. The picture clearly changed as of 1820, with passage of a federal law defining slave traffic as piracy, punishable by death. Although many slave-trading records for earlier dates were deliberately destroyed, there is no evidence of slave voyages outfitted anywhere in Rhode Island after 1820 (84). Smuggling of slaves into the US “was minimal after 1820” (112). Thereafter, the country’s main contribution to the transatlantic trade was construction of ships—no small matter, but not quite the same as direct participation by US nationals.

Subsequent chapters trace the US role in the large post-1820 contraband trade to Brazil and Cuba. Contrary to many historians, Marques argues that federal antislave-trade policies were “not without effect” on such strategies as the use of the US flag to avoid British enforcement. “But slave traders seem to have had an infinite array of strategies,” and international cooperation was hindered by persistent US refusal to grant the “right of search” to the British (238). Only the Civil War brought a “radical assault on most US-based components of the slave trade to Cuba” and an end to the trade itself by 1867 (253).

Stanford University

Gavin Wright
Adding a name to the pantheon of “Founding Fathers” is tough, but the author of this new book argues that Jonathan Mayhew should be remembered as “the most politically influential clergyman in eighteenth-century America and the intellectual progenitor of the American Revolution in New England” (ix). Mayhew was pastor of Boston’s liberal West Church from 1747 to his early death in 1766. Beginning with Loyalist Peter Oliver in 1781, scholars have explored Mayhew’s role in mounting tensions in Boston, but historians since the 1960s have questioned whether the clergy played a central role at all. J. Patrick Mullins suggests that most recent scholarship again credits Congregational ministers with spreading revolutionary ideals, and he argues that “no clergyman in eighteenth-century America dared more, struggled more, and succeeded more in advancing the cause of liberty than Dr. Jonathan Mayhew” (4). Mullins’s more compelling assertion, however, is that Mayhew’s “rationalist views on basic philosophic and theological issues drew him to radically individualistic conclusions regarding the nature and purpose of government” (181).

The book charts Mayhew’s intellectual development, with each chapter dedicated to an event or publication by Mayhew. According to Mullins, Mayhew believed that God was rational and wanted man to be guided by reason. In his Harvard master’s thesis, Mayhew asserted that reason and faith coexisted, and his teachings were seen as so radical that Boston’s leading ministers refused to even attend his ordination in 1747. Mayhew’s Seven Sermons undermined Calvinist doctrine—such as justification by faith alone—denied the Trinity, and shocked his ministerial colleagues. Mayhew’s first political pamphlet, Discourse Concerning Unlimited Submission, affirmed the acceptability of regicide against Charles I and asserted the right of all subjects to resist “rulers who thwart God’s will” (55). Mayhew’s embrace of Enlightenment philosophy alienated him from his Boston ministerial colleagues, but he was warmly welcomed into a transatlantic correspondence with like-minded British dissenters, especially during the Seven Years’ War. The now-forgotten “Indian Affair” solidified the antagonists: Mayhew, who believed people could freely question all authority, versus Governor Bernard, who denied that colonists had liberty to question almost anything. The Stamp Act crisis exacerbated the division, as Mayhew preached that subjects did not owe allegiance to a corrupt British government that would steal its subjects’ money. According to Mullins, Mayhew was the only New England minister to denounce the Stamp Tax publicly, even if he abhorred the violence of the Stamp Act mobs. Mayhew died shortly after the Stamp Tax was repealed.
Father of Liberty is deeply researched and elegantly written. Sometimes, Mullins offers too many superlatives—Mayhew’s sermon was the most famous, his funeral procession was the longest, his wife was among the most beautiful. Mullins does not need such breathless boosterism. The book more than proves that Mayhew is a Revolutionary father worth getting to know.

State University of New York at Potsdam

Sheila McIntyre


Few except historians of abolitionism know of Warner Mifflin [1745-1798], but as the author of this book points out in this lively biography, Mifflin was well known to the leading political figures of late eighteenth-century America. Growing up on Virginia’s Eastern Shore and owning land and slaves both there and in Delaware, Mifflin was well set for the comfortable life of a planter. But his commitment to the Society of Friends while it was intensifying its condemnation of slavery changed his direction. In 1775, he freed his slaves and embarked on a rigorous testimony against enslavement that would occupy the remainder of his life. Mifflin embodied the vigor and visibility of post-Revolutionary Quaker reform efforts, linking earlier abolitionists such as Anthony Benezet to the nineteenth-century campaigners more familiar to historians.

Combining mildness of manner with persistence and determination, Mifflin advocated for emancipation and African Americans’ rights, first among Friends, then increasingly among strangers and the early Republic’s political leaders. He undertook long journeys to spread the word, traveled to state assemblies and to Congress to confront legislators, and worked to help and defend the enslaved and formerly enslaved of the Chesapeake’s Eastern Shore. His efforts and devotion to principle, sustained amidst family obligations and misfortunes, would exhaust him; his death in 1798 could be counted among those of several Friends who, having insistently attended the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting during a yellow fever outbreak, succumbed to the disease. To reformers with whom he worked Mifflin was a stalwart ally; to many of the politicians and slaveholders with whom he disputed he was a pain in the neck.

Nash emphasizes the contributions that mark Mifflin out as a heroic figure: his renunciation of slavery and restitution of back wages to slaves he freed (a foretaste of reparations); his persistent petitioning and intervention with state assemblymen and Congressmen (making him a pioneer political lobbyist); even
the emergence of his Delaware estate as a magnet for escapees seeking help (a forerunner of the Underground Railroad). Delaware was a hazardous place for free blacks liable to be kidnapped and sold into slavery further south; Mifflin was active in efforts to provide protection.

More implicit in Nash’s account are the ways Mifflin’s story illustrates the limits of what was possible in the 1780s and 1790s. Persuading fellow Quakers to renounce slavery was challenging enough. Advocating against it in legislatures, and promoting legal means to obstruct or weaken it were both met with resilient opposition. Proslavery advocates employed arguments that would be refined and developed in the long struggle to come. Mifflin’s close connections with Philadelphia and New Jersey and campaigning in Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia meant that he threaded the boundary between freedom and enslavement as this hardened after the Revolution. While Pennsylvania and New Jersey enacted the gradual emancipation for which Mifflin and his cohorts fought, the three lower states spurned their efforts, turning Mason and Dixon’s Line from a political border into a sectional divide that faith and dogged devotion to abolition would not soon breach.

Christopher Clark


Francis Marion, an enigmatic man in life, is a legendary figure of the American Revolution. Despite the popularity of Marion as image, he has been the subject of only one scholarly biography, published over forty years ago by historian Hugh F. Rankin. Drawing on recent historiography and archaeological evidence, John Oller offers a thorough reassessment of Marion, placing his irregular tactics in the larger story of the Southern Campaign of 1780–1781.

Little is known of Marion’s life prior to the fall of Charleston to British forces in May 1780. Having suffered a leg injury, Marion was not in the city when it surrendered. After the British subdued much of South Carolina and destroyed a Continental and militia force at Camden in August, Marion and his small band of irregular militia became a lonely symbol of resistance, keeping the idea of independence alive in the lower South.

Once Nathanael Greene assumed command of the Continental Army’s Southern Department, Marion served with a regular officer who understood the necessity of irregular tactics. Unlike another famed commander, Thomas Sumter, Marion usually subordinated his personal pride to service in the cause of independence. Oller
demonstrates that Marion’s unlikely and successful collaboration with Henry “Light Horse Harry” Lee involved conflict over tactics but also shows that their differences were of degree rather than kind.

One challenge Marion poses to a biographer is the lack of evidence about his early years and his personal life. Oller devotes chapters to Marion’s Huguenot ancestry and to the prerevolutionary military experience he received in campaigns against the Cherokees. The evidence is tentative, but Oller suggests that a Huguenot legacy of toleration influenced Marion’s actions as commander. Marion performed his important work in the context of South Carolina’s vicious civil war, which divided communities and neighbors and often degenerated into endless blood feuds, a war in which men shifted political allegiances with such confusing regularity that it was difficult to discern friend from foe. Plundering, burning, murdering, and torturing were common features of this internecine conflict. Amid the atrocities, Marion stood out as a different man and commander. Though his small bands invariably lacked supplies, he restricted plundering and strived to protect civilian property. A commander who took calculated tactical risks, Marion refused to countenance violence once a military engagement ended. And he was forgiving toward former enemies, receiving them into his ranks and striving to ameliorate vindictive retaliations against loyalists.

Because the historian is left with little evidence of Marion the man, Oller devotes most of the narrative to examining Marion’s succession of skirmishes, raids, advances, and retreats. The litany of small engagements can be confusing to the reader, but overall Oller succeeds in tying Marion’s operations in the South Carolina Lowcountry swamps to the wider war in the South and demonstrates how his successful hit-and-run tactics distracted the British from their larger strategic aims. Oller’s biography of Marion is a welcome addition to the growing literature on the War of Independence in the South.

Freed-Hardeman University

Gregory D. Massey


Poet and essayist Margaret Randall offers a personal take on Cuban internationalism in her newest book, Exporting Revolution: Cuba’s Global Solidarity. The author came to the topic in 2015 while completing a bilingual anthology of Cuban poetry. Impressed by the consequence of Cuban poets, she decided to explore how the relatively small nation impacted the world, especially through
global solidarity campaigns. Although people urged her to limit the scope of her book, Randall forged ahead with a broad purview on “Cuba’s multifaceted interdisciplinary approach to internationalism” (19). With that ambitious goal, the fifteen chapters of the book mix Cuban history, personal anecdotes, and reflections on Cuban cultural production, aid to liberation struggles, literacy campaigns, health care initiatives, and sports programs, domestically and abroad. Though posing provocative questions and offering insights on Cuban literature, Exporting Revolution lacks carefully researched analysis.

Between the introductory and concluding chapters, the book has three background chapters, six on Cuban activities in Africa or Latin America, one on global education initiatives, two on health care, and one on sports. General overviews on the variety of topics have occasional inaccuracies, such as calling the Conjunto Folklórico Nacional de Cuba the “Folklore Ballet” in a chapter on Cuban cultural institutions (29). At other points, ruminations border on stereotype, such as a chapter on Cuba’s island condition, in which Randall writes, “islands have a sort of magical aura that comes from their being closed within themselves” (64). This claim in particular exposes a general disregard for recent monographs by scholars like Ada Ferrer and Marc Perry, which illuminate how Cubans have connected with peoples outside their aqueous borders from the age of revolutions through the present day.

Despite these problems, the greatest contribution lies in chapters 8, 9, and 10, which contain translated short-story excerpts written by Cuban internationalists. The selections would enrich syllabi for courses on Cuban history or global health. Though arguably the most compelling chapters, Randall presumes people might wonder why she dwelt on literature, or as she put it, “approached internationalism through poetry’s door” (217). And yet, in fact, she passes too quickly through the rich opening, doing the book a disservice by not focusing its content and fully embracing her literary angle to the topic of Cuban internationalism.

Scholars interested in Randall’s experiences in Cuba from 1969 to 1980 or Cuban internationalism more generally should look elsewhere. Stories from Randall’s memoir, To Change the World: My Years in Cuba, appear in Exporting Revolution, but remain more interesting in their original iteration. For Cuban internationalism, Jorge Domínguez’s To Make a World Safe for Revolution: Cuba’s Foreign Policy has far more to offer. Randall never cites Domínguez’s prodigious book or other scholarship on related topics, though she does claim to write against how “Cuba is presented in our press and even by many of our academics” (220). Fighting unnamed
opponents, Randall weakens her case and undermines studies that share
her interest in celebrating the rich history of Cuba and all it has given to
the world.

Elizabeth Schwall

Northwestern University

_Tlalcael Remembered: Mastermind of the Aztec Empire_. By Susan Schroeder. (Norman, OK:

When thinking about Aztec history, the names “Montezuma” or “Hernando
cortés” are mainstays. Yet hardly anyone is familiar with the name “Tlaca-
el.” In this impressive work, Susan Schroeder—author of numerous books
on the Nahua historian Domingo de San Antón Muñon Chimalpahin
Quauhtlehuanitzin, or Chimalpahin—successfully recovers Tlacael from
the forgotten historical past and illustrates his paramount role in establish-
ing the Mexica (Aztec) state. Some scholars have doubted the veracity of
Tlacael’s existence, attributing his presence in the historical record as a
mythical creation perhaps by his descendants hoping for benefits from the
Spanish. Schroeder, however, convincingly argues for Tlacael’s actual
existence. Her sources primarily center on Chimalpahin’s writings, fra
Diego Durán’s histories about Aztec life and religion, and Alvarado Tezo-
zomoc’s _Crónica mexicana_. These are coupled with pictorial accounts, codi-
ces, and various other sources acquired through impressive archival
sleuthing. The result is a solid archival foundation for her argument and a
book that offers an important piece of scholarship detailing the Mexica’s
rise to power and contributes to the important body of scholarship examin-
ing Nahua annals and histories and their contributions to the
historical past.

Schroeder begins her resurrection of Tlacael by providing a detailed and
informative history of the Mexica and their violent struggle for dominance
among the polities of central Mexico while establishing their own city, Tenochti-
tlan. Born in 1398, Tlacael appears throughout this narrative as a skilled mili-
tary leader who was intrepid and essential to the formation of the Mexica state.
When Tlacael’s brother became the _tlatoani_, or ruler, of Tenochtitan in 1440,
Tlacael served as the _cihuacoatl_, or principal advisor to the tlatoani. In this
role, he influenced the policy of his brother and subsequent rulers of the state.
Often, his advice was aggressive and violent, resulting in the quick and impres-
sive expansion of the Aztec Empire during this time and in Chimalpahin naming
him “conqueror of the world” (107). Likely dying at the age of 90, Tlacaelel’s lineage continued to serve as Cihuacoatl until the office ended, at least officially, shortly after the Spanish conquest. Schroeder, however, provides a valuable extension to the story by illustrating the role of Tlacaelel’s lineage in the colonial apparatus as leaders and rulers.

Throughout the work, Schroeder provides interested readers with nuggets of insight into indigenous politics, state formation, and lineage groups. Moreover, Schroeder is not careless in her analysis and openly acknowledges when sources might make too fanciful claims or become dubious. Yet, although recognizing the extraordinary, she lends credibility to the man himself. In the end, although scholars may continue to quibble about the deeds of Tlacaelel, this excellent book has made it difficult to wave him aside as a mythical creation.

Assumption College

Mark Christensen


The rise of borderlands history, with its emphasis on the complex entanglements of indigenous and colonizing actors, has encouraged fresh appreciation of topics like the Virginia colony’s tributary system, a set of treaties that linked English settlers and an evolving constellation of native peoples. Kristalyn Marie Shefveland’s valuable study of Virginia’s tributary order is not a borderlands history per se; she is clear that her focus is mainly on showing the importance of English relations with native groups in shaping the colony’s own development, especially in relation to “settlement patterns, trade, and diplomacy” as Virginia grew from “a fledgling colony on the outpost of empire to a plantation model of English society.” However, her account is certainly informed by borderlands scholarship insofar as she usefully draws attention to the ways in which the tributaries’ own agendas and expertise affected English maneuverings in their new colonial home and determined, often in unexpected ways, how Virginia confronted the challenges of governing its diverse array of at least ostensibly subject peoples.

The study is organized chronologically around the changing contours of the colony’s tributary order, an approach that has the salutary effect of examining Virginia’s oft-told history from the mid-seventeenth to the early eighteenth century from an unfamiliar angle. Governor Sir William Berkeley’s negotiated
peace with the Pamunkey *weroance* Necotowance in 1646 was thus a watershed moment, ushering in the tributary system by bringing the former members of the Powhatan paramount confederacy into new, colony-centered bonds of mutual obligation, “some honored and some broken” (16). Other similarly imperfect attempts at transforming native neighbors into Indian tributaries would follow: The Middle Plantation Treaty [1677], Lieutenant Governor Alexander Spotswood’s short-lived experiment in Indian conversion at Fort Christanna, and the Albany Treaty that he helped to forge with the Five Nations Iroquois in 1722 all evinced the colonists’ continuing, though ultimately unsuccessful, efforts to create a tributary order akin to the Spaniards’ *encomienda* in English America.

The book is at its best in recovering some of the changes that the tributary system inadvertently wrought. Especially compelling in this regard is Shefveland’s argument that the 1646 peace was most consequential in opening up Virginia’s southwestern interior. The colony’s government sought to control access to this region south of the James River and along the rolling hills of the Piedmont through fortified points like Fort Henry. Unintentionally, extremely disruptive competition over the hides and Indian slave trade ensued, as colonists took advantage of tributaries’ knowledge and diplomatic ties in forging relationships with nontributary groups like the Tuscarora and the heavily armed Westo. Shefveland’s treatment of this profound unsettling of Virginia’s border is excellent, though unfortunately her reading of this episode in narrowly economic terms misses its political dimensions, especially in relation to Berkeley’s concerted efforts to control the frontier. Accordingly, her later identification of Spotswood’s concern to regulate traders as “something wholly new” does not ring entirely true and is symptomatic of a broader tendency to read the tributaries’ own maneuverings with greater nuance than the colonists’ changing political world (88). Yet, Shefveland’s unearthing of the tributary order’s historical significance is very helpful and makes this book a highly welcome scholarly contribution.

*University of California, Riverside*  
Alexander B. Haskell

*True Sex: The Lives of Trans Men at the Turn of the 20th Century.* By Emily Skidmore.  

Rural America at the turn of the twentieth century was more queer than the contemporary imaginary would have it—and yet, the queers were not all that
queer. This is the crux and central tension of *True Sex*, which convincingly demonstrates the surprising commonality of newspaper stories about trans men published across the United States between 1876 and 1936. Most trans men lived in rural spaces and presented as what Skidmore calls “conventional men,” and did not take part in the period’s nascent urban queer subcultures or claim queer identities (3). Trans men who could not conform to economic, racial, and social standards of respectability risked rejection, but those who could found themselves tolerated and sometimes even extolled as examples of American manhood.

Joining scholars like Colin R. Johnson, Peter Boag, Gabriel N. Rosenberg, and Rachel Hope Cleves, the author of this study resists queer history’s tendency towards metronormativity. The men of *True Sex* often led migratory lives, recalling narratives that one must leave the family farm for a queer life in the big city, but their relocations carried them from one rural locale to another, rather than from backwater to urban center. In small towns, codes of familiarity and a high value placed on the masculine roles of husband, farmer, and neighbor enabled trans men to become integral members of tight-knit communities—an opportunity less available in the anonymous metropolis.

Emily Skidmore’s attention to rurality brings a new twist to the history of sexology. Although city-based sexologists had a strong influence on narratives of trans pathology at the national level, the tolerance of local communities mattered far more in everyday life than opinions of experts. The tracing of narratives between local newspapers, national newspapers, and medical literature to show how “sex reveal” discourse changed moral and political valences between genres is one of the book’s strengths.

The chapters on whiteness and US empire are valuable and necessary contributions to trans history. As Skidmore argues, newspapers used reports on white trans men’s lives to highlight the virtues of normative white male citizenship, and the press accounts she located accordingly reflect a high incidence of whiteness, as well as few examples of men who had once passed as white encountering gender trouble when they no longer did. Skidmore’s point that the acceptance of gender deviance for white trans men often was a privilege of whiteness itself is well-taken. One still wonders whether other sources beyond newspapers might give us more clues about the lives of trans men of color, particularly those without racial passing privilege. The reader would have also eagerly welcomed a deeper dive into the tension between queerness and normativity that Skidmore so enticingly sets up—what are we to make of the possibility that trans men
introduced their loved ones to the idea that biology might not be destiny, if normativity was their ultimate goal?

True Sex is eminently readable and filled with rich biographical detail that will appeal to the nonexpert reader as well as to historians of gender, sexuality, and rural America.

Yale University

Beans Velocci


Andrew Jackson Donelson is a puzzlement. A young man of brilliant prospects, he learned statecraft at the right hand of his uncle Andrew Jackson, who groomed him “to preside over the destinies of America (sic)” (23). Yet, though prominent in the public eye for decades, the highest rungs he reached on the political ladder were a couple of mid-level diplomatic posts. He was never elected to anything, and his only nomination was for vice-president on the 1856 American (Know-Nothing) ticket—a place that no astute aspiring politician wanted. Rarely has such a heralded career produced such meager fruits.

That fact has not deterred biographers. This life of Donelson, appearing in a new Jacksonian series edited by Mark Cheathem, follows by ten years Cheathem’s own Old Hickory’s Nephew. A sprightly writer and thorough researcher, Richard Douglas Spence keeps his readers engaged. He makes Donelson interesting, and his occasional dissents from Cheathem are models of respectful scholarly decorum on both sides. But Spence cannot dodge the inescapable question: What is the point? What went wrong with Donelson? And is this confessedly secondary figure really worth so much attention?

Donelson prospered politically as long as he had a mission laid out for him, or somebody to tell him what to do. Despite their searing disagreement over the Eaton affair early in Jackson’s presidency, Jackson found him indispensable. Hundreds of Jackson’s most important papers are in Donelson’s clear hand. Appointed chargé to the independent state of Texas by President John Tyler in 1844, Donelson performed effectively as a diplomatic intermediary, smoothing Texas’s absorption into the American Union. But it was downhill from there.

Jackson’s visage shadows Donelson’s on the dust jacket of Spence’s book, as it also does in Cheathem’s—and indeed, as it did in life. Andrew Jackson was Donelson’s blessing and perhaps also his curse. He gave him entry into powerful circles, a first-rate political apprenticeship, and a talismanic name.
What he could not give him, and perhaps even took from him, was an identity of his own. Once Jackson was off the scene, Donelson floundered. His turn as a Washington newspaper editor ended miserably. When the slavery question rose to dominance in the 1850s, he had no productive response. His political precepts were borrowed and now outmoded, and he could not think beyond them. Doggedly invoking his dead uncle’s name, he could only insist that everyone cling to the Union—a sincere but empty position that rendered him irrelevant and in the end pathetic as the country slid toward Civil War.

Spence, an astute but admiring biographer, cannot bring himself to state the conclusion in bald terms. But those who run may read. The problem with Donelson was that his center was empty. With all his outward attributes and advantages, he had no original political character or convictions, no creative intelligence, nothing distinctive to himself. His talents were of a first-rate sidekick and functionary, not a statesman. Thrust into a role he was unsuited to fill, he descended finally into bitterness and drink. His disappointments were well earned.

University of Tennessee

Daniel Feller


Thanks to Princeton historian Arthur S. Link, who spent most of his productive life collecting and publishing everything Woodrow Wilson had ever said or written, the twenty-eighth president of the United States is likely the most thoroughly documented statesman of the modern era. Add to this a cottage industry of secondary scholarship by the likes of John Milton Cooper, Lloyd Ambrosius, Thomas Knock, Frank Ninkovich, and John Ikenberry, to name just a few recent examples, and the literature on Wilson becomes truly vast. What else can one possibly say that has not been said before?

A lot, suggests Trygve Throntveit in his new volume. “For decades, Wilson has been remembered as either a paternalistic liberal or reactionary conservative at home, and as a naïve idealist or cynical imperialist abroad,” owing to his racial segregation of federal offices, his military interventions to teach Mexicans democracy, and his post-World War I call for the League of Nations, which would end war in the world, as he boasted (4). According to Throntveit, however, these traditional representations are mistaken. “Wilson was not a
‘Wilsonian,’ as that term has come to be understood,” but a Jamesian pragmatist driven by the practical goal of gradually developing a global system of governance providing mechanisms for security, justice, and peaceful change (5).

This goal, adds Throntveit in a second major challenge to received wisdom, enjoyed abundant public support at the time. At least in the United States, “opinion favoring some version of League membership significantly outweighed opinion opposing it” (301). The notion that Americans sought isolation and that great powers were simply not ready to cede some sovereignty in exchange for collective security is a “myth” (301).

In the context of international relations (IR) theory, Throntveit pushes against positivist–realist, neorealist, and neoliberal renditions of Wilson as a utopian oblivious to the anarchical nature of the international system dooming individual states to the security dilemma, limiting their cooperation, and dictating that they pursue national interests defined in terms of power. Wilson was fully aware of anarchy and its consequences, but he viewed them “as historical rather than natural facts” (13). Wilson thus emerges as an early proponent of constructivism, whose contemporary representatives similarly view international structures as social phenomena—products of human choices and performances—capable of progressive change.

That Throntveit combats positivists does not, however, mean that post- and antipositivist IR scholars will automatically find his reading of Wilson appealing. Nowhere is his lack of critical reflexivity more apparent than in his failure to problematize Wilson’s repeated invocations of world opinion as the basis for his internationalist project. World opinion never speaks for itself, but only through individual interpreters who employ it as a rhetorical strategy to legitimate particular agendas situated in particular contexts. Here it needs to be noted that *Power without Victory* makes practically no mention of the narrow cultural roots of Wilson’s statecraft in, among other things, American patriotic Protestantism. These endowed his liberal internationalism with decidedly illiberal, even totalizing, implications on the world stage.

Milan Babík


The tension between exploitation and agency remains central in studies of slavery. In the Caribbean, where few slaves lived to old age and where new
importations were required to sustain slavery, the idea of a slave “family” seems inconceivable. Still, Sasha Turner’s new study draws attention to an era in which slave women—slave mothers—wrested some few concessions for their families.

Centered on the three decades before the British abolition of the slave trade in 1807, Turner’s work explores how the contradictory pulls between interest groups—antislavery reformers in Britain and sugar planters in Jamaica—allowed slave mothers a negotiating space. During this era, local planters as well as imperial elites anticipated a severe shortage in slave labor and prioritized the well-being of slave mothers. Presumably, if slave mothers could produce enough children, Jamaica’s sugar profits would remain high without dependence on African-born slaves. But how could all interested parties encourage valuable productive slave women to bear and raise healthy slave children?

Interested parties included abolitionists in Britain and planters, doctors, and missionaries in Jamaica. Each group supported increasing the reproductive rate of slave women but for different reasons. Abolitionists anticipated the birth of a working class, much like England’s factory population. Planters hoped to minimize the disruptions of abolition. Doctors and missionaries—benevolent and ambitious—viewed the increase in slave population as a worthy cause, one that would keep them busy and guarantee their salvation, respectively. Doctors emphasized scientific hygiene and hospital births, and missionaries offered Christian marriage. The route towards promoting slave population growth was naturalized. No one considered that the historical absence of slave children in the Caribbean came from brutal working conditions, malnutrition, disease, and flogging.

A combination of legal and practical incentives was created for slave workers simultaneously to become mothers and childrearers. As in some Scandinavian countries today, a few planters financially rewarded slave women who gave birth. Yet, unwilling to release slave mothers to give attention to their infants, planters used various mechanisms to keep mothers in the fields. Some resorted to creating weaning houses near plantations (slavery’s version of onsite daycare) to ensure that mothers continued to work efficiently, without undue interruption from crying or hungry infants. Others tried to enforce a shorter lactation period so women could produce additional children more rapidly. Planters punished pregnant mothers more gently to protect the wellbeing of the unborn child. In the end, the labor needs of a slave society determined the lives of slave mothers; productivity trumped fertility.
Turner admirably shows the human will to resist and to negotiate, within the limits possible. Slave women used the new laws to demand time and provisions for their families. They resisted having children in hospitals, away from their communities and their midwives. They drew from West African rituals to celebrate the birth of newborns. They ran away with their suckling infants. Some slave fathers, Turner writes, were “active in their families’ lives” (244). Here, we pause. In the world that Turner herself illuminates—of planter paranoia and power—slave fathers could protect neither mothers nor children.

San Jose State University

Ruma Chapra


President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s first hundred days in office are the stuff of legend. The vigorous action he took in early 1933 to fight the Great Depression set a standard of excellence by which all future chief executives would be judged. By contrast, his final days on the job have received far less fanfare, this despite the fact that FDR faced challenges every bit as grave.

David B. Woolner sets out to change the narrative in The Last 100 Days. The author’s chief innovation is to pair new information about FDR’s declining physical condition with traditional diplomatic accounts of the Yalta summit to provide fresh perspective on the high-level talks that led to the creation of the United Nations Organization, whose founding conference opened just days after Roosevelt’s death on 12 April 1945. The personal becomes deeply political as a result.

The demands of twelve years in office had taken a heavy toll on Roosevelt, who, though just sixty-three years of age, suffered from ailments such as hypertension and congestive heart failure, in addition to the polio that had stricken him earlier in life. Although FDR tried to hide it, the perilous state of his health was painfully evident to almost everyone who saw him up close. “He had the pallor, the deep gray color, of a man who had been long ill,” said Labor Secretary Frances Perkins, shocked, like many, by the president’s appearance (23).

FDR was a dying man. He nevertheless summoned the strength to make the 14,000-mile roundtrip to Yalta to meet Winston Churchill and Josef Stalin. The voyage exhausted the president, arguably hastening his decline. Even so, Roosevelt went fully determined to iron out any differences among the Big
Three that could stand in the way of the permanent peacekeeping structure that he sought to create, writes Woolner, who suggests that FDR sacrificed himself for the greater good.

Critics who argue that FDR, too ill (or naïve) to resist Stalin at Yalta, sentenced Poland and much of the rest of Eastern Europe to decades of Soviet dictatorship might object to Woolner’s fawning portrait of the president and his actions. But it is difficult to come away from The Last 100 Days unimpressed by the courage Roosevelt displayed in his efforts to forge a lasting peace. Highlighting the enormity of what he accomplished seems particularly important now that the international order Roosevelt helped build appears to be in some danger of collapsing. As Americans return to an isolationist stance akin to that once faced by FDR, Woolner encourages readers to find inspiration in the internationalist example Roosevelt set: “We should remember FDR’s vision, faith, and idealism—his conviction that the world’s problems are America’s problems—and ask ourselves if, in the face of the challenges confronting us today, we will exhibit the same courage to live up to our international responsibilities” (300). Woolner’s timely work, which should remain the standard account of FDR’s final days for the foreseeable future, deserves wide readership.

East Carolina University

M. Todd Bennett

Asia and the Pacific


This volume on Ryukyu/Okinawan history by Mamoru Akamine is actually a translation of his Japanese work, Ryukyu okoku: Higashi Ajia no konasuton (Kodansha, Japan, 2004). Akamine narrates the rise and fall of the Ryukyu Kingdom, starting with its founding, and ending in the final decades of the nineteenth century following its formal absorption into Japan as Okinawa Prefecture in 1879. The focus of the book is on the kingdom’s efforts to maintain its political autonomy in its dealings with its powerful neighbors, Japan and China, something it achieved with varying degrees of success over its history.

The Ryukyu Kingdom formed out of the political unification of the island of Okinawa in 1429. Because of Ryukyu’s geographic proximity to China, Japan, and Southeast Asia, it was perhaps only natural for it to become a key hub in the vibrant maritime trade of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. For roughly a century between
1450 and 1550, Ryukyu prospered in what was a golden age of wealth and power. However, the economic competition that came with the advent of Portuguese and Japanese trade activities after 1550 severely cut into the flow of wealth into the kingdom. At the same time, developments in Japan, specifically its looming invasion of Joseon Korea in 1592, subjected Ryukyu’s political autonomy to Japanese scrutiny, culminating in their invasion and takeover of the kingdom in 1609 (56). The Japanese wanted to regulate the Ryukyu Kingdom’s trade with China, since the Ryukyuans had participated in the Chinese tributary system since 1372 (61). The Japanese had ended their own participation in the Chinese tributary system in the 1550s and were thereafter forbidden from entering China. The Ryukyuans responded to Japan’s subjugation of their kingdom by increasing their efforts at sinification in order to maintain the idea of their kingdom’s political autonomy (83).

In 1874, the Japanese government concluded a settlement with the Qing government of China over the killing of Ryukyuan castaways in Taiwan in which the Chinese recognized the right of the Japanese militarily to retaliate against the Taiwanese in order to protect their citizens (146-147). The Japanese interpreted this settlement with China as the latter’s recognition that Ryukyu was no longer one of China’s tributaries and that it had formally become a part of Japan. Ending Ryukyu’s status as a Chinese tributary state cleared the way to its legal annexation by Japan, and five years later the Japanese government formally abolished the kingdom, establishing Okinawa Prefecture in its place (151). With China’s defeat at the hands of the Japanese in 1895, any hope of restoring the Ryukyu Kingdom came to an end (161).

The translator and editor of this book managed to capture the breezy prose style of the original Japanese version, which enhances the book’s readability and accessibility. The author’s transnational approach to Ryukyu history, especially his expertise using Chinese materials, is a significant strength of the book, making it appropriate for use in undergraduate courses in world, Asian, and Japanese history.


This ideologically driven celebration of China’s transition into a quasi-capitalist state is a promotional for “Western” economists’ roles in China’s post-Mao rise to global power. It reads as a bright undergraduate’s thesis, expanded for an English-language market eager to take credit for China’s antisocialist present. Yet, its “impact of the West” paradigm is exhausted, and its narrative is propelled by a breathlessness
usually more associated with erotica than with economics. The reviewer is all for rendering economics sexy, but this earnest credulity is ineffective.

Julian Gewirtz begins with a tone-setting introduction: Chinese economics stages a comeback after the “poverty” of “inefficient” socialism; economists fan out across the globe, “crossing the river by feeling for the stones,” in search of how to transform their pitiful China into an engine of growth and wealth production. Subsequent chapters chronologically march from 1976 through the post-Tiananmen consolidation, in 1993, of a “socialist market economy.” The prose alternates between portentous pretention and dry distance, all the while straining the riverine metaphor beyond its weak analytic capacity. In chapter 1 the author takes us from Mao’s death to Hua Guofeng’s “whateverism” while introducing major characters: venerable economists sidelined during the Cultural Revolution; stalwarts of Communist Party power; key theoreticians; and more. Various institutional homes for economic research are established. The stage is set.

Enter the heroes: enterprising economists who leave China in search of truth and the soothsayers from abroad who will guide them to the promised shore. There are conflicts aplenty—between “reformers” and reds and between Soviet market-socialist theoreticians (such as Wlodzimierz Brus) or World Bank economists and “conservatives” in the first two chapters, but the trajectory leads towards freedom (from Maoist socialism) and the embrace of growth-oriented economics. Some of the material is of interest; most is repackaged. In chapter 4, the author brings Milton Friedman and his merry market fundamentalism to China in 1980 and indicates the emerging convergence of Friedmanism with those in the Soviet bloc plotting the demise of the centralized economy; rather than merely stimulate initiative, these proposals promote total systemic transformation. Chapter 5 covers the epic showdown in 1982 over the relationship of state to economy, and chapter 6 floats along the Yangtze river of ideas to advance Dengism. Chapter 7 gets Zhao Ziyang into position to argue for increases in foreign investment to boost productive efficiency, thus sparking more conflicts within the party. In chapter 8, Gewirtz presents a tempest—albeit not Mao’s Hunan storm—in the teapot of systemic restructuring; and chapter 9 gets us to the all-important thirteenth Party Congress of 1987, when Zhao Ziyang’s “coastal development strategy” is endorsed. Here, finally, we are given a sense of the difficulties encountered by people living these changes, not merely as ideas but as material factors in their lives. We reach the social crisis of Tiananmen, after which reformer “mind-sets” and conservative ones battle through to 1993, when Deng Xiaoping’s Southern
Tour puts an end to the waffling by concretizing in policy the agenda of growth at any and all social costs.

The story that Gewirtz tells is both familiar and superficial; it is told with vigor, without a critical eye. In addition to the heroic Chinese economists, it introduces a host of actors—Eastern European, Russian, American, German, Japanese—who help propel China away from socialism. The book’s premise is that endless economic growth is an absolute good, socialism was bad, and that it was only a matter of time and judicious foreign advising before China’s leaders saw the self-evidence of these truths.

New York University

Rebecca E. Karl


The author of this book cogently explores how political violence is conceived in ancient India over a period of twelve hundred years. In addition to examining various legal, didactic, and poetic texts from the traditions of Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Jainism, Upinder Singh surveys the epigraphic and numismatic records and political inscriptions and monuments, such as Ashokan edicts that proclaim the emperor’s rejection of violence after a brutal military campaign, or hero-stones that commemorate the heavenly ascension of warriors slain in battle. In focusing on kingship and its relationship with violence, the author identifies three overlapping phases of ideological development; namely, “foundation” [600-200 BCE]; “transition” [200 BCE-300 CE]; and “maturity” [300-600 CE]. Each phase produced compelling, yet contradictory views on the relationship of violence to the state, and differing accounts of the nature of kingship. Singh rightly concludes that although violence is inherent in the ancient Indian state, no singular or monolithic theory of kingship existed. What is more, she dispels any naive views of ancient India as peaceful and apolitical, or that it lacked complex moral philosophies about the use and ramifications of violence.

Among many strengths, Singh demonstrates that in earlier phases the problem of violence is skillfully justified in a process that corresponds with the growth of a systematized state. The king is consistently entitled to the use of force for successful governance, especially in punishing criminals, securing the kingdom through diplomacy or covert means, or in defending its borders through warfare. The presentation of kingly dharma (law, duty) ranges from the pragmatic to
mythically idealized. For example, Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* presents a practical account of how kings seeking political dominance should only wage war as a last resort. Their primary tools should be political in the sense of forming alliances, sowing dissent, and employing expert advisers, spies, and assassins. In contrast, the epic *Mahabharata* presents an ambivalent view on political violence. On the one hand, the kingly figure of Yudhisthira laments the cruelties of war and wavers between the pursuit of worldly power and ascetic renunciation. On the other, many heroes revel in heroic ideals of battle, yet employ underhanded means to achieve victory. In terms of counternarratives, Buddhism and Jainism avow a moral stance of nonviolence, yet do not prohibit kings from going to war to ensure social stability. In addition, though Ashoka expressed regret about the suffering caused by his imperial expansion, his subsequent nonviolent attitude still allows for the protection of the state’s borders through force.

In the mature phase, poets and playwrights downplay the harsh realities of warfare and corporal punishment by portraying kings as valiant and powerful, yet also as loving and benevolent. Moreover, the health of the state is aligned with the king’s emotional temperament and personal discipline, which are often represented in the royal pastime of hunting and the benevolent subjugation of tribal peoples who stand outside of the civilized state. Singh argues that such aesthetic glorification serves to idealize kings, while circumventing the brutalities implicit in rulership.

Singh is to be highly commended for unpacking an impressive amount of information from numerous sources in a sophisticated and accessible manner. This important book is recommended for anyone interested in the complex and highly contested representations of kingship in ancient India and the violence it entails by necessity.

*Wake Forest University*  
Jarrod Whittaker

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In this book, the author explores significant transformations in wartime Japan through rhetorical analysis of three rescripts issued by Japanese Emperor Hirohito. Though his inquiry into these rescripts provides significant insights into the language used by the Japanese leadership to convey imperial policy, the bureaucracy surrounding the Japanese emperor makes it difficult to
identify the rescripts’ specific authors and rhetorical intent. Also, historians may find the author’s distinction between historical analysis and rhetorical analysis a distinction without a difference.

Takeshi Suzuki deconstructs rhetorically three wartime rescripts: the 1942 rescript declaring war against America and Britain, the 1945 imperial rescript ending the war, and the 1946 “Declaration of Humanity” rescript, devoting a chapter to each document. He sees these as transformational in Japanese history, describing Japan’s national identity and defining the role of the emperor. For his analysis, he employs dramatism, a rhetorical criticism, which analyzes terms and their frequency in discourses to probe human relationships and motives.

The writing is dense and written for someone with background in rhetorical studies. He also introduces the US debate about the future of the emperor and its rhetoric with little introduction. Overall Suzuki’s presentation is well organized, and he invokes a debater’s style by enumerating his points in careful detail. He also uses a journalistic style for Japanese names, using Western name order with the surname last. The work, however, does not include an index.

The author often overstresses the emperor’s involvement in the rescripts’ rhetoric. Although Hirohito may have been, as Suzuki suggests, the most charismatic figure in twentieth-century Japan, his charisma was not the same as that of other charismatic wartime leaders. Hitler, Mussolini, Churchill, and Roosevelt were also politicians who cultivated their charisma through personal connections with the people from beer hall speeches in Munich to “Fireside chats” from the White House. Hirohito’s wartime charisma was not personal, but an institutional construct built on his status as a manifest deity within the emperor system and State Shinto. These imperial rescripts may contain rhetorical devices, but the “chrysanthemum curtain” that surrounded the emperor, even during the allied occupation, makes it difficult to know if and how these devices were intended and who crafted them.

Though Suzuki presents an interesting discussion of the Kyoto School of Philosophy’s positive response to the 1942 rescript on war, it is unclear how persuasive the rescripts were for the ordinary Japanese. When the rescripts on declaring the war and terminating the war were issued, the events were faits accompli. Also, it was the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers who ultimately would decide the fate of the emperor. After years of shortages, rationing, and firebombing, the ordinary Japanese response to these rescripts may have been more the result of the Japanese fatalism of shikataganai (“it can’t be helped”) than imperial rhetoric. Nevertheless, Suzuki’s analysis of these three
rescripts, which are more often referred to just in passing than examined, does lay the foundation for future research into the role of Hirohito and language in wartime Japan.

John Carroll University

R. W. Purdy

Europe


For tradespeople, including craft workers who made things and retailers who sold things and composed mainly of people who did both, business and family were so closely intertwined that it is difficult to separate them. Thus, Hannah Barker’s book focusing on the trading class in northwest England discusses both business and family.

The book uses a wide variety of sources. Each source has biases, but the use of multiple sources with different biases helps us to gain a more balanced view of the lives of these tradespeople. One source is a sample of 254 wills from Manchester and Liverpool. Wills survive for only about 10 percent of the population, and not all traders who engaged in business made wills. Barker also examines inheritance practices using court records, though these records are of course biased towards families that did not get along. Letters, diaries, and memoirs provide more information about harmonious family relationships. In addition, advertisements and houses still in existence provide information about domestic spaces. Another advantage of using multiple sources is that historians get more complete information about individuals. Using trade directories, Barker shows that it was fairly common for business succession to differ from what was stated in the will; in a quarter of the cases where the will specified the business should end, it was actually continued.

These sources are used to examine asset holdings, inheritance, business succession, affection among family members, and the physical spaces in which business and domestic life took place. Though the first two chapters report averages from the sample of wills, most of the book relies on detailed examples of particular families to make its points. A few men are followed throughout the book. The extensive detail on particular cases results in a rich picture of the lives of individual tradespeople.
Using this material, Barker makes a number of different claims. She claims that, in terms of authority within the household, age mattered more than gender. A woman of an older generation would out-rank a junior male, though within generations men had more authority than women. Barker mentions claims by Lawrence Stone and others about change over time in family relationships, but given the limited number of examples and the relatively short time period studied, she does not have enough evidence to establish whether there was change over time. She demonstrates that spouses expressed great affection for each other and parents for their children, but we do not know whether this was different from previous periods. Barker does establish that families varied considerably in the extent to which family members lived separately from non-related workers in the household and that the extent of separation seems to have been influenced by the amount of space the house had.

Chapter 1, on wealth-holding, was coauthored with Mina Ishizu, and chapter 5, on the arrangement of space in houses, was coauthored with Jane Hamlett.

_Wabash College_  
Joyce Burnette


A recent review of _Praetorian_ in the _London Review of Books_ suggested that there is simply not enough material on the praetorian guard of Imperial Rome to write an entire book on the unit. Having published a book only a few years ago on this very subject, the reviewer might disagree. But what Guy de la Bédoyère has written is not the “full narrative history of the Praetorians,” as claimed in the press release. It is instead a general history of Imperial Rome with the guard occasionally playing a role. Specifically, it is a book about the Roman Empire and, in particular, about the emperors themselves, wide-ranging but from a very traditional viewpoint. This proves problematic, for the role of the praetorians in many episodes is not as clear cut as de la Bédoyère wants it to be.

One of the main difficulties with studying the guard is the nature of the ancient sources, in particular once we move beyond the first century CE where sources are in short supply. When he encounters this difficulty, de la Bédoyère opts to focus on the praetorian prefects, commanders of the unit. Yet these men were not praetorians _per se_ and from the outset their appointment revealed more about the emperor than the guard. Other digressions on various aspects of the

The author of this book has published monographs on prehistory, the Bronze Age, and other early civilizations, with an anthropological and archeological focus and using results from the sciences of chemistry and biology. The scope of this book is wide in terms of landscape and chronology, which stretches from the longue durée from the Stone Age until the early Middle Ages and includes climate change and its impact (6-9). Peter Bogucki offers a “high-level overview” of the barbarian civilizations in continental and northern Europe, the northern islands, and the Baltic regions and provides insights into religions, cults, and the use of astronomy (23).

Depending upon where they lived, barbarians developed as hunters-gatherers, fishermen, farmers, metal workers, and traders. They later interacted with the Greek and Roman societies and contributed as outsiders to the economy of the Mediterranean World, until the late antique period. Bogucki successfully shows...
that the barbarian world was not flat and monolithic, and he sheds light on the development of the barbarian cultures over the centuries as a result of migrations and interactions with other civilizations. Many sections of this book are descriptions with photos of archeological settlements, burials, and the remains of mummified corpses. This evidence opens small windows into the life of the barbarian peoples. The resulting assemblage of examples provides the reader with an impressionistic view of the multifaceted barbarian cultures in chronological sequence. See chapters 1-5.

More evidence comes from the AD era, and Bogucki gives due attention to the frontiers, a topic that has received much attention over the last decades. Following the occupation of the Western Empire, the picture of some barbarian tribes becomes much clearer, and archeological and literary evidence can finally be combined. The final chapter is dedicated to the reception of the barbarians in modern history and in media and fiction. This includes the period of Nazi Germany, which made the “Germanic” world into the heavy, unpleasant heritage of modern Europe.

Prioritizing archeological evidence over the written sources is part of the author’s method (11). Much of chapters 5 and 6 relies also on literary evidence, including the bad press on barbarians that is common in the Roman literature (14-15). The author gives attention to the accounts of the defeat of Varus in the year AD 9, Tacitus’s ethnography, and especially the abundant sources on the Goths, Huns, and Franks (143-147, 154). Here the author misses the important studies of B. Ward-Perkins (The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005), who combines literary and archeological evidence, and of B. Luiselli (Storia culturale dei rapporti tra mondo romano e mondo germanico, Rome, Italy: Herder, 1992), who provides a large work on the views of barbarians by the Greeks and Romans.

Bogucki’s book includes references to those archeologists who are considered the founders of studies on barbarians. The large amount of illustration in color and maps is educative and makes this book an instrument for American undergraduates with interests in archeology and anthropology. It could be useful also for colloquia in history to introduce new graduate students to the multifaceted world of the barbarian societies.

Massimiliano Vitiello

University of Missouri-Kansas City

Delving into the details of early modern English Protestant theology to a degree not previously attempted in relation to the history of same-sex desire in Britain, this new work by H. G. Cocks demonstrates the complex ways in which the more radical and apocalyptic strains of Protestant theology have shaped understanding of homoerotic desires. Using the works of early modern English evangelicals such as John Bale, Cocks analyzes the specific ways in which Protestants drew on the Book of Revelation to support the claim that the Catholic Church was Antichrist (understood as a principle rather than a person). For Bale, it was priestly celibacy that was most damning, as “Sodom’s sins were made up of sex outside marriage” in all its forms, with sex between men being only one type of sin against the seventh commandment (39). Cocks then traces how, through theological writings in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, “these religious ideas [became] key sites for the emergence of homoerotic behavior as a problem in itself in British and Western culture more generally” (4). Some of these patterns have been identified in the work of other scholars, but never before so comprehensively grounded in the theological sources from the period. Other insights that come from close attention to these religious texts include Cocks’s argument that it was religious toleration, ironically, that led to greater denunciation of sodomites in England, as such denunciations could appeal to a range of Protestant sects otherwise separated by issues of doctrine.

Having constructed a nuanced understanding of the cultural meanings of the “sodomite” and explored the ideas and institutions that sustained those meanings in the first half of the book, Cocks turns in the later chapters to explaining the persistence of those understandings into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Here Cocks contests aspects of Faramerz Dabhoiwala’s argument that “a broader secularizing trend, a sort of sexual Enlightenment” was responsible for more positive evaluations of lust between men and women by the mid-eighteenth century, and Randolph Trumbach’s argument that the early eighteenth century saw a turning point in the understanding of same-sex desire with “the birth of the queen” (181, 162). The evidence upon which Cocks draws in this section continues to be primarily from religious writings, and though chapter 4 offers an account of how “attempted sodomy” prosecutions represented a legal innovation in the late seventeenth century, the evidence from court cases stemming from this is not a significant factor in the analysis. Cocks’s source base
for the eighteenth century primarily allows him to contest overly secular interpretations of that period, underscored by his ending of chapter six with the observation that “[i]f we are looking for the origin of ‘modern sexuality’ in the eighteenth century, it is just as likely to be found in the self-monitoring consciousness of the Anglican pastoral than among the ‘abominable sect’ of mollies” (201). As insightful on English Protestant theology and English national identity as it is on the place of homoerotic desires within British culture, this is an original and well-researched study that deserves a wide readership.

Florida State University

Charles Upchurch


Since the publication of her important first book, Imperial Bodies: The Physical Experience of the Raj [2001], the author of this study has documented how European empires engaged in global struggles over food and ingestion. Whether charting the history of curry or arguing that World War II was a food fight, Lizzie Collingham has demonstrated how imperialism shaped agriculture, provisioning, culinary and dining practices, and the more elusive concept of taste. In her latest exploration of this topic, Collingham explores how the desire for foods such as sugar, pepper, and tea propelled the British to expand and maintain their empire between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries. Building on and synthesizing a growing body of scholarship on food, trade, and empire, Collingham moves from the early modern Atlantic Empire to the Second Empire that emerged in the nineteenth century. She visits India, New Zealand, British Columbia, and Tahiti, among other places, to consider such things as the role of missionaries, merchants, and settlers in the creation of new foodways. She also examines the legacies of imperialism in such places as postcolonial Britain and Africa. Each chapter revolves around the themes raised by a particular meal and includes a recipe for such things as Indian pudding, pottage of chicken garnished with asparagus, okra soup, rum punch, and liquid laudanum. This deliciously detailed book will no doubt be of interest to foodies who love travel and cooks who enjoy trying historical recipes.

The writing is informed by much scholarship, yet is sparse on analysis. Collingham instead chooses to write in an accessible style that relies on illustrative examples. She enjoys describing how things are made, cooked, and eaten. For
example, she recalls with tremendous clarity how by adopting assembly-line style production the eighteenth-century British Navy managed to produce massive amounts of food, which included the ability to bake 1,500 biscuits in an hour. This capacity helped Britain rule the waves, contributed to the industrialization of food processing, and transformed the provisioning trades.

Though no book can do everything, this book is light on the darker side of food and imperial history. Topics that appear in Collingham’s earlier work are mentioned only briefly here. We learn more about workers as eaters than laborers, preferences than distastes, pleasures than anxieties. The absence of such subjects tends to present imperialism as a consensual and even healthy experience. Though Collingham does not argue this, she does clearly state that the desire for foods stimulated overseas conquest, and readers who are unfamiliar with her other work or that of many other scholars she relies upon might come away with the unfortunate lesson that imperialism merely led to cultural and dietary diversity. This is a decidedly problematic conclusion. Famine, economic stagnation, and political problems throughout Africa and South Asia are just a few of the long-term costs of feeding the voracious British Empire.

University of California, Santa Barbara

Erika Rappaport

*Clerical Households in Late Medieval Italy.* By Roisin Cossar. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017. Pp. 240. $49.95.)

In this complex and nuanced study, the author attends to the domestic lives of priests in medieval Italy, drawing from a rich notarial record in Venice, Bergamo, and other northern Italian communities. She argues that although ecclesiastical officials tried to impose domestic arrangements on priests that would highlight the distance between clergy and laity, priests resisted these norms. Instead, they created domestic arrangements that met their physical and emotional needs, employing servants and slaves and living with relatives or female companions for support. Although they could not claim the legal status of *patres familias*, these priests nonetheless acted as patriarchs. In the surviving records, however, priests framed these living arrangements in ways that would be acceptable to their ecclesiastical superiors, and it is to these documents—testaments, inventories, and episcopal visitation records—that Roisin Cossar turns in part I, arguing that our understanding of clerical households has been shaped by both the notaries who recorded these documents and the archivists who gathered them.
Part II, “The Clerical Familia,” turns to the lived experiences of priests and their household members. Cossar first explores the clerical life cycle, showing that a priest moved through life stages quite similar to those of a layman, despite his commitment to celibacy. Notarial records provide evidence of priests’ life-cycle phases: as youthful apprentices in clerical households; as ordained priests who often became heads of their own households and whose status was defined as much by their domestic lives as by their professional occupations; and as aging clerics who maintained notarial careers and remained active in their households and kin networks. Cossar foregrounds an often-neglected aspect of clerical life: priests’ roles as patriarchs, men who had complex domestic lives, conducted commercial and income-producing activity, and maintained lasting relationships with their extended families. In their domestic lives, priests resisted attempts by ecclesiastical authorities to regulate their households, especially to protect their children. Clerical children had no inheritance rights, nor did their fathers have any claim to the legal status of *patres familias* over their children. Yet in their testaments, Venetian priests asserted the legal ability of their sons to inherit, despite ecclesiastical law to the contrary.

Turning to the women who were priests’ companions, Cossar is careful not to replicate ecclesiastical attitudes by focusing on sexual relationships. Instead, she perceptively emphasizes the fluid range of intimate bonds between priests and the women who lived with them. These women played essential roles in clerical households, and priests often made provisions for them in their testaments. Yet they were also strikingly vulnerable to church officials, who might haul them into court; to neighbors, who might decide to expose illicit relationships; and to their clerical companions, who might deny them wages and shelter when the relationship soured.

Cossar concludes her study by examining material aspects of clerical households, showing that they occupied a central space between lay and ecclesiastical spheres. With painstaking archival work, perceptive analysis, and graceful prose, Cossar has provided an important contribution to both church history and the history of the family.

*Bentley School*  
Janelle Werner

*Inhabited Spaces: Anglo-Saxon Constructions of Place.* By Nicole Guenther Discenza. Toronto Anglo-Saxon Series 23. (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2017. Pp. xii, 261. $60.00.)

What is the relationship between space and place and how and why does any specific culture construct these concepts? Anglo-Saxons imagined themselves on a
spherical planet at the center of a divinely created cosmos on an island of multiple kingdoms, but a careful balance of their views versus ours forms the core of this sometimes surprising study. The complexity of Anglo-Saxon constructions belies the simplicity of early T-O maps and corrects later misapprehensions that they had a merely insular outlook. Focusing mainly on later Old English texts, Nicole Guenther Discenza begins with Anglo-Saxon views of their planet and its universe, zooms in on England and connections to the Mediterranean and the North, focuses on the details of open spaces (wastelands, sea) and then bounded ones (halls, cities), and finishes with a wide-angle return to the heavenly. Her style is readable, often dense in rewarding detail, heavily signposted, and with a circular structure to each chapter, returning to recapitulate points before proceeding.

Discenza asserts that Anglo-Saxons saw all spaces as inhabited but organized their perceptions to attempt mastery or control over them—what emerges is an early medieval textual version of art history’s *horror vacui.* She details how connections made between known Anglo-Saxon places and geographical references outside Britain created both a cognitive map and, borrowing Derek Gregory’s term, material for a self-reinforcing archive, a kind of “connect the dots” approach before wider use of maps created other spatial representations. She describes various strategies for understanding references to foreign places and considers whether and when Anglo-Saxons thought of themselves as on the margins, as classical sources said, or central, as their own experiences reaffirmed, or both in any given time and context. Always they were relating to places through who or what inhabited them, and whether and how land was used, knowing finally that only heaven and hell were stable: All earthly places, redeemable for a time, would fail.

Mainly a textual study, the author offers a focused and deep look valuable to interests ranging from the history of geography and cultural reproduction to literary onomastics. Much of the coverage focuses on close readings of well-known prose and poetic texts; from homilies, saints’ lives, Bede and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* to *Beowulf, Genesis, Andreas,* and a variety of shorter pieces. Use of theory is kept clear and brief, but though the title alone of Yi-Fu Tuan’s *Cosmos and Hearth* shows its fit, for example, use of Pierre Bourdieu’s terms float without his inherently twentieth-century social contexts; and *doxa* appears without its partner *habitus.* Did it not apply to how Anglo-Saxons reproduced culture and its constructions?

Textual detail alternates with concise, often new insights, building up through extensive example a broader cultural perception. A solid choice for university libraries, the book is useful for professionals and students alike. Most interesting might be the sections on inhabitants of the many layers from earth to heaven
In the decade-and-a-half following the end of the Seven Years’ War, Britain undertook an unprecedented effort to survey its empire. This study reveals the breathtaking scale of this cartographic project. But this is not merely a book about early modern maps. It is a compelling new “spatial history of empire,” which reads the rhumb lines and river charts to reconstruct the coherent vision of British imperialism articulated in the 1760s (6-7). The book rests upon a fine-grained analysis of a huge collection of maps commissioned by the Board of Trade. S. Max Edelson has tracked down maps from multiple archives and reunited them digitally. The book is best read in conjunction with the more than 250 maps, which are curated into online atlases for each chapter.

Bringing the maps together is not simply a technological feat. It is at the heart of Edelson’s argument. Viewing the maps as a collection—as they appeared spread across the desks of imperial officials in London—reveals the audacious scope of British efforts to grapple with a moment “rich with geographic possibilities” in the aftermath of their territorial gains (39). Edelson shows that seemingly disparate cartographic projects, stretching from the Maritimes to Florida, and from the Proclamation Line to the Ceded Islands in the southern Caribbean, were part of a coherent effort to evaluate rationally different regions and more directly organize the distribution of new lands, in order to create a new model of settler colonialism that tied colonists and indigenous peoples firmly to the metropolitan center through mutual economic interest. Their pursuit of cartographic knowledge was at the heart of a transformation in the political economy of empire, and an effort to “take command of America” (334).

Although the focus of cartographic efforts lay on the fringes of British America, their implications were profound. They shaped a “language of empire” that emphasized the superiority of metropolitan planning over the previously chaotic process of colonization directed by colonial elites (337). Ultimately, this confidence was misplaced. Maps could not substitute for local knowledge or contain the forces of colonial energy. Many of the schemes the maps supported ended in
failure. However, this effort did mark a crucial British reckoning with the new scale of global empire. It complicates our understanding of the transition from Britain’s Atlantic empire to its nineteenth-century empire, by highlighting the self-conscious reframing of what imperial power meant and how it was exercised.

The new imperial language of mapping also stoked anger in Britain’s long-established mainland colonies. Colonists, who considered themselves the vanguard of a national project of expansion, were now hemmed in by imperial efforts to oversee settlement and treated as merely “units of political economy” (341). They declared their independence, Edelson argues, to reassert their creole spatial understandings and their right to colonize on their own terms.

For Edelson, maps embodied a growing division between the empire’s center and its periphery. As a result, the book emphasizes the top-down imposition of imperial cartography and the resistance to it, which somewhat flattens colonists’ own engagement with the project of mapping the empire. It also downplays divisions within the metropole over imperial policy. Ultimately, though, the new techniques and resources for cartographic analysis, and the new insights that they uncover about British imperial vision at this critical moment, make this a path-breaking book.

Dartmouth College

Paul Musselwhite


This new book represents an important revisionist take on the final years of the iconic artist whose name has come to be virtually synonymous with fin-de-siècle Britain. This very readable book should be of interest to many readers of The Historian, appealing particularly to scholars working in British and/or French late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century history and literature, but also to even the most casual of Wilde fans. Nicholas Frankel’s incredibly detailed account of Wilde’s unrepentant years offers a long overdue reevaluation of what other biographers (including Richard Ellmann) render too exclusively as merely “tragic aftermath” (21).

Frankel’s thesis is that the longstanding insistence upon Wilde’s “decline and martyrdom distort[s] the truth” of his actual resilience (297). To cast Wilde as the “passive victim” of either Victorian morality or Alfred Douglas is, for Frankel, “to rob him of all agency,” when in fact “imprisonment and exile, paradoxically, had liberated him to pursue an uninhibited life … with conversation as its medium and laughter as its index” (297, 298, 303). According to Frankel, in spite of ongoing struggles with sadness, suffering, and insecurity, Wilde
ultimately persevered “with bemusement, irony, and self-conviction, unbowed and impervious to the harsh judgments of smaller natures” (303).

Frankel’s narrative is organized into two parts; approximately sixty pages on Wilde’s prison years and then approximately two hundred pages on his exile. The first section is slimmer, since many are more familiar with how Wilde was pushed to the brink of physical and psychological collapse during his two-year sentence to hard labor for gross indecency. But it effectively serves to remind one of the horrors of prison life, even as Frankel’s overall aim is to insist Wilde was far from broken, but determined to face life upon release with “courage and conviction” (82). The reviewer’s only disappointment with the book is Frankel’s failure to provide an in-depth reading of De Profundis, Wilde’s tour-de-force “letter” written during the final months of his sentence, still the most compelling evidence of how his mind and spirit remained intact.

In the seven chapters on exile, Frankel thoroughly documents the complex composite of pleasure and pain that characterized Wilde’s time on the Continent. Wilde experienced “restlessness, humiliation, and frustration” as he faced social opprobrium and creative self-doubt, not to mention relative poverty and ill health (253). But he also was buoyed by his reunion with Bosie in Naples, his success with Ballad of Reading Gaol, and his life in the cafés and bars of Paris. Frankel finds much to admire in how Wilde’s “eloquence, wit, and laughter” persisted undiminished in his still-sparkling conversation and in how his “frank and unapologetic attitude to his [open] homosexuality” shows him to have understood “his erotic relations with other men as a matter of personal identity,” leading Frankel to insist “Wilde’s greatest achievement in exile was himself” (302, 215, 300, 303).

Chris Foss

University of Mary Washington


Adapting Ecclesiastes 12.12, “Of making many books [on Paul] there is no end,” but this one is a welcome addition to the field and well worth reading. The author correctly roots the career and letters of Paul in first-century Jewish apocalyptic eschatology, which was thoroughly enmeshed in the Hellenized Greco-Roman world. She convincingly overtures many time-worn tropes about Paul; therefore, this book is an excellent choice for those whose understanding of Paul
comes from a college or seminary course of an earlier era, or a more recent course taught by professors traditionally trained.

Paula Fredriksen sees the primary impetus for Paul’s mission as one of end-times inclusion of the Gentiles as Gentiles into the dawning Kingdom of God, based on biblical prophets’ expectations. This is the reason these Gentiles should not come under the Jewish Law, but it does not mean that Paul thought he himself or other Jewish followers of Jesus as the Christ should abandon the Law. Paul did not preach a “Law-free” gospel as many have interpreted him. Fredriksen notes that evidence of misunderstanding Paul in this direction surfaces already in Acts 21.21; this reviewer would push this further back into Paul’s own lifetime by citing Romans 3.8, oddly not referenced in this book (169). Paul himself provided fodder for his opponents on this score with phrases like Galatians 3.28 “There is no longer Jew or Greek … in Christ Jesus,” but Fredriksen rightly does not allow this passage to trump all the other places where the letters maintain the distinction between Israel and the nations (150). Her analysis provides a cogent explanation for why the preconversion Paul and synagogue officials so often opposed the Jesus-movement to the point of lashing its proponents: By convincing pagans to abandon the worship of their traditional gods without adopting the Jewish Law, the Jesus-movement was creating a new social category, neither “God-fearers” nor full converts to Judaism, injurious to the delicate balance of relations between Jews and Gentiles in Greco-Roman cities (146-147).

In addition to fresh insights into Paul and the Jewish Law, Fredriksen’s comprehensive interpretation also encompasses Christology, with numerous trenchant observations. She provides great depth of understanding into Philippians 2.6 and Romans 1.4, wherein Jesus is understood as a man having the “form of a god” (not God), who humbled himself on the cross, and is exalted and proclaimed Son of God via the general (not just his own) resurrection (138, 142). Those intrigued by this brief summary should read the book with all its nuance.

Occasionally Fredriksen does not pay enough attention to the specific context of each of Paul’s letters, written over a period of many years in unique rhetorical circumstances. Galatians and Romans may be more different than she allows; Paul certainly could have changed his mind or tone on certain issues over the course of his epistolary career. But this observation should not detract much from what is on balance a remarkable achievement in holistic Pauline interpretation.

Saint Michael’s College

Jeffrey A. Trumbower
The history of mentality deals with the functioning of “practical reason” (Immanuel Kant). It is of particular interest in explaining the economic life if its development is disrupted. So it happened in the history of Germany after World War II, when the centrally controlled war economy collapsed with the fall of the Nazi dictatorship and a new order, the social market economy, was established in the west of the country. As is well known, the economy recovered quickly and West Germany experienced a so-called economic miracle in the 1950s and 1960s.

Although its history has been studied from different angles for decades, gaps in research are still opening: for example, who indeed created the economic miracle; how the entrepreneurship that claimed the leadership coped with the new institutional challenges, although it was in large part involved in the crimes of the Nazi regime; or to what extent new management methods that had been developed in the United States supported the modernization of the German economy, allowing it to catch up in terms of productivity. The book under review contributes to this research area, studying “the mentality of the ‘miracle makers’” not as individuals but as groups of businessmen (2).

Armin Grünbacher identifies the carriers and mediators of the collective attitudes of entrepreneurs—their ways of thinking on political and economic issues with the German industrial associations and their training institutions. He verifies his mentality thesis by complex and intensive archival studies. The book is divided into three parts with eight chapters and a conclusion. The chapters cover the associations’ crucial role in postwar economic survival, the tortuous ways of redeeming the public image of the entrepreneurs, the industrialists’ self perception as elites during West Germany’s reconstruction period, their resistance to the trade union participation in business associations and to codetermination, the reluctance against the ‘Americanization’ in management training, the reasons for retaining the entrepreneurs’ old fashioned mentality as well as the influence that businessmen had over politics, and even their undermining Adenauer’s boycott policy over trade with the Eastern bloc.

The author sums up: "West German industrialists did not create the economic miracle, and they were not the ‘miracle makers’ they styled themselves to be. They were foremost businessmen with a very conservative social outlook and attitude" but who profited from the global economic boom of the postwar era (150ff).
The book shows a masterful grasp of German archival material and academic literature, which is particularly beneficial for experts who do not know German. The author’s further conclusion, that German entrepreneurs and managers did go their own way in modernizing the leadership of firms without copying the American innovations, is well demonstrated. Grünbacher has produced a significant book on the history of entrepreneurs’ mentality during the West German economic miracle that will be a very useful resource for scholars and postgraduate students interested in the economic and political history of Germany. Some may regret that the institutional background of the economic miracle is given less attention.

Halle Institute for Economic Research

Udo Ludwig


Consumption—consumerism—is widely claimed as the prime source of self-definition and identity in today’s world, a clamant phenomenon the ideology, discourse, and practice of which has been attracting historians of modern Britain for some thirty years. Following an early focus on the boom in luxury commodities for the urban middle classes in the eighteenth century, the field has grown extensively to cover many aspects of modern consumerism. In this rich, spirited, and astute study, Peter Gurney offers a general account of the field while concentrating on the particular history of retailing and shopping, emphasizing how politics and its struggles have been the most potent determinant in the making of consumer culture.

The book’s title evokes E. P. Thompson’s themes of class struggle in the early years of capitalist industrialization, revisited in part 1, 1800-1870, in the turmoil over the Corn Laws and New Poor Law. If consumption was an elemental matter of survival for the many, the cooperative movement (Gurney’s research specialty) was a notably constructive response, an encouraging example of working-class agency and group identity, ‘democratic consumerism’ in contest with bourgeois ‘liberal consumerism’ and its idealization of the cellular home and family with its material glorification.

Part 2, 1870-1920, examines the advent of the big stores, modern advertising, and the issue of pleasure as business interests learned to stimulate rather than simply meet demand. At the same time the ‘Co-Op Commonwealth,’ if less than a majority, traded with increasing success on working-class solidarity,
while a socialist wondered if “greater material comfort may co-exist with lesser satisfaction” (66-67). The early 1900s saw a party political fight that roiled the nation—and generated intensive new scholarship—as the now orthodox policy of free trade was challenged by the protectionist forces of fair trade. Domestically, ‘The People’s Bread’ was the issue, while imperial preference acknowledged new responsibilities of empire in Britain’s meteoric rise to world dominance.

According to Gurney, consumer culture in Britain fully matured during the short twentieth century, 1920-2000. Government controls on supply—‘Fair shares for all’—saw the nation through two world wars, following which a resurgent capitalism aided by advertising and the rise of monopolies boosted growth and consumption under a succession of Conservative governments. The mutualist ethic of the cooperative movement collapsed by the 1960s as wider prosperity and self-fashioning prevailed, given added stimulus as New Labour shed its socialist inheritance to rebrand itself the consumer’s friend in acknowledgment of the newly coined ‘consumer sovereignty.’

The aspirations and anxieties attendant on modern consumerism have generated a pathology to darken its triumphalism, addressed here in a review of major theorists: Marx on fetishism, Veblen on the fever of social emulation, and Baudrillard on consumption as a form of hysteria. In an epilogue, Gurney steps aside from the dispassionate mode of the social historian to declare the discourse of consumer sovereignty “a pernicious fiction” (209). In British historiography, the struggle continues.

Indiana University

Peter Bailey


Timed to appear precisely on the 100th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, 25 October 2017, Tsuyoshi Hasegawa’s monograph provides a fresh perspective on an already much studied event. This is a fitting follow-up to the author’s 1981 social history, *The February Revolution, Petrograd, 1917*, because Hasegawa has used the three-plus decades not only to publish on other topics, but in this instance, to include a survey of the historiography that developed during the intervening years. He once again focuses on a brief but impactful period, in this case the eight months that followed the abdication of the tsar, in order to
recreate the chaos that ensued when the recognized authority, however unpopular, collapsed. The Provisional Government that replaced the autocracy made a fateful error when it dismissed the extant police authorities with an eye to establishing a new, less venal and heavy-handed security force. What they got instead was mob violence, best characterized by “vodka pogroms.” Hasegawa treats the reader to the perspective of the victims as well as the violent actors, generating from his newspaper and archival sources the atmosphere of what the average Petrograder, far less concerned with politics than safety, had to endure on a daily basis.

To sort through the bedlam, Hasegawa borrows from two sociologists contemporaneous to the revolution, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber, and a third, Robert Merton, who built upon Durkheim’s original theory of anomie, “the condition of normlessness” that occurs when social cohesion breaks down (13). Weber put forward the theory of the “failed state,” which Hasegawa applies to the successive Provisional Governments. These theoretical constructs, he argues, help him to explain why this, and other political revolutions, resulted in authoritarian rather than the more democratic replacements for which the people had initially revolted.

Using the dichotomy established so creatively by Fedor Dostoevskii, “crime” and “punishment,” Hasegawa poses the question: Why did crime rise so exponentially?

Attention to the minutiae of quotidian life helps the reader to experience the enormity of the difficulties. Whereas much ink has already been spilled on the Bolsheviks’ liberal theories about sexual expression, in reality, on the streets of the imperial capital, the closing down of the inspectorate of prostitutes resulted in an epidemic of sexually transmitted diseases. With the future so murky, many took to gambling, so much so that there was a run on playing cards. And with the law gone, who is going to stop the cocaine smuggling? Hasegawa also details the failures of local militias to maintain order on the streets, which led to mob punishment, including the physical beatings of bystanders to crimes wrongly accused of them. Spirits proved an insurmountable problem until the alcohol supplies in the city were simply exhausted. The complete breakdown of social services, and lack of central heating in the winter of 1918, forced the Bolsheviks to take extraordinary measures. They “wrested control over the means of coercion,” but without pursuing “the other quality that Weber cited as essential to the state: legitimacy” (272).

This book makes a vital contribution to our understanding of how the revolutionary events unfolded for common citizens, who by implication from Hasegawa’s conclusion would have accepted the new regime at least perfunctorily
because of the extent to which the Bolsheviks reestablished a fundamental order. The reviewer’s main caveat with this is Hasegawa’s insistence that the Bolsheviks “had no choice,” when the opposite can be argued, that is, that they took advantage of the socio-political collapse, which allowed them to implement their ideology (260, 265).

University of North Carolina

Louise McReynolds


Sixteen years after collaborating on an earlier survey, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, that celebrated the cultural turn in French Revolutionary historiography, Lynn Hunt and Jack R. Censer present a wholly rewritten textbook aiming to situate the revolution in global history. This emphasis firstly comes from an outpouring of recent scholarship, including Hunt’s own, asserting the French Revolution took the form that it did from the globalization of statecraft, consumerism, and ideas during the eighteenth century. Secondly, the text builds from recent books by both authors on the revolution’s global legacies—and importance in developing modern political concepts from revolution and human rights to dictatorship and terrorism.

In so doing, however, their text captures a field in transition—in which work on colonial, transnational, and world history sits awkwardly alongside two centuries of predominantly nationally focused historiography. The desire to maintain a conventional narrative of events leads to jumping between France and abroad, while even sections like “Trans-Atlantic and trans-European Radicalism” summarize events abroad but do little to show the many ways in which they directly affected the Revolution’s course in France (42-45). Little attention is paid to how the French adapted political models from abroad as they shaped (and continued modifying) their revolution. Though identifying elements for a new interpretation, the authors remain hesitant in analysis.

Despite the book’s purported emphasis, instructors may complain that the textbook does not pay enough attention to colonial affairs. Course units on the Haitian Revolution would require a supplementary text, as colonial affairs receive only rare mentions in the early chapters, and the slave revolt of 1791 is dispatched in less than a page (159-160). The one paragraph on the abolition of slavery unconventionally gives more credit to the National Convention for
abolishing slavery than the slave rebellion that had already forced effective abolition in the colonies (105).

The book’s French sections are largely traditional—with emphases on elite politics, diplomacy, intellectual developments, and military history. Popular movements are little discussed, except when being blamed for revolutionary violence. Particularly given Hunt’s radical earlier works in cultural, gender, and postmodern history that made her one of the most influential historians of her generation, the normalcy of this survey is surprising.

Among the text’s advantages, it takes a broad interest in the Revolution’s later periods (half its pages are devoted to post-Thermidor). Affordably priced and helpfully featuring primary documents at the end of each chapter, along with a significantly larger trove the authors have maintained for free online, Hunt and Censer’s volume will compete with similar-length offerings from Jeremy Popkin and Peter McPhee. If reflecting the field’s current ambivalences, the work significantly ends with an “invitation to continue to explore,” this survey nevertheless alerts students to the historiographical issues at hand and could serve as an anchor text for broader discussions of recent work on the French Revolution (218).

University of Central Missouri

Micah Alpaugh


Forty years ago, the reviewer was studying in England and invited to visit a friend who lived in Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, part of the “Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.” He took a train that crossed Italy and came to the border city of Trieste. He knew about the famous Yugoslav leader, Marshall Josip Broz Tito, and his “independent” brand of communism, and expected that the border would not be a challenging one, unlike crossing to West Berlin, which always featured harassment from the East German Volkspolizei. To his surprise, the Yugoslav border police proved as obnoxious as the Vopos, delaying the train for more than two hours as they searched suitcases and interrogated passengers. There was a tension in the train car that belied what the reviewer thought was the friendly relationship between Western countries and Yugoslavia.

Reading this book promotes understanding of that tension. Christian Jennings, a British foreign correspondent, has written a fast-paced, consistently interesting, and remarkably engaging short book about a very complicated and contested subject. The port city of Trieste was one of the oldest
and most strategically vital ports in the Mediterranean. It became a part of Italy after World War I and the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but it had a mixed population with many who wanted to be part of the new Yugoslavia. During World War II it became a battleground, with Italian fascists and Nazi forces fighting partisans of both Yugoslav and Italian origin. As the war was ending, the Western Allies raced to occupy the city before Marshall Tito. Jennings exaggerates this confrontation by calling it the “first battle of the Cold War,” but it did have larger significance for the postwar situation of a divided Europe.

Jennings uses the biographical stories of twelve different men and women of seven different countries to tell his story. Some of these are familiar, such as Marshall Tito and William “Wild Bill” Donovan, the American head of the Office of Strategic Services. Some are not well known, such as the remarkable Ondina Peteani, an Italian woman partisan who was captured and sent to Auschwitz, but who survived and returned to Trieste after the war, walking 700 miles across war-torn Europe. Others are rather unusual, such as Arapeta Awatere, the Maori commander of the New Zealand forces who were among the first Western soldiers in Trieste. These biographical sketches add color to the basic story of Trieste, which became a Cold War crisis in 1946 when Yugoslav forces shot down an American plane, but which receded in importance after Tito broke with Stalin in 1948.

Jennings tells a familiar diplomatic and military story in new and engaging ways, but the greatest contribution of this book is its highlighting of the terrible cruelty and viciousness of the war years, especially the numerous atrocities and massacres. He describes the “Foibe massacres,” named after the foibes or deep natural sinkholes into which victims were dumped, and the importance of modern forensic techniques in investigating and determining the difficult truths about these crimes. Trieste, with its spectacular scenery and pristine beaches, is now a popular tourist destination, but just seventy-five years ago, it was the scene of carnage and brutality comparable to today’s Syria.

Vanderbilt University

Thomas Schwartz

_Imagined Communities on the Baltic Rim, from the Eleventh to Fifteenth Centuries._ Edited by Wojtek Jezierski and Lars Hermanson. (Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Amsterdam University Press, 2016. Pp. 394. $149.00.)

If scholars were to choose _the_ one most overused phrase in the humanities, “Imagined Communities” would be a strong contender. The merits of Benedict
Anderson’s ground-breaking 1983 monograph of the same name are beyond question, but the catchy title itself has been rendered somewhat trite, after decades of constant namedropping references that all too often avoid any serious engagement with Anderson’s theories.

The reviewer therefore approached the book at hand, a collection of essays based on two 2014 workshops and published by the Turku Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies, with limited expectations. This made the surprise even more pleasant: Far from being yet another superficial attempt to appropriate Anderson’s observations on modern nationalism for medieval studies, *Imagined Communities on the Baltic Rim* is an excellent publication, a thought-provoking inquiry into medieval patterns of social cohesion.

The editors have evidently been inspired by ongoing research projects on the envisioning of community in the Middle Ages, and have singled out three theoretical angles on the concept of community: Anderson’s “imagined communities”; Brian Stock’s “textual communities”; and Barbara Rosenwein’s “emotional communities.” The introduction leaves the impression that these three aspects are equal in importance for the book, yet this reviewer finds this claim somewhat misleading. Several authors do tackle the applicability of Anderson’s theory of modern nationalism to medieval studies and address the problems resulting from it (and others do, at least, include an obligatory reference to Anderson). Others highlight the textual foundations of communality, following Stock. But the strongest influence, by far, is exerted by Barbara Rosenwein (who also contributed the book’s closing remarks).

The most convincing contributions to the volume share an interest in the emotions, which underpin medieval communities and serve to express cohesion. Lars Hermanson draws attention to the importance of friendship, trust, and concord in the writings on William of Æbelholt and Saxo Grammaticus, two men of letters whose ideas of community shaped the young Danish realm in the early thirteenth century. Two other socially significant passions, fear and joy, are in the focus of Wojtek Jezierski’s contribution, which traces the importance of these emotions for the missionary communities on the southern and eastern Baltic shores, as expressed in the writings of Adam of Bremen, Helmold of Bosau, and Henry of Livonia. Linda Kaljundi shifts the perspective slightly, away from textual affirmations to public displays and performances of emotion, which united the fledgling Christian community in Livonia, including the neophytes. Jezierski’s and Kaljundi’s investigations complement each other very well, leaving the impression of two authors engaged in a productive dialogue with each other.
The same holds true for the contributions of Grzegorz Pac and Tuomas Heikkilä, who both discuss the emotional attachment to patron saints. Reverence to a particular saint could unite individuals in different realms into a community of devotion, as Pac has shown, or provide the foundation for a territorial Christian identity, as Heikkilä has demonstrated with the example of Finland and St. Henry. Lastly, Cordelia Heß convincingly argued that social unrest and riots in medieval cities did not necessarily prove detrimental to the emotional ties that linked the inhabitants but could also be interpreted as an affirmation of urban communities: “[W]e riot, thus we exist” (322).

These studies are complemented by additional contributions that focus on varied issues such as the perception of the Baltic Sea in medieval mental maps, the role of the peasantry in the envisioning of the Swedish realm or the external view on the Baltic in late medieval Icelandic sagas. Although such inquiries are undoubtedly interesting in their own right, they seem somewhat subordinate to the intense and multifaceted analysis of communities and emotions that forms the core of the book.

In summary, the volume at hand is an excellent publication that provides not only significant case studies from the Baltic Sea region but also insights on the role of emotions for medieval social cohesion. As such, its significance extends beyond the historiography of north-eastern Europe and will prove stimulating for scholars who specialize in other areas as well. Although the steep price will unfortunately discourage individual purchases, colleagues are strongly advised to consult this inspiring book at their library.

Austrian Academy of Sciences

Stefan Donecker


Setting his face firmly against William Manchester’s egregious dismissal of the Middle Ages as little more than “a mélange of incessant warfare, corruption, lawlessness, obsession with strange myths, and an almost impenetrable mindlessness,” the author of this clearly written and well-informed book writes in the conviction that “the wisdom of the Middle Ages is worthy of our respect and exploration” and that the medieval authors he addresses “speak to us directly and have helped to make us what we are today” (10, 11). It is his purpose, then, via a series of carefully framed and descriptive commentaries, to
make his chosen authors accessible (and appealing) to the “lay” or general reader to whom, rather than to the scholarly specialist, his work is directed.

Though it would doubtless be tiresome to second-guess Michael Kellogg’s choice of texts, it should be noted that it would be easy enough to do so. Just one example will illustrate the point. What he has to say about Augustine’s great work *The City of God* is too brief to be of any help (something on Augustine’s dispute with the Pelagians would in the reviewer’s view have been preferable and more central). And it has the added drawback of leaving us with the erroneous impression that by his “City of Man”—*civitas terrena*—Augustine intended to denote, rather than the community of the damned, some this-worldly, temporal entity like the Roman Empire. That said, it should properly be conceded that that choice of texts is a fairly obvious and straightforward one, extending from memoirs and philosophical writings to poems, letters, epics, and romances. And the authors addressed range from such as Augustine and Boethius in late antiquity or the Anglo-Saxon anonymous who wrote *Beowulf* in the early Middle Ages to literary figures like Dante, Boccaccio, and Chaucer in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries with stops on the way to address such writings as those of Abelard and Heloise, Chrétien de Troyes, Francis of Assisi, and Thomas Aquinas himself.

The chapters devoted to such authors are preceded by others of a general introductory nature. One is a helpful and carefully nuanced account focused on the New Testament and the teachings it conveys; the other is a basic outline of the overall course of medieval history. The latter is unfortunately punctuated by one or two errors on significant points. Thus, pace Kellogg, the historic document associated with Pope Gregory VII and known as the *Dictatus papae* [1075], though it does make much of the papal power of jurisdiction, says nothing about “papal infallibility” as such. Nor did the fathers assembled at the Council of Constance [1414-1418], many of whom owed their high offices to the Avignonese pontiffs, declare the latter to be “antipopes.” Unlike the subsequent chapters, moreover, which are usually written in a crisp and lively fashion, this introductory section comes through as a somewhat labored piece of work. The reader would have been better served if the subsequent chapters—basically summaries of texts and commentaries on their significance—had been punctuated by more frequent and lengthier excerpts from the works themselves. If they are indeed capable of speaking to us directly, they should, after all, be permitted to do so.

*Williams College*  
Francis Oakley
The *raison d’etre* for this volume of sixteen concise essays is quite evident. Its unambiguous title and affecting cover image signal “the largely untold story of women during the Great Famine” and the enduring propensity to represent women as “‘bearers’ rather than ‘makers’ of meaning” in studies of Ireland’s national calamity (7, 9). Each essay addresses women’s marginalized role in the episode from a distinct perspective. The cumulative effect is a landmark contribution to the field and a powerful call for ongoing attention to its subject.

Famine historiography pioneer and coeditor Christine Kinealy launches the volume with a captivating testament to Cecil Woodham-Smith and her 1962 history *The Great Hunger*. But Woodham-Smith’s fraught progression within her academic discipline also reflects the overarching theme of the present collection. Her liminal status within the patriarchal confines of history in her day finds reflection in the aspiration of *Women and the Great Hunger* to address fully women’s role in the watershed episode. Maureen Murphy’s absorbing analysis of American social justice advocate Asenath Nicholson in Famine Ireland reverberates likewise. Beyond their respective topics, both of these keystone essays engage the anthology’s objectives to compelling effect.

Several chapters give voice to individuals and groups whose experience is largely absent from the historical record. Coeditor Ciarán Reilly’s rescue of Famine-era female petitions, Gerard MacAtasney’s account of Leitrim women’s affliction, and Daphne Wolf’s treatment of clothing deficiencies reveal new dimensions of ordinary women’s agency at a critical juncture in Ireland’s history. A standout essay by Cara Delay reveals power dynamics among Irish women and clergy as rather more fluid and complex than previously realized, while Matthew Skwiat, Amy Martin, and Maureen O’Connor situate the activism of Speranza (Lady Wilde) and Frances Power Cobbe within the Famine purview. Emigrant settlement in Australia and female movement from Mountbellew to Canada reveal the double tragedy of famine and abandonment, as Rebecca Abbott and Gerard Moran affirm, while the operations of the Grey Nuns in Montreal and the Sisters of Charity in New York allow coeditor Jason King and Turlough McConnell to showcase women’s agency, community, nativist pressures, and universal negativity toward impoverished and powerless refugees in the Famine context. Eileen Moore Quinn expands the book’s disciplinary
foundation in engaging fashion in mining linguistic intricacies and the folkloric qualities infusing Famine-era Irish New England. Oonagh Walsh contemplates the impact of starvation and disease on the modern Irish health profile, and the backstory to a recent exhibition of private correspondence by a Mayo landed family member engages other elements of the Famine’s legacy in an inventive coda by Sandy Letourneau O’Hare and Robert A. Young Jr.

Relatively trifling equivocations about its lackluster, textbook-style design and odd placement of illustrations aside, this work counters a major deficiency in Famine scholarship and spotlights additional dimensions of the episode awaiting due attention. By affirming and documenting women’s central role in the Famine, Women and the Great Hunger transforms a crucial episode in Irish and diasporic history. As such, it deserves a wide and appreciative readership.

*Franklin Pierce University*  

Mary C. Kelly


The author of this book tackles one of the perennial questions in the history of ancient Rome: Why did Christianity succeed? Robert Knapp describes an ancient world in which ordinary people, both Jews and polytheists, sought good relationships with the many supernatural powers that surrounded them, so that they might navigate successfully the vicissitudes of life. Through miracles and magic, Christians persuaded some people to abandon their traditional ways and tap into the superior supernatural power that the new movement made available: “[A] greater power had come on the scene” (202). Knapp estimates that by the end of the third century “as many as 10 percent of urban dwellers and 3 percent of rural inhabitants” affiliated with Christianity to some degree. Christianity most likely would have remained one option among many if Constantine had not decided in the early fourth century to patronize it aggressively; henceforth conversion to Christianity was “top down,” even as supernatural power remained at its core (237).

This thesis is hardly new, but Knapp makes the case persuasively in a book aimed more at general readers than at professional historians. (He provides a glossary that identifies people, places, and things, ranging from Abraham, the “Hebrew patriarch,” to Zadok, “King David’s High Priest.”) The first six chapters provide the context for Christianity’s birth and growth: a chronological sketch from Moses to Constantine (Chapter 1), ancient attitudes toward and means of dealing with supernatural powers (Chapter 2), practices of
ordinary Jews (Chapter 3), Jewish attempts to maintain “Yahweh as a god of justice” in a world in which righteousness often did not prevail (Chapter 4), practices and beliefs of polytheists (Chapter 5), and trends that opened the door to new ideas (Chapter 6). Knapp then situates Jesus among several charismatics and messiahs of the period (Chapter 7) and explores how Christianity was continuous with and different from Judaism and polytheism (Chapters 8 and 9). He can then explain Christianity’s appeal: Magicians, miracles, and martyrs demonstrated the religion’s access to superior supernatural power (Chapter 10). When Jesus’s anticipated return did not materialize, elite Christians integrated Christian beliefs with traditional philosophy and created hierarchical structures to ensure institutional persistence, while ordinary Christians found ways to interact with divine beings in ways that resembled their old polytheistic habits, but within the new Christian paradigm, especially the cult of the dead (Chapter 11).

The historian of early Christianity will find some aspects of the book puzzling: for example, the claim that Jesus’s identity as the Messiah was not central to Paul’s message, and the use of Acts of the Apostle as a reliable source (128, 152-154). The presentation of Jesus is confusing: On the one hand, “the evidence that Jesus called himself a messiah is mixed at best”; on the other, Jesus claimed “not to speak for Yahweh, but to be Yahweh’s son,” that is, “to share Yahweh’s essence” (128, 147-148, emphasis original). Nonetheless, Knapp captures well the overall dynamic of Christianity’s appeal to the ordinary people of the ancient Mediterranean.

The Ohio State University

David Brakke


In the late thirteenth century, the young mystic and noblewoman Margherita Colonna lived and died within the ambit of her family’s protection while exploring various paths to an ascetic and charitable religious life, as recorded by two extraordinary narrators in her paired Lives. Thwarted by her family’s refusal to found a monastery for her, Margherita formed an informal community of penitents, sought to enter a convent, and resided with a holy laywoman in Rome. She died after years of austere living in her family’s palazzo, before reaching the age of twenty-five. Her brothers soon established her followers in the convent of San
Silvestro in Capite in Rome. The community later became a target when conflict broke out between Pope Boniface VIII and the Colonna family [c. 1297-1302].

This translation provides an unparalleled window into this period of foment and diversity in female monastic life, as well as the workings of the intertwined Roman landholding elite and papal court. There were many penitential women living in Europe, known by various names (bizzoche, beguines, tertiaries), but only a few were memorialized, mostly by clerics writing about middle-class women, and few of those texts are available in accessible English translations. Margherita’s Lives are doubly valuable, as they were written by a layman, her brother Senator Giovanni Colonna, and the nun Stefania of her community. The book includes translations of three papal bulls detailing San Silvestro’s difficult dealings with the papacy and Franciscan hierarchy during Boniface’s war with the Colonna, and a later account of the translation of Margherita’s body from the family stronghold to the Roman convent. These additional documents extend the reach of this work beyond Margherita’s life and into the milieu of central Italian politics, with particular emphasis on the papal curia and Franciscan Order at a time of precipitate growth and change for both institutions just prior to the papal move to southern France.

This timely and well-executed volume brings these intriguing texts forth from relative obscurity, and highlights only a few of the rich sources on late medieval Rome of interest to religious and gender historians, Italianists, and literary scholars. Larry Field’s adept translation makes light work of the Latin text’s obfuscations and embellishments, producing an accessible and engaging read. Sean Field and Lezlie Knox’s deft editorial contributions provide a thorough introductory grounding in the political and cultural history of late medieval Italy, the papacy, and Franciscan life. The rich annotations and analysis reflect the editors’ expertise in the bounty of recent scholarship on female mysticism and monasticism, the diversity of Franciscan life, and late medieval Italy. This book is well positioned for use as a teaching text for upper-level undergraduates, graduate students, and scholars in a variety of disciplines.

Oklahoma State University

Emily E. Graham


At the height of the Cold War, the late Harvard historian Edward Keenan observed that Western interpretations of Russia’s early development were based
largely on a “deprivation hypothesis.” They attempted to explain Russia’s unique history and, in particular, its illiberal political culture, by the phases in the history of Western Europe that Russia never fully experienced, including the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. Such insights came at the expense of insights into developments inside Russia. In the post-Cold War period, Western historians of Russia have worked hard to move beyond the fallacy of the deprivation hypothesis. The achievement of Nancy Shields Kollmann, a former student of Keenan, is to have constructed an interpretation of early modern Russian history based upon this new research.

Kollmann’s periodization is unusual but effective. She begins in the second half of the fifteenth century as the remnants of the Eurasian Empire of Genghis Khan disintegrated and Muscovy (the state ruled by the princes of Moscow) consolidated its hold over central Russia, having defeated rival states centered in Novgorod and Tver. Although accounts of the early modern period typically end with the accession of Peter the Great [1682-1725], who proclaimed Muscovy the Russian Empire and shifted Russia’s geopolitical orientation from the Eurasian Steppe toward Europe, Kollmann ends her account in 1801. By incorporating the eighteenth century, she is able to show how the Europeanized empire Peter created represented less of a radical departure from Muscovite traditions than their evolution.

The book combines social, political, intellectual, and cultural approaches and is divided chronologically into three sections. The first is on the historical and geographical background to the rise of Muscovy, the second on the Muscovite Empire through 1700, and the third on the eighteenth century. Each of these sections is divided thematically. There are chapters on geography, foreign policy, politics, ideology, urban and rural society, agriculture, trade and economics, as well as religion, the army, and administration. However, the dominant idea is that of empire. Although Russia called itself an empire formally only in the eighteenth century, it was never a purely Russian entity. From its very beginning, Muscovy was a supranational unit, which was multi-ethnic, in the sense both that its population was diverse and that its culture was based on the adaptation of practices borrowed from the civilizations of Europe, Asia, and the Near East. Kollmann uses the idea of empire as an organizing principle because she believes that the process of Russia’s imperial expansion played a decisive role in shaping its political culture, social institutions, and administrative organs. The distinctive feature of this process was, crudely speaking, tolerance. More specifically, as Russia expanded eastward into the Steppe and Siberia and later westward toward the Ukraine, Belorussia, and the Baltic, it was tolerant of difference for
pragmatic if not ideological reasons. Almost always, Russian officials made agreements with local leaders that allowed newly incorporated peoples to keep their religions and their customs as well as some of their autonomy while integrating the leaders themselves into the empire’s elite. The need to respect local traditions and social structures to coopt the support of locals and to minimize conflict almost always trumped the competing imperative of bureaucratic uniformity or the occasional flare-up of Russian ethnocentrism. The empire had a standardized practice for assimilating new regions but a diverse set of agreements to govern them. At the center of Kollmann’s interpretation of early modern Russia history is an “empire of difference” that stands in sharp contrast to the picture of the rigid, despotic, monolithic regime associated with traditional interpretations of the period.

Kollmann’s survey of early modern Russian history is an invaluable resource for students and scholars interested in Russian history and the recent historiography. It offers an innovative, clearly conceptualized and comprehensive synthesis of early modern Russia that is not likely to be superseded for years if not decades.

The College of Wooster

Peter C. Pozefsky


Although this reviewer has elsewhere criticized the current state of “Crusade Studies” as a field, he is the first to admit that there is exceptional work being done on the phenomena of medieval Christian (and Muslim) holy war. This book is not one of those. In fact, it is awful. Of course, this book is pop history and so should not be held to the same standards as an academic monograph, yet there are bushels of exceptional, engaging pop histories being written today, which are clear-eyed, thoughtful, and engaging. Nevertheless, as professional historians we have to point out when a work—by professional or amateur—does violence to the study of the past. God’s Wolf does violence to the study of the past. It is seemingly contrarian for the sake of being contrarian, treats its sources far too uncritically, and traffics a clear politics that distorts its view by seeking to connect then and now, suggesting “they” (Muslims) are still fighting the same holy war “they” were more than eight hundred years ago.

Ostensibly, this is a biography of Reynald of Chatillon, a medieval man of some infamy who arrived in the Holy Land in the 1140s, was present at the
battle of Hattin that decimated the kingdom of Jerusalem, and who was made even more famous when portrayed by Brendan Gleeson in the 2005 film *Kingdom of Heaven*. This book, on the other hand, “emphasizes how appeasement and treachery—rather than Reynald’s aggressive policies—undermined the Kingdom of Jerusalem” (21). This has immediate import, the author assures the reader, because “the crusades live” (15). In other words, the book revisits a tired trope (long marginalized in the scholarship) that the Crusades were but one battle in a centuries-long “Clash of Civilizations” that continue to this day. Indeed, the author uses the rest of his introduction to lay out all the parallels between then and now—how the Crusades were the West’s first colonial experiment, how the West today wrongfully feels shame for their actions, and how all Islamic knowledge passed to the West and spurred science, how Muslims feel “no guilt” for their actions, and how “they” think it is still an ongoing battle, evinced by the events at the Bataclan, among others (15-17). That attempt to link directly back to the past, what the reviewer has elsewhere called a “rainbow connection,” returns again and again throughout the book with modern anecdotes used to illuminate the medieval past. Of course, analogies can be productively deployed but there are limits. Historical circumstances matter, religions (and peoples) change over time, and *post hoc ergo propter hoc* is a fallacy—what happened then is not necessarily the cause of what is happening now.

Reynald’s portrayal in *Kingdom of Heaven* was indeed a caricature, but the corrective is not another, opposite, caricature. Historians show that things change over time, that people and events are complex. This book, unfortunately, does neither.

*Virginia Tech*  
Matthew Gabriele


In this new book, the author, who has achieved great renown for his work on the Parisian salons in the Enlightenment, offers a fascinating take on the origins of the phenomenon of celebrity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Originally published in French as *Figures publiques. L’invention de la célébrité, (1750–1850)* [2015], this book examines how the emergence of a new form of notoriety coincided with the transformation of the public sphere, the rise of mass media, and the commercialization of leisure.
By locating the origins of celebrity in the eighteenth century, Antoine Lilti demonstrates how the “economy of spectacle” and the proliferation of mass media, from newspapers and paintings to photography, played a fundamental part in the construction of a phenomenon that is all too familiar to modern audiences (4). He offers an analysis that is both deeply theoretical and historically attuned to changes in social, cultural, and economic contexts. Through several examples, including Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Marie Antoinette, George Washington, and Lord Byron, he explores the ambivalences and contradictions inherent in this new form of fame. Celebrity was something that writers, actors, and politicians sought out but also something that their contemporaries “decried as a media artifice” (8). Similarly, the mechanisms of mass media involved what Lilti describes as “an inversion,” whereby the most “private aspects of a celebrity’s life” became the main objects of the public’s curiosity (10). As he shows with the example of Rousseau, whom he identifies as “the first real European celebrity” and the first person to self-reflexively comment on the experience, the “celebrity mechanism” was full of paradoxes (13). Rousseau, who became famous not only for his writings but also “for not wanting to be famous,” was deeply concerned about how the public perceived him (113). At the same time, he criticized the dynamics of popular culture that celebrated him and alienated himself from society to the point where he transformed his celebrity “into persecution and defamation” (159). As a peculiar trait of modern societies, celebrity was also “a form of greatness” that was “always threatened with illegitimacy” (12). Intertwined with the expanding mass media, one’s public standing became ephemeral and subject to the whims of a public ever hungrier for spectacle and gratification.

Lilti challenges two earlier interpretations of the celebrity phenomenon. The first perspective describes celebrity as a “universal phenomenon” present “in all societies and periods,” combining disparate notions of fame and ignoring particular socio-cultural conditions (3). The second interpretation depicts the rise of celebrity culture as a distinctly recent development that appeared in the twentieth-century media environment, neglecting earlier changes that, for Lilti, were grounded in the formation of the modern public sphere during the middle of the eighteenth century. Lilti examines how authors used the term “celebrity,” and argues that it emerged as a concept that was different both from glory, which was generally earned posthumously, and from reputation, which was based on “local mechanisms of social judgment” that evaluated personal or professional merit (5). The phenomenon of celebrity did not simply represent
“extended reputation,” because celebrities were no longer solely judged by the standards of their professional accomplishments, such as a singer’s voice or a writer’s eloquence (6). Increasingly, they elicited deep emotional attachment from their fans, who purchased portraits, photographs, and other merchandise.

It is not always apparent from Lilti’s analysis what the causes of these transformations actually were. He demonstrates a clear connection between the expansion of mass media and the new “mechanisms of celebrity,” but it is not entirely clear what other factors and what forces drove these changes. Lilti’s book also raises vitally important questions about the meanings of the ambiguous concept of “modernity” and promises to become an instant classic in the field of cultural history.

Kenyon College
Anton Matytsin


This book is an important study for historians in any area of twentieth-century European history. The volume is lucidly organized in seven chapters that all focus on the new order for European culture, which German national socialists and Italian Fascists attempted to lay out and implement. Relying on comprehensive source material from archives in Germany, Italy, France, and the United States, as well as newspapers, the main areas of artistic engagement analyzed in the book are film, classical music, and literature.

During the rise of fascism in Italy during the 1920s, it became a common belief that “European civilization [was] in crisis” (13). When the Nazis gained control over Germany in 1933, they were trying to build a new order for European culture that contrasted the German vision of Kultur with the Western concept of civilization as represented by France and Great Britain, as well as the American and Soviet take on culture. It is a strength of the book to illuminate in detail how fascist Italians clearly believed they should be the striving force behind this idea of a new order for European culture. This can be seen in the prominent role the Venice Film Festival played in Europe prior to World War II. What Benjamin G. Martin describes as “the general mood—away from cosmopolitanism” and the emergence of a concept of “civilization of the spirit” brought Germany and Italy closer together during the 1930s and 1940s regarding this “internationalist” idea of a new Europe (79, 80, 114).
Moreover, the author offers a fascinating insight into the history and interconnectedness in the Axis’s European institutions, which received enthusiastic support from German, Austrian, and Italian artists as well as from artists not only in occupied countries such as Norway but also from Finland and Spain. This support included the removal of Jewish artists from cultural institutions and the cultural memory of the particular country. The founding of the International Film Chamber gave it a new institutional face and outlined what the European film should ideally look like. This all went together with numerous efforts to harmonize copyright laws throughout Europe prior to the war, which in one of its consequences led to the Alfieri Law from 1938 reducing the number of Hollywood movies being shown in Italy (141).

The Germans’ Europapolitik would eventually lead to war, and Italy’s military failures would weaken Italy’s place in a Germany-controlled Europe, although her cultural ambitions remained strong (154). With the waning power of her military strength, however, the rivalry between Germany and Italy grew into open disagreement. Much went to back to ‘normal’ after the war, leaving many of its former protagonists in high profile positions. As Martin concludes with a hint on the current re-emergence of nationalism in Europe, he suggests that “the ethical content of ‘European culture’ [is] not dictated by history, but [is] a matter of choice that lies with us” (277).

University of Oklahoma

Carsten Schapkow


The subject of this work is Ulster loyalism, that is, the political and social culture of northern Irish Protestantism, something distinct from Unionism that serves to organize a political movement, most notably and influentially in the form of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). The author attempts to explore loyalism in its various aspects, not only as an ideology, but also as the central value of a community. In the course of its history, loyalism has served as the justification for violence by a violent people who are now being forced to live side by side with age-old adversaries.

Critical to loyalism is how it is based upon “shared experiences, interests, and concerns” that serve as “a distinct common narrative and memory, which works to weave together and solidify a collective identity, based on an interactive and
shared definition” (7-8). It helps to organize a community, establishes and reinforces a common popular culture, and provides the symbols “through which People make sense of the world” (8). It is an identity facing a conundrum: How does loyalism serve to reinforce the union with Britain at the same time as it refuses to accept any compromise of its position by the government of the state? How loyal can one be if when the time comes you are willing to deny the authority of the state?

The author examines how loyalism has been used to justify violence, and how loyalists see themselves to be the keepers of the flame when it comes to the idea of a united Britain. Loyalists now have to do this at the same time political circumstance has forced them politically into the political accommodation of antiunionist Irish Catholic republicans. He considers a wide variety of issues along the way, including modernization, differences amongst loyalists, not the least of which is the historical narrative that informs their culture, its deeply problematic paramilitary history, its political expression in the Democratic Unionist Party, and the role of historical memory in sustaining loyalism. Special attention is given to commemoration and the increasing anxieties amongst the faithful that loyalism’s symbols and rituals, which fill the calendar and sustain the loyalist Weltanschauung, are under attack and threatened with extinction.

James W. McAuley is a political scientist and the author of numerous works on Ulster, in particular the peculiar tension that plagues loyalists and their culture. To address that question much of the analysis focuses on the current state of the political state of affairs, but this work is also a fine work of contemporary Ulster cultural history. It is also a useful survey of the landscape of loyalism since the Troubles, one to be commended in its imaginative use of source materials and the judicious sensitivity of its interpretation.

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Oakland University                          Seán Farrell Moran


The very title of this book should warn the reader that it is going to be a sweeping and largely uncritical endorsement for Martin Luther. It should also alert the reader that it is going to overreach. It does both of those things, in spades.

The temptation to claim too much for Luther has a long pedigree which has been justly corrected by the likes of Ernst Troeltsch, Gerhard Eberling, Erwin Iserloh, and most recently by Brad Gregory. But Eric Metaxas soldiers on, in
spite of such solid scholarship, and makes claims for Martin Luther that cannot be sustained. He wants to use Luther to support his own agenda about freedom and truth—an admirable project—but which has its place somewhere other than this biography of Luther.

The author cites the meeting of Luther with the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V at Worms in 1521 as not only the single most important moment in Luther’s progress, which is arguable, but as an event that “ranks with the 1066 Norman Conquest and the 1215 signing of the Magna Carta and the 1492 landing of Columbus in the New World. And in its way, it far outweighs all of those historic moments” (218). Having had one’s breath taken away by this sensational claim, the reader soon realizes that Metaxas is only getting started. He sees in Luther’s defiant words “Here I stand; I can do no other” the moment “where it can be said the modern world was born, and where the future itself was born.” Luther’s words (which, even Metaxas admits, no witness to the occasion remembers him saying) “unequivocally” led to all manner of things including (the reviewer is not making this up) the abolition of slavery and the time “when the troops at Lexington and Concord took a stand for liberty against tyranny” (218).

Furthermore, we are told, for 1,500 years the Catholic Church had held a stranglehold on truth claims and on the very process of how the truth was arrived at. With Luther, Metaxas claims, “suddenly how one sought the truth and whether and how one argued for the truth were on the table as well. ... Now suddenly there was also the process of how one determined what was true” (440). And Rome, “with its nearly infinite power and authority,” could no longer enforce compliance (437). For the first time, all because of Martin Luther, the world had been given a method of discovering the truth, and freedom had at last been set free.

In order to make these connections and reach these conclusions, Metaxas needs to misunderstand, denigrate, and then caricature centuries of human effort and achievement in language that is colloquial, casual, and often flippant. It is not helpful to vilify Aristotle and generations of Christian theologians who took Aristotle’s thought to new (and revolutionary) heights, recognizing in the newly rediscovered Aristotle a language of science and an appreciation of the natural world (and yes, the human being) that the West had not known before then. To say that Thomas Aquinas explained the Eucharist “in his unconscionably smuggled-in Aristotelian thinking” is but one example of many embarrassing statements we find in this unfortunate book (371).
To suggest that the Catholic Church embraced transubstantiation because of its fear of the physical is made ludicrous not only by the Church’s own (medieval) teaching on the sacredness of the human—made in the image of God—capable of sharing in God’s perfections of beauty and (yes) truth, but also laughable in light of humanistic Renaissance and Baroque Rome and the corresponding iconoclastic Protestant destruction of sacred images and ceremonies unleashed, if not encouraged, by Luther’s misplaced anthropology (370). Luther, because of his inner-directed nominalism, in which Jesus becomes one’s personal Lord and Savior, had something to offer Christianity, but Luther could not understand the notion of human participation in God’s being, or in God’s grace as a rejuvenation of something good that is already within the human soul, or in the communicant’s sharing in the one sacrifice of Calvary. Even so, Luther deserves better than this biography.

John Vidmar

Providence College


Though many historians recognize the critical role of seapower in shaping and winning the First World War, few could name more than half a dozen of the battles that ensured the Entente powers retained command of the sea throughout the conflict. This is especially the case in the United States, whose navy did not engage with enemy surface ships. Not only did seapower matter but it was contested by surface ships throughout the conflict. The authors of this book narrate and analyze 144 of those contests, including the Baltic, Black Sea, and the Adriatic. The Entente took control of the oceans on day one, denying the Central Powers access to the rest of the world. Early battles confirmed British dominance; German attempts to wear down the Royal Navy and set up a “decisive” battle ended in failure at Jutland. Germany resorted to unrestricted submarine warfare, hoping to break the British economy without securing command. After Jutland, the primary role of German surface forces was to support the submarine. Germany and Austria-Hungary used everything from torpedo boats to dreadnoughts to attack antisubmarine mine-barrages in the Dover Straits and Straits of Otranto and strike at convoyed merchantmen. The Royal Navy responded, using large minefields to restrict the movement of U-boats, and by attacking German minesweeping forces. Russian operations in the Black Sea cut fuel supplies to Istanbul, hamstrung the Ottoman fleet, and crippled their army in the Caucasus, forcing Germany to supply coal via an overloaded rail network.
At the core of this book is a sustained analytical narrative that builds to a comparison of the navies, weapons systems, and tactics. Forces attacking at night had a major advantage, a problem exacerbated for the British by superior German night signalling. Lessons learnt in these engagements shaped interwar naval policy, warship design, and tactical thinking, shaping the second war at sea.

The use of slang terms like “uncork,” for firing a torpedo, is a distraction in such an ambitious text. The destroyer HMS Defender and the armored cruiser HMS Defence, which blew up at Jutland, have been conflated, while the statement that Admiral Jellicoe resigned as first sea lord is incorrect; he was sacked. The omission of engagements between British and German Armed Merchant Cruisers (AMCs), merchant ships armed and commissioned to supplement regular cruisers, compromises the claim of completeness. By sinking German AMCs Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse and Cap Trafalgar in the early months of the war, the British cruiser HMS Highflyer and AMC HMS Carmania secured the central Atlantic section of the global shipping network. Thereafter British AMCs patrolled the outer oceans, releasing regular warships for frontline combat, and delivered the economic blockade. In 1916 AMCs sank the German raider Grief.

Seapower did much to settle the outcome of the war, but as this book makes clear, it was contested at every stage, and in all theatres. The development of submarine warfare reflected the Central Powers’ inability to overturn Entente command of the sea and break the blockade.

King’s College London

Andrew Lambert


Early modern societies were deeply concerned with prostitution and extramarital sexual relations, which threatened marriage, family honor, and social order. The prevalence of child abandonment and infanticide troubled religious and political authorities, who feared that moral failings would produce social disorder. Brian Pullan’s new study offers a broad survey of “lost” women and children in early modern Italian societies. The author constructs a detailed synthesis of the past three decades of historical research on women, sexuality, childhood, and charitable institutions. The book is organized into two sections on the treatment of dishonored women and illegitimate children.
Italians worried about the dangers that girls and young women faced from romance, harassment, and sexual assault. The moralist Matteo Bandello wrote that “the woman who has lost her honour has lost all her glory and good” (10). False promises of marriage from suitors and seducers could leave young women deflorata, stuprata, or violata. Faithless lovers and failed breach-of-promise cases often left “lost” women alienated from their families and destitute. Pullan delves into the colorful vocabulary of insults directed against dishonored women: puttana, meretrice, cortigiana, femina di chiazzo, femina di partito, vil feminella, dona di malavita, peccatrice, piazzarola. Poverty fueled many forms of prostitution, but also threatened unmarried women and widows.

Attempts to forbid illicit sex utterly failed, so Italian authorities regulated sexuality by confining prostitutes to public brothels or to vice districts (such as the Ortaccio in Rome). Regulated prostitution was regarded as a defense against promiscuity, adultery, and social disorder. “There were always critics who argued that the disorder surrounding prostitution outweighed any benefits it might bestow on society” (61). The Council of Trent attempted to curb illicit sexual activity through laws formalizing marriage rites and forbidding clandestine marriage (77). Despite attempts to legislate marriage, women joined extramarital arrangements as lovers, mistresses, and courtesans.

Italian governments and religious institutions developed strategies to rescue girls in danger and redeem dishonored women through regulation and social tolerance. Charitable policies were based on canon law arguments that “tolerance is turning away from the greater of two or more evils” (3). Houses provided refuge for widows and separated women, who were often escaping domestic abuse. Penitential houses and female conservatories aimed to protect virgins and rehabilitate fallen women.

Charitable institutions also responded to the problem of unwanted children in Italian societies, as infanticide and child abandonment were prevalent in the early modern period. Foundling homes such as the Innocenti in Florence accepted unwanted children, eventually using a ruota (baby-wheel) to deposit children anonymously. Pullan sympathetically relates how foundling homes struggled to find wet-nurses and care for orphans, leading to disturbingly high rates of child mortality. Children who survived early childhood often entered foster homes or learned artisanal trades.

Tolerance, Regulation and Rescue utilizes historical studies and Italian prescriptive literature effectively but sometimes makes odd comparisons to English cases. The book nonetheless builds a compelling picture of prostitution and child abandonment in early modern Italy.

Northern Illinois University

Brian Sandberg

On the tiny North Sea islands of Heligoland, few signs remain of its dramatic history. Thoroughly bombed in the Second World War and demilitarized through violent demolitions that permanently scarred its topography, Heligoland has since been completely rebuilt as an out-of-the-way holiday destination for German spa-goers. Yet, as the author observes, “To visit Heligoland today is to walk through an archaeology of the Anglo-German past” (235). National monuments, remnants of fortifications, and lingering craters speak to a complex legacy that up until now has been largely unexplored.

Jan Rüger’s excellent volume tells in full the story of Heligoland, which for two centuries was an imagined island borderland standing between the naval power of Great Britain and the rising ambitions of Germany. Through a blend of diplomatic, cultural, and military sources, Rüger details how European conflicts, nationalist aspirations, and global currents intersected at this most innocuous of places. Beginning with the British seizure of the islands from Denmark during the Napoleonic Wars and ending with their postwar reconstruction in the 1960s, this book reveals how Heligoland both reflected and informed the ways in which the Germans and the British saw themselves and each other. “German sentiment about Heligoland was thus always in part a sentiment about Britain,” Rüger explains, though the British saw it “as a lens through which to interpret Germany” (2-3). Both sides imposed a range of symbolic meanings and obliged the islands to take on a variety of roles. Its rugged beauty inspired artists and poets, while its strategic location occupied the minds of politicians and military planners. Though sparsely populated and isolated, Heligoland became a haven for spies, a den of smugglers, a refuge for political outcasts, and a hotspot for elites. It was at various times a colonial bargaining chip, a gambler’s paradise, and a maritime fortress.

With his study of Heligoland, Rüger has identified a critical fault line that tells us much about Anglo-German relations, and he does so with a gripping narrative that will delight the lay reader. His work is deeply researched and thoroughly contextualized, with fascinating vignettes about the many well-known figures who visited the island, including August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben, who wrote the German national anthem on the island, Franz Kafka, Werner Heisenberg, Leni Riefenstahl, and Adolf Hitler. Along the way, he connects Heligoland to a worldwide history of empires while never losing sight of the Heligolanders themselves. Through individual stories, we learn about a unique people who never quite fit the mold of
either side but who often used their liminal status to resist nationalist pressures. What emerges is an admirable, entertaining book that brings British colonial history closer to Europe while contributing to our understanding of German identity through a locale resting both at the very edge of Germany’s frontiers and at the heart of its national consciousness.

*University of Arkansas*  
J. Laurence Hare

_Female Tars: Women aboard Ship in the Age of Sail._ By Suzanne J. Stark. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2017. Pp. xii, 205. $18.95.)

The Naval Institute Press has done maritime historians and women’s studies specialists yeoman service by publishing a reasonably priced paperback edition of _Female Tars_, which first appeared over twenty years ago in hardcover. Time has shown it to be a solid piece of scholarship. Documentary sources provide the basic underpinning for Suzanne Stark’s research, but author Stark also proves to be adept at interpreting less traditional materials such as ballads, broadsides, contemporary illustrations, and narratives of dubious provenance and reliability. With crisp prose and an unadorned, fast-moving style, she lays out a strategic plan for dealing with several major subjects, among them, prostitutes on board ships in port and verified accounts of almost two dozen women who passed as male crew members in the Royal Navy from the time of the restored Stuarts to the age of Victoria. Although chocked with fascinating tales and near-wondrous events, the book is no narrative rehash. Stark has an acute, analytic sense and discerns trends and meanings from her data that might have been lost to a less perceptive investigator. Her descriptions of the raucous shipboard frolics of sailors and whores while in port square with those given by others, but she delves deeper into the familiar scenes to discover the lie in the stereotypical image of the sailors’ ’tween-decks bawd as buxom, red-faced, drunken, cursing, age-ravaged, and wanton. Instead, she explains, they were often young, vulnerable, bereft, or abandoned women driven to prostitution by economic and societal necessity.

The book’s most fascinating characters are those who masqueraded as boys to join the navy or the marines. Here, too, Stark’s revisionist bent comes into play. The image of the fair maid who donned male garb and went to sea to accompany a lover or search for her lost sailor boy is nonsense, she argues, a creation of sodden romantics, songsters, doggerel versifiers, and other low-brow mythmakers. The women who took the king’s shilling were instead a tough,
independent lot. They ran away from home for many of the same reasons young women today run away from home. Some sought relief from untenable family situations, others were driven by economic necessity, a few were lost and alone with nowhere to turn. In any case, enlisting was no problem. The navy was chronically short of crewmen, and recruiters would eagerly enlist lads, even if they had severe doubts about their appearance or character. With a set of male togs, anyone could be off to sea and on the government payroll.

Stark’s account of women in the Royal Navy and Marines has been a mini-classic since it was first published. Along with David Cordingly’s Seafaring Women [2002], Joan Druett’s She Captains [2001], and several other notable books on females afloat, it offers a substantial trove of information and delight for scholars and general readers.

Arizona State University


This recent monograph examines the medicalized control of venereal diseases in Germany’s former colonies in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. By exploring biopolitical interactions between European officials and indigenous peoples, the author aims to “gain insights into the less obvious ways Germans tried to exert authority in the colonial situation, including the extent of colonial power and the limitations of it” (3). Though syphilis and gonorrhea have not attracted the same scholarly interest as malaria and sleeping sickness, Daniel J. Walther convincingly argues that colonial bureaucrats worried that venereal diseases might undermine the viability of white colonial rule by threatening military effectiveness, economic vitality, and the health of the ruling elites. Those fears became acute as Europeans became less accepting of “miscegenation” between white men and local women, meaning the choice of sexual partners for male settlers, soldiers, and administrators narrowed on white wives and indigenous prostitutes.

German doctors acknowledged the European responsibility in introducing VDs to colonized territories, but blamed the lax morals of local populations and the “quackery” of traditional medicine for their rapid spread (81). Colonial officials adopted the nineteenth-century, surveillance-based regulation system of
prostitution, one based on the bourgeois sexual double standard moral code. As in the metropole, female “sources of infection” were made to register with police, while male clients remained largely autonomous. In certain colonized areas, bureaucrats set up brothels and even “syphilis camps” (123). Although gender and class distinctions dominated discussions of the “necessary evil” in European societies, Walther maintains that race dictated policy-making in the colonies, and meant that German doctors “saw all non-Europeans as objects needing education and surveillance” (133). Racial hierarchies also granted doctors greater leeway to coerce and manipulate their patients, which, according to Walther, ultimately contributed to “broadening colonial rule” (2).

This is a densely researched work of social history, though its division into very brief chapters can be jarring to the reader. And, though the book’s title promises examinations of “indigenous agency,” the evidence often falls short of this claim. African, Pacific Islander, and Asian voices do occasionally appear in Walther’s narrative; however, there is little attempt to draw out those perspectives, especially within a Global South framework. Similarly, though Sex and Control explores masculine motivations and desires, it largely lacks a feminist perspective. For example, Walther maintains that when female prostitutes in the colonies were subjected to “dual medical and racial objectification,” they, like their European counterparts, “lacked agency” (84). This assumption ignores recent work by scholars such as Victoria Harris, which affirms that female prostitutes in the metropole did exercise agency, where they could, even in the face of police interference, medical intrusion, economic barriers, and social exclusion. Walther’s work will be read with interest by scholars of imperialism, and will no doubt inspire more research on the illuminating relationship between sex and racism in the former German colonies.

University of New Brunswick

Lisa M. Todd


The occupation of Germany after the First World War remains an understudied subject, a fact that seems ironic in light of the strong scholarly interest in the making and unmaking of the Treaty of Versailles and the rise of the Third Reich. Historical work on the period of the occupation has focused overwhelmingly on matters of diplomacy and occupation policy,¹ along with occasional studies on
such phenomena as Rhineland separatism. This second edition of David G. Williamson’s 1991 study of the British role in those occupations is therefore both welcome and timely. The new edition includes expanded sections on the social history of the occupation, reflecting a recent shift in the priorities of historians of military occupations, as well as added maps and illustrations.

Williamson describes the British as “reluctant occupiers” whose governments were often absorbed in domestic problems and whose diplomatic tradition dictated avoiding “continental commitments” (37). In spite of their country’s halfhearted commitment to occupation, he shows that British officials played a key role in interpreting and enforcing the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. In spite of their limited resources, British officials in Cologne and elsewhere also played a major role in checking French ambitions physically to dismember Germany and create an independent state in the Rhineland (248). In addition to the better-known Rhineland and Ruhr occupations, Williamson stresses the important role of British troops and officials in managing territorial conflicts along Germany’s northern and eastern borders, including balancing the interests of Polish and German nationalists in Upper Silesia and Danzig. According to Williamson, “the British role in the plebiscite zones was unprecedented,” and included peacekeeping, mediation, and ensuring the enforcement of the Treaty of Versailles (96). The author traces the rise and fall of British influence in the many parts of Germany that its forces had a hand in occupying, as its relatively small occupation forces were continually redeployed to confront new crises.

In the process, Williamson describes a Germany with its boundaries and identity in flux, where social tensions, hunger, and wounded national pride festered and a communist revolution seemed not only possible, but likely. This book is sure to interest scholars and students of the World Wars and the interwar period, as well as those with an interest in European diplomacy in the era of the League of Nations, Versailles, and Locarno. It is also a useful contribution for our understanding of the period that saw the rise of National Socialism. Williamson’s work reveals the powerlessness of the occupiers to do much beside manage Germany’s dangerous political and social situation. Perhaps wisely, he stops short of taking a side on the question of whether Britain’s more lenient policy or France’s focus


2. For example, Gerhard Gräber and Matthias Spindler’s Revolverrepublik am Rhein (Landau, Pfälzische Verlagsanstalt, 1992)
on weakening Germany at all costs was the correct one. Instead, one comes away from his book with greater respect for the limits of what even a well-run military occupation can achieve.

Brandeis University

Drew Flanagan


The Leningrad blockade, which lasted 872 days between September 1941 and January 1944, was one of the most horrific events in world history. The number of Soviet civilians trapped within the blockaded territory who died from hunger, cold, and enemy bombardment was probably close to 900,000. Most of them perished during the first winter. Hundreds of books were published in the Soviet Union on the blockade, but they suffered from limited access to sources and had to conform to the official narrative that Leningraders displayed unqualified heroism in defending their city. Following the collapse of the USSR and partial opening of Soviet archives, there has been an outpouring of scholarship on the blockade.

Sergey Yarov was born and educated in Leningrad and became a much beloved teacher and scholar at the city’s European University and Herzen Pedagogical University as well as a Senior Research Fellow in the Russian Academy of Sciences. His book on the period, which he simply calls the “Time of Death,” was originally published in 2012, three years before his own cruel death at the age of fifty-six. Yarov meticulously researched and wrote his richly detailed and carefully documented study over a decade. His sources include hundreds of diaries, letters, memoirs, declassified government reports, and interviews with siege survivors. The book was a labor of love, intended for a wide audience, and it ranks among the most important on any aspect of the Second World War.

Yarov displays tremendous empathy for the *blokadniki*, and his descriptions of them trying to supplement their starvation-level bread rations with wallpaper glue, animal fodder, boiled leather belts, rotten cabbage leaves, and acorns reveal their persistent sense of anguish. At the same time, his book is a clear-eyed, unvarnished, and penetrating examination of changes in moral behavior. His thesis is that

Siege ethics ... were a chaotic mix of the old moral rules with amendments designed to adapt them to the realities of wartime. The “deterioration of morals” was neither consistent nor irreversible. For some it occurred quickly, for others more slowly. ... [At the same time] Leningrad saved itself through redeeming actions great and small: the dedication of
hundreds of people who sought out orphans, or took a glass of hot water to a helpless neighbour. (322, 324)

Moral deterioration was a slippery slope. “The more people stripped [dead strangers] of their clothes, the easier it became to flout other moral prohibitions” (29). Theft, fraud, and looting became common occurrences. Yarov recounts how some parents ate their children’s meager rations or decided to starve one child to feed the rest, while other parents starved themselves to save their children. In the horrendous conditions of the siege, when upwards of ten thousand may have died on individual days, Yarov found evidence that “sometimes acts of charity … shone through the widespread callousness and calculating self-interest.” Even in the worst of times, “the charitable urge proved so indestructible” (194–195).

Congratulations to Polity Press and translator Arch Tait for making Yarov’s superb book accessible to the English-reading world.

Washington and Lee University

Richard Bidlack

GENERAL, COMPARATIVE, HISTORIOGRAPHICAL


This book’s value and perceived contribution will likely vary from reader to reader, depending on expectations and needs. That could probably be said of any book, but it seems particularly apt in this case. At the beginning of Great Men in the Second World War, Paul Dukes, Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Aberdeen, provides a preface and an introduction—two sections that could easily be merged into one stand-alone essay—covering the theoretical methods that historians have used to shape and reshape popular notions of power. Dukes asks questions about how power is formed, how it is applied, and how it changes. He returns to this discourse in his conclusion, with a particular focus on Fernand Braudel’s concept of the longue durée and the notion that individuals are less critical to understanding the past than are the slow, creeping interactions between humans and the environments and institutions that humans have created.

Much of this is helpful and well done. Students less familiar with theory and method will benefit from these portions of the book, and Dukes does a fine job of couching the abstract within the topical context of his study—World War II and its aftermath, and the leaders of involved nations. But Dukes is better at asking questions than he is at answering them. In what seems like an imbalanced...
and almost bipolar dichotomy, the highly theoretical discussions that frame Dukes’s study are mostly overwhelmed by historical content that is already widely known. Put more bluntly, Dukes begins and ends his book on very theoretical notes, but the bulk of the book’s content is straightforward, top-down historical narrative. Readers are transported to Tehran for one chapter, then to Yalta for two more, and finally to Potsdam for two more. Anyone who has studied World War II, or the origins of the Cold War, will have already made this trip. These chapters recreate conversations among Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin, before including Harry Truman and Clement Attlee. These recreated conversations are engaging and effectively place the reader into a room with these “great men.” But while readers will leave each chapter having a good understanding of what these leaders discussed, the analysis that bridges those men with theories about the longue durée remains murky.

The book is essentially a synthesis of select secondary sources. Such works are incredibly important to the work that historians do, and without them scholars are often left with an unusually vast historiography that never quite comes together. So, there is great value in what Dukes has done in this work. But he offers very little that is new, and what could have been new—an accessible commentary on the need to balance social and political history—does not quite come through. Dukes could have been more forceful in his analysis, and might have done so by sacrificing some of the blow-by-blow accounts of the three great summits, each of which has been fully unpacked in other volumes. In the end, this is a stylistically engaging book that raises more questions than it answers, which may not have been the author’s intent. Still, students of political history, international relations, and the origins of the Cold War will appreciate the book as an introductory one-stop-shop for the “Big Three” narrative of World War II.

Texas Tech University

Sean P. Cunningham


The author of this recent book presents a literally “fishy” take on history, by exploring what “fisherfolk did to help create our modern world” (x). Brian Fagan notes that of humankind’s prehistoric methods of securing food—hunting, foraging, and fishing—only fishing remains economically important today. Despite this remarkable continuity, he notes that there are few works that focus on preindustrial fisherfolk, and fewer still that examine the history of fishing on a global scale. Fagan remedies
this with a sweeping history of fishing, spanning over a million years, from the catfish-scavenging hominins of the Pleistocene to the cod collapses of the twentieth century. Geographically, he casts a similarly wide net, drawing cases from almost every ocean and continent. The book weaves together complex stories of people, fish, and landscapes, demonstrating how fishing connected communities, influenced migration patterns, fed populations, built cities, and drove trade.

To tell the stories of the fisherfolk that existed on “the edge of history,” Fagan necessarily draws on diverse sources from many disciplines, but particularly archaeological studies (19). Notable is his deft incorporation of paleoclimatology, which highlights the changeable nature of marine environments—an anodyne to the tendency to consider the ocean a static, ahistoric space. The book is divided into three thematic parts and further subdivided into regional case studies. The first section focuses on prehistoric “opportunistic” fishing practices, and details how subsistence fishing shaped coastal and riparian cultures across the globe. The second discusses the preindustrial commoditization of fish as it became an essential foodstuff that helped “create, feed, and link great civilizations,” from the Egyptians to the Inca (145). The final section focuses on the rise of large-scale industrialized fishing and the resultant catastrophic declines in fish stocks. Fagan closes with a caution to readers that modern depletion of fisheries, coupled with the uncertainties of climate change, may finally signal an end to our millennia-long reliance on the sea’s bounty.

This is a dense book, packed with facts, but Fagan’s straightforward writing style and enthusiasm for the subject make it a rewarding read. One of its greatest strengths is its meticulous reconstructions of fishing practices. One gets a true sense of the expertise needed to spear a fish in a fast-moving stream, or pilot a reed boat through surging waves. The book is punctuated with passages that bring the experiences of fishers to life, immersing the reader in settings ranging from a Paleolithic North Sea settlement to a bustling Sumerian fish market.

Such an ambitious and broadly scoped work certainly contains elisions and generalizations, but this does not diminish its overall value. The book might also have benefited from a stronger theoretical engagement with existing environmental history work on fisheries. Nevertheless, environmental historians will find the book a valuable addition to the still-lagging historical analysis of marine spaces. Likewise, fisheries experts may find that the book provides useful historical
context for their work. Ultimately, Fagan makes a strong case for the important role played by fishing in human history.

*Harvard Kennedy School*  
Michaela Thompson


This beautifully illustrated volume by the Curator of Consumer Technology at the Science Museum, London, provides a delightful and international account of the origins, evolution, and implications of an appliance most of us take for granted: the domestic refrigerator. Like Henry Petroski on pencils or Ruth Schwartz Cowan on stoves, Helen Peavitt’s approach to this ostensibly mundane technology is at once artifact-centered and remarkably wide ranging.

Not surprisingly, Peavitt begins with the icebox. Deceptively simple in form, the icebox itself was merely the endpoint of a complex chain of activity in which ice was harvested from faraway places, transported to urban centers, warehoused, and ultimately sold for domestic use. By the end of the nineteenth century, with demand for ice far outpacing the supply, science and technology of artificial refrigeration—theretofore separate spheres of inquiry—began to come together. Numerous patents and exposition displays followed, and by the 1930s the refrigerator (sometimes gas, sometimes electric) was well on its way to ubiquity. Widespread use came first in the United States, between the 1930s and 1950s, aided in no small part by the involvement of major firms like General Motors and General Electric. In much of Europe, buying a “fridge” would remain “the domain of higher-income households, with ‘status symbol’ significance in the home well into the 1950s”; thereafter, mass adoption followed swiftly (62).

As this happened—that is, as the refrigerator came to occupy a place of prominence in modern kitchens—culinary habits began to shift. In perhaps her strongest chapter, “A Culinary Revolution,” Peavitt traces how changing means of cold storage in the home, from the larder to the icebox to the fridge, gave rise to changing norms at the table. Various pickled, salted, and canned staples, developed over many generations principally for their qualities of preservation rather than their flavors, made way for fresher, often frozen ingredients. This leads Peavitt to the terrifying conclusion that “many familiar foodstuffs—bacon, cheddar cheese, smoked kippers, raisins and jam and chutney
preserves—may never have been introduced if refrigeration had been invented sooner” (124). (The reviewer doubts that he is the only one for whom the prospect of a world without bacon, cheese, or oatmeal-raisin cookies is downright nightmarish.)

At the same time, new cookbooks emerged to aid consumers in the practice of “cold cookery,” in which the fridge was used in the preparation, rather than merely the preservation, of complex dishes. Interestingly, Peavitt not only describes these cookbooks and their suggestions, but also reproduces several of their recipes, joining a wave of recent enthusiasm for the historical recreation of (at least some of) the tastes of the past. The description and photo of her attempt at an “egg toadstools” recipe from 1959 is itself worth the price of admission.

Suitably rich in technical detail, yet also concerned with broader social and economic contexts, Refrigerator is a textbook example of the history of technology at its finest. It is at once accessible, playful, and insightful, and will appeal to academics and retro foodies alike.

Auburn University

David N. Lucsko


In the summer and fall of 1929, the Soviet Union and the Republic of China fought with each other over disputes related to the Chinese Eastern Railway (CER), which they jointly managed in Manchuria since 1924. Until recently, Chinese and Soviet/Russian historians referred to these events as a “military conflict” or “incident.” In his book, military historian Michael M. Walker demonstrates that the 1929 Sino-Soviet War was a full-scale war, which was brutal and damaging for both sides. He argues that this war demonstrated the growing military capability of the Soviet army and state, the weaknesses of Chiang Kai-shek’s regime, as well as growing political uncertainty in East Asia. The history of the Chinese Eastern Railway is well known to historians of modern China and Russia/Soviet Union, however, this book offers a fresh analysis of the war from several overlapping perspectives: military, diplomatic, local, national, and regional.

In part I, titled “Creating Conflict: The Chinese Eastern Railroad,” the author discusses the troubled history of Imperial Russia’s railway expansionism in Manchuria, which Bolshevik Russia initially condemned, but the Soviet leader Joseph Stalin later continued. He describes the evolution of Chinese and Soviet military forces in this region, shaped by revolutions, civil wars, and warlord politics. By
the late 1920s, the Soviet army was well equipped, had capable leaders, and was united by a strong revolutionary ideology. In contrast, political and military power in China was divided between Chiang Kai-shek’s republican government and warlords who challenged his regime. In diplomacy and negotiations regarding management of the CER, Moscow took advantage of the fragmented political and military power in China. On the eve of the 1929 war, Stalin was well informed about Chinese military capabilities by Soviet military advisors and Comintern agents who had been involved in Chinese politics for nearly a decade.

In part II, “Crisis and War,” Walker analyzes the military aspects of this war and political consequences for China, the Soviet Union, and Japan. He offers a close look at military operations in three war fronts along the vast Manchurian-Soviet border, the strategy, leadership, technology, and tactics of the two armies. Despite being “the best-equipped warlord army in China” the Northeast Frontier Defense Force, commanded by warlord Zhang Zuolin, did not have experience in international conflicts (156). Detailing the progress and outcome of major battles, the author concludes that the Chinese regional army faced a better trained and disciplined Soviet army, which possessed overwhelming artillery and airpower, but “the deciding factor was the application of superior doctrine” (296). The 1929 conflict resolved little, becoming but a prelude to more profound conflicts in this region.

Military historians will appreciate the technical details of battles, organization, and tactics, backed up by US military intelligence reports. Though Guomindang and Comintern archival materials may offer different interpretations of this conflict, The 1929 Sino-Soviet War succeeds in explaining complex long-term forces at play in the military and international history of East Asia.

University of Connecticut

Victor Zatsepine


Contemporary US political leaders, national security “experts,” and pundits have made somewhat of a mess explaining geopolitical relationships. Descriptive terms such as “ally,” “friend,” and “strategic partner,” for example, too often fail to capture adequately the nature of a relationship between the United States and other nation states. Anthony Wells, however, has his geopolitical feet planted firmly on the ground in his examination of the relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom, and in particular the cooperative efforts between
both nations’ navies over the last fifty years. That “special relationship,” he argues, was instrumental in containing the Soviet Union during the Cold War and endures to this day; a consequence not just of common national security priorities but also the necessity for the two navies to work together to achieve their respective nations’ policy objectives.

Wells is quite qualified to write on the inner workings of the USN-RN relationship, having served in the Royal Navy as an exchange officer with the US Navy, and also having worked with the intelligence services of both navies. A Tale of Two Navies is consequently less a history of the relationship between the USN and RN, but more of selected key themes that Wells believes defines the depth and significance of USN-RN cooperative efforts. Consequently, the book bounces between historical aspects, mostly devoted to the Cold War but also touching on the Falklands campaign and Middle East wars, with other chapters focusing on efforts between the two navies in the areas of intelligence and nuclear deterrence technology. As such, there is no central thesis to the book. Rather, Wells offers what he believes is a guide that should lead to questions and discussion on the current and future of the relationship between the two navies.

Historians may be somewhat disappointed with Wells’s handling of the context. He seems, for example, to miss the RN’s connection to British grand strategy, which was to help secure, and then police, an empire. A more detailed historical examination would have revealed the connection between the unraveling of the British Empire in the twentieth century, with the ensuing reduction of the Royal Navy to just a handful of ships. He also tends to misread aspects of USN history as well, particularly the adverse consequences on the US Navy’s sea-control mission from the Vietnam War. However, Wells’s treatment of the Cold War, Middle East, and Falklands is solid and clearly illuminates the breadth and depth of USN-RN cooperation.

Contextual missteps, however, should not blind readers to the importance of this book. National security leaders and senior officers on both sides of the Atlantic should appreciate Wells’s conviction that the relationship between the USN and RN, forged over two centuries from adversary to ally, continues to be of invaluable importance to the national security of both nations. As the Royal Navy struggles to complete construction of two carriers, and the US Navy to reach 350 ships, perhaps policy makers ought to be looking for a third way through closer operational cooperation.

Society for Military History

Craig C. Felker