Reviews

*After the Ice: A Global Human History, 20,000 b.c.–5,000 b.c.* By Steven Mithen (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2004) 622 pp. $29.95

The dust cover describes the narrative device that Mithen employs in this book; “through the eyes of an imaginary modern traveler—John Lubbock . . . readers visit and observe communities and landscapes, experiencing prehistoric life—from aboriginal hunting parties in Tasmania, to the corraling of wild sheep in the central Sahara.” Mithen’s goal of making his book a “good read” by putting a human face on the past is noble; too often archaeologists lose sight of their human subjects and end up creating a sterile world of stones and bones and chemical tests.

As befitting a scholarly global history of a key episode in human history, this book is long and well documented. The main text is divided into six sections dealing with the environmental and cultural transformation that occurred in different regions: Western Asia, Europe, the Americas, Greater Australia and East Asia, South Asia, and Africa. Each section is divided into short sub-sections containing authoritative descriptions of important regional archaeological sites, as well as theoretical discussions of the ecological and social forces responsible for changes in subsistence patterns and social organization.

Most sub-sections begin with the author describing imagined ancient scenes as if Lubbock were observing them during his time travels. Sometimes ancient people are involved in mundane daily activities; at other times, they are performing exotic religious rituals. After a paragraph or two of picturesque descriptions, Mithen shatters the illusion by abruptly shifting to an academic analysis of the archaeological data on which the imaginative reconstructions are based.

This constant shifting between the short vignettes of Lubbock’s visions and the author’s discussions of archaeological data is distracting, often upsetting the suspension of disbelief the author seemed to be encouraging. Lubbock’s nebulous corporal status casts further doubt on his credibility; many of the people that he supposedly encountered surely would have fled from him or attacked him. Since they do neither, Lubbock must be invisible. How else would he survive intimate encounters with so many typically xenophobic hunter–gatherer groups? Yet invisibility seems unlikely because of his occasional involvement in the everyday activities of the people that he visits.

This book has much to recommend it, in spite of problems with its narrative device. It provides an authoritative, easily accessible, worldwide perspective on the formative events that occurred during the 15,000 years between the last glacial maximum and the widespread rise of sedentary agricultural communities around 5,000 b.c.—a period that saw severe changes in temperature, rainfall, sea level, and plant and animal communities that challenged human adaptive capacities. As Mithun points out, an understanding of such adaptive response may well prove
useful as we struggle both to predict and respond to the modern challenge of global warming.

Phillip L. Walker
University of California, Santa Barbara


In this extraordinarily well-wrought example of interdisciplinary and comparative history, twenty-eight specialists of European and Asian history, most of them veterans of comparative historical analysis, scrutinize closely one aspect of the current inequality in Eastern and Western living standards by asking when the gap emerged. Seventeen chapters look at the two centuries immediately preceding the Industrial Revolution in the West and, using economic, social, and demographic measures, challenge the “established view, stemming from the classical economists and still influential, . . . that the gap originated far back in history, perhaps thousands of years ago” (1). The findings, however, “support the revisionist view that there were no systematic differences in living standards between Europe and Asia before the Industrial Revolution. . . . [T]he general picture emerging from these studies is not one of great divergence between East and West during this period, but instead one of considerable similarities” (17–19).

To bring the diverse societies of the two ends of the Eurasian continent into a meaningful comparative framework, methodological innovation was necessary. The project uses an expanded concept of “standard of living” (7), employing not only economic indicators of well-being but also sociophysical (health and height) and demographic (measurable responses to food prices) ones. Though considerable research on the latter two has been ongoing for some time in local and regional contexts, their relevance to broad-based comparative work is amply demonstrated in this book. Scarcity of quantifiable evidence, especially for the Asian countries, had to be overcome by the clever use of estimates that, on the whole, do not strain credibility. The range of evidence is itself remarkable. The various chapters look at, inter alia, the supply of, and demand for, hogs, double cropping, price series for a variety of commodities, labor markets, wage levels, life expectancy, the cost of servants, literacy rates, average heights, taxes, maternal and child mortality, proletarianization, human fertility, marriage, and out-migration.

Since the project involves the effort to understand the on-the-ground interaction of many variables, modeling of various kinds had to be employed. Its use is persuasive, as are the methods of presenting quantitative information. The close fit between the text, tables, and graphics is evidence of a rigorous editorial process. The national societies
included in the study are China, Japan, India, the Netherlands, Russia, Slavonia, Denmark, Tuscany, Sweden, and Belgium. Several of the essays merge evidence from many European countries and generalize about a “Western European” region.

The book is not an easy read, and could not have been, given the inherent complexity of the topic. The excellent introduction by the editors goes a long way toward holding the rest of the chapters together, and the conclusion of each chapter adeptly describes the meaning of the particular findings for the larger theme. However, in recognition of the conceptual complexity of the main theme, the editors could have asked that each chapter also begin with a short re-introduction to the main theme and some instructions as to how to integrate it. But this is a minor point, which in no way detracts from a challenging and intellectually rewarding volume.

Andrejs Plakans
Iowa State University

*When the Stakes Are High: Deterrence and Conflict Among Major Powers.* By Vesna Danilovic (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2004) 294 pp. $52.50

In the study of war and international crises, political scientists have often focused their research on Great Powers’ confrontations over the security of other states. Danilovic draws upon the theoretical literature on deterrence to analyze such Great Power conflicts—specifically, cases of extended immediate deterrence. That is, she studies international crises in which a state (defender) seeks to prevent a military attack on an ally by threatening military retaliation against a potential attacker. Danilovic is mainly interested in addressing the well-known debate within the deterrence literature about the question of what factors determine the credibility of threats. To her, the influential claims of such early-deterrence theorists as Schelling that the credibility of deterrence threats are highly interdependent and that they are strengthened by various bargaining strategies designed to “manipulate risk” are open to serious logical criticisms. They also need to be tested systematically against the historical record. Danilovic argues instead that the credibility of threats is more dependent on the “intrinsic” interests of states, and she seeks to show through new empirical tests that her argument is better supported by the available evidence.

Danilovic tests a series of alternative hypotheses about the credibility of threats by statistical analyses of a newly developed dataset of seventy deterrence cases from 1895 to 1985. She codes the outcome of each deterrence case according to one of three outcomes: defender acquiesces; challenger acquiesces; or the two sides compromise. She also uses

this dataset to test hypotheses about which Great Powers will attempt extended immediate deterrence against a potential attacker. In her empirical tests on deterrence outcomes, she finds, for example, that democratic defenders are more likely to compromise as well as force challengers to back down, that defenders with strong regional security interests are far more likely to deter attacks, and that the past behavior and crisis bargaining moves of defenders have little effect in deterring challengers. Thus does Danilovic conclude that the credibility of defender threats has more to do with the tangible interests at stake in protecting an ally than signals of resolve communicated by bargaining moves and behavior in current or past crisis.

The strengths of the book include its integrated analysis of the reasons for, and the outcomes associated with, policies of deterrence; its nuanced analysis of deterrence outcomes beyond dichotomous conceptions of success or failure; and its creative measurement of “intrinsic interests” in terms of regional ties, which places the bilateral relationship between allies and defenders within the broader context of Great Power regional security interests. Critics might question how well the claims of Schelling and others regarding bargaining strategies of commitment or manipulating risk are actually measured in the empirical tests. On balance, this sophisticated and valuable book represents a welcome contribution to the scholarly literature on deterrence.

Paul Huth
University of Maryland

Dictating Development: How Europe Shaped the Global Periphery. By Jonathan Krieckhaus (Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006) 264 pp. $27.95

In a sweeping analysis of economic development outside of Europe during the second half of the twentieth century, Krieckhaus argues persuasively that international factors have weighed heavily on the economic fortunes of different countries. He systematically catalogs a wide array of international factors, from trade to ideological influences and foreign aid, but the book’s primary target is European colonialism.

Krieckhaus argues that colonialism had a highly positive economic impact when it introduced a large number of European settlers into a colony, as in North America, or Australia and New Zealand. Otherwise, he argues, its economic effect was largely negative. In particular, he ascribes sub-Saharan Africa’s economic woes during the second half of the twentieth century almost entirely to the nature of European colonialism, in particular because it failed to develop the human capital of the region while ruthlessly exploiting its economic resources. On the other hand, he credits East Asia’s recent success to the fact that it had the good luck to be colonized by Japan instead. These arguments are advanced with
the help of crossnational quantitative work, and illustrated with informative, if derivative, case studies of Mozambique, Korea, and Brazil. Brazil appears to serve the purpose of showing that Latin America’s intermediate economic record is due to the fact that the region did not escape colonialism, like East Asia, but has had more time to recover from it than tropical Africa. Latin America also had more European settlers, though not so many as the real settler economies.

These historical patterns are too well established to contest. Nor will many contemporary readers view as particularly controversial the general proposition that international factors influence the economic prospects of today’s developing countries. The book’s ultimate contribution stands or falls on the quality of the evidence and arguments that it brings to bear on behalf of its thesis.

Despite much compelling analysis and an engaging presentation, Krieckhaus’ approach evinces two main problems. First, because Krieckhaus wants to put all or most of the explanatory weight on the destructive force of colonial occupation, he makes little effort to explain the reasons why Europe colonized certain regions and not others, or why European settlers initially went to, say, New Zealand, but not the much closer Nigeria. European colonization decisions were not random; they were shaped by perceptions of how easy colonial occupation would be, and how wealthy the future colony would be. Tropical Africa was colonized late in large part because it was viewed as both inhospitable and not particularly wealthy.

Even if European colonialism did not promote the economic development of the region, Africa’s comparatively poor economic performance cannot be entirely be blamed on colonialism, because it may simply not have had as high a potential for economic development as East Asia or Latin America. In the language of the social sciences, colonialism cannot really explain twentieth-century development because the decision to colonize and or to send settlers to the colony is itself endogenous to economic development.

Second, Krieckhaus often underestimates other factors that help to explain development patterns. He cites but largely neglects the recent literature arguing that geographical location helps to explain development patterns and that, for instance, tropical location has had a strong deterrent effect on development. More curiously for a political scientist, he downplays the role of indigenous state structures in shaping the development process. His case study of Korea denigrates the country’s long-standing state traditions, and his chapter on Mozambique exaggerates the importance of the state structures found and destroyed by the Portuguese. Since Krieckhaus argues compellingly that political institutions have had a powerful effect on twentieth-century development, it is curious that he systematically downplays the similar impact of pre-colonial state structures.

Nicolas van de Walle
Cornell University
Ringer has written an excellent single-volume work on Max Weber and the many areas of Weber’s intellectual development, including his political evolution. After having provided a first reconstruction of the intellectual context of German academics in *The Decline of the German Mandarins* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969) and a recent interpretation of some of Weber’s work in *Max Weber’s Methodology* (Cambridge, Mass., 1997) Ringer now brings together a more specifically focused context with a more comprehensive interpretation of Weber’s staggering intellectual achievements and political interventions.

Ringer has also been engaged in a form of interdisciplinary history, at least since his *Fields of Knowledge* (Cambridge, 1992), in which he drew on concepts like “intellectual field” and “habitus” from Pierre Bourdieu. In that work, he claims that these concepts do more than simply restate more precisely the parameters of traditional contextual history of thought, intellectuals, and ideas; they also allow us to specify in a uniquely valuable way the set of relationships that illuminate the whole “field” of Weber’s intellectual production. Whether these concepts in fact provide such a new model remains to be seen. The issues involved aroused a stimulating debate between Ringer and others in *Theory and Society* in 1990.\(^1\)

But of one thing there can be no doubt. Although Bourdieu’s categories might be mobilized for the understanding of an intellectual or artistic debate or development, Bourdieu himself thought that “biography” was an “illusion” (and an “intellectual biography” would have been even stranger to him), in the sense that it was not a category that could contribute to making sense of a set of intellectual interventions of any kind.\(^2\) Unfortunately, Ringer does not address the serious challenge that he thus poses to Bourdieu’s fundamental claims. To do justice to Bourdieu’s method requires noting that only the detailed specification of the whole “field of positions” and its “homologous” relation to a “field of position takings,” framed by a “field of power”—Bourdieu even developed graphic representations to illustrate them—could adequately convey what Bourdieu hoped to establish by the use of his categories. Little of that specificity is present in Ringer’s book, and one must wonder whether Bourdieu’s categories serve Ringer more as a metaphor for his contextual approach than as a specific method used in a rigorous manner for the fashioning of a “new” history.

Yet, no matter how one views this particular construction of the context or field, one must wonder at the wisdom of publishing any kind of biography of Weber just now, before the *Max Weber Gesamtausgabe*...
(Tübingen, 1984–) has finished publishing Weber’s collected letters (currently available through 1914), as well as the remainder of the historical and critical text editions of the massive works that Weber completed from 1914 to 1920, particularly the “revised” parts of *Economy and Society* (pub. in English 1978) and *The Protestant Ethic* (pub. in English 1930). Surely these works would be needed for any intellectual field or context to be most fully elaborated. Ringer is aware of this concern but he can do little about it.

One thing that would have helped is a larger bibliography, beyond what Ringer himself used, in order to point potential readers to a much wider literature, as well as a note about English translations of certain works, like Wolfgang Mommsen and Wolfgang Schwentker (eds.), *Max Weber und seine Zeitgenossen* (Göttingen, 1988).

Harvey Goldman
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*When Physics Became King.* By Iwan Rhys Morus (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2005) 303 pp. $60.00 cloth $25.00 paper

Morus’ *When Physics Became King* undertakes the seemingly impossible task of demonstrating the vital importance of a cultural history of physics for an understanding of the nineteenth century. By focusing mainly on Britain, with brief interludes in France and the German states, Morus assembles principal findings of the last two decades of cultural history to argue effectively for the contingency of physics as the apex of the sciences, as well as to show how physics (and, presumably, any other science or form of cultural life) necessarily drew on its local resources to acquire features that still shape it today. His history is engagingly written, well illustrated, and entirely accessible to the technically uninitiated (that is, free of equations and unexplained scientific content).

*When Physics Became King* is “unashamedly cultural history” (4), drawing heavily from the scholarship and methodology of various historians of science from the University of Cambridge during the 1980s and 1990s, mostly as students of Simon Schaffer. The book is openly indebted to their cumulative research, which in itself reflects the interdisciplinary attentions of recent history of science. In particular, great attention is paid to cultures of display, evidence from material artifacts and literature, popular culture, and anthropology, to craft a clear narrative about the change of “natural philosophy” into “physics” by the century’s end, and to grant it intellectual primacy.

Morus begins his narrative with mathematics and the institutional transformations that accompanied the French Revolution, tracing how that culture of sophisticated mathematical analysis was imported, institutionalized, and propagated in Britain, primarily at Cambridge. He then turns to the central philosophical innovation of the early nineteenth
century, German Romanticism’s attention to the unification of nature, which he follows through the concepts of energy and the luminiferous ether, the two chief conceptual tools of nineteenth-century physics. Those tools were deployed in a culture that was highly charged with showmanship, entrepreneurialism, and exhibition—the subject of Morus’ earlier work, slightly overemphasized in this one (Chapter 4)—to become a steam-powered electrical empire that characterized Great Britain by 1900. Supplemented by informative but brief chapters on factory-scale astronomy and the proliferation of laboratories and cultures of precision measurement, Morus concludes with the collapse of the nineteenth-century world picture and the advent of Albert Einstein’s relativity and the fracturing of networked Western European institutions during the debacle of World War I. What rises mostly intact from the rubble of 1918 is the primary place physics had forged as a profession, a discipline, and a system of knowledge.

This book provides an exemplary introduction not only to the history of Victorian physics but also to contemporary trends in the history of science, helpfully supplemented by a bibliographical essay for the uninitiated. Unfortunately, much of Europe outside of England and Scotland emerges shortchanged. Yet Morus offers a painless guide to some of the more intriguing interdisciplinary historical findings of recent decades, and a potential new synthesis that he notes has been lacking in the proliferation of microhistorical monographs (6).

Michael D. Gordin
Princeton University


The authors want literature, science, and overseas exploration to be linked largely by the bitter fruits of the labor of their practitioners, who “often precipitated the subordination, removal or death of the native inhabitants on whom they lavished such minute attention.” Even when poets, travelers, or experimenters displayed empathy toward the native people under discussion, or cast a cold, condemning eye on the imperial mission, “they nevertheless for this reason served the purposes of the men who held power at the imperial centres of Europe” (13, italics added). In short, just about everyone found in this book craves power of some sort, and achieves it by virtue of being linked together through what the authors call “networks,” centers of calculation possessed by the imperial power that privilege only their intellectual representatives. The idea comes from Latour, well-known in history of science circles for a raffish relativism that occasionally he repents.1 The authors carry his theoretical

baggage onto the field so that their method of linking all three topics under discussion will hold together. Yet it would hardly be news that anyone investigating the period from the 1770s to the 1830s in Britain would see mutual influences and inspirations at work at the interface of literature, science, and exploration. Why do we need this complex language to describe the fact that people traveled, wrote, and experimented in ways that were often profoundly interconnected and that aided the advance of empire?

The complexity is needed to bolster the case for the destructive power exercised by a few major players in the period. In this account, Sir Joseph Banks, president of the Royal Society, sits like a queen bee at the heart of vast power centers of calculation that he alone controlled and that enabled British imperialism to flourish. Captain James Cook gets a bad press for his imperial exploits, but in this account, Banks was just as bad and far more powerful; he was one of “the causes of Romanticism’s retreat from the language and politics of revolution” (179). Even Romantics like Humphrey Davy gave into his power and trooped to London to gain fame and fortune under his sway. “Without an audience to support their researches, young experimentalists dropped their association with radicalism and strove for a rapprochement with Banks and access to the metropolitan and European contexts that he influenced” (15). The insight into his power, we are told, is possible only because of Latour’s framework, and he is even credited with having made possible the superb writing of Gascoigne on Banks (Gascoigne makes no reference to the work of Latour).

If people are like Thomas Hobbes’ belligerent and exploitive creatures, and their networks are webs that entrap, then their changing beliefs, values, and attitudes do not merit much attention. When the poet William Cowper tried to enter into meditation on what Omai, the Tahitian visitor, might have felt, the whole exercise, we are told, amounts to Cowper suggesting “that in capitalism globalisation functions as a fall from self-sufficiency” (65).

This book contains some helpful discussions, to be sure: electricity and its radical associations in the 1790s, the struggle of Edward Jenner to promote vaccination, Benjamin Thompson (Count Rumford)’s work on heat and its impact on the desperate lives of chimney sweeps, the racialist investigations of Johann Blumenbach, and expeditions to the Poles and the Romantic concern with polarities, among others. But in almost every chapter, the vision of power and its conceits as the driving force of human endeavor makes the picture grim and unrelenting.

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Murmann has pursued two goals in this painstaking work—to provide a history of the synthetic-dye industry prior to World War I and to offer a general theory of business history, which he terms “coevolution.” Synthetic dyes were the creation of an early “high-tech” industry that both steered and rapidly commercialized a new technology. Such industries are common today, and their nurture and development is often seen as a matter of economic and strategic importance. Those who believe that history can offer important insights into today’s policy issues will appreciate Murmann’s contribution, even if they find that his reach on the second goal has exceeded his grasp. The goal and the attempt to reach it are ambitious, but not always successful.

The first synthetic dye was invented by a British teenager, William Henry Perkin, who was seeking to synthesize quinine. Perkin serendipitously created aniline purple, and, most remarkably, appreciated its potential as a textile dye superior to any natural dye then in use. Perkin abandoned his studies at the Royal College of Chemistry to commercialize aniline purple and to develop new synthetic dyes. Contemporary observers expected Britain to dominate the new industry for the indefinite future. Yet by 1870, German companies held half of the market in synthetic dyes and increased it to 85 percent, a share they held from the turn of the century until World War I. The handful of German firms that dominated this industry included Bayer, AGFA, and BASF. The primary market for textile dyes lay in Britain and the United States, however, and the chief raw material used to manufacture synthetic dyes, coal tar, was primarily available in Britain. Given these disadvantages, how could German firms so thoroughly come to dominate an industry in which the first movers were British?

Murmann discusses the relationships among German firms (most of whom failed) and between the dye industry and universities in Germany, Britain, and the United States. His discussion of the impacts of varying patent regimes is especially interesting in light of current concern about the public policy of intellectual-property protection. In all countries, these institutions (firms, universities, and patent laws) changed over time in response to pressures from each other (coevolved) in ways that may have helped solidify German dominance.

As a framework for understanding German dominance, Murmann’s coevolution fails the test of Occam’s razor. His own account supports the contention that the initial conditions in Germany gave that country the edge, not the ensuing institutional changes. At the time of Perkin’s discovery, Germany had the most organic chemists and the best educational infrastructure for organic chemistry. The new industry enjoyed economies of scale and scope: Large numbers of organic chemists were
necessary to develop new dyes. Firms with many dyes had production and marketing advantages over competitors with few. That the yet ununified German states had no patent laws enabled a competitive industry to arise, initially copying and improving upon Perkin’s inventions. The patent law eventually adopted protected processes but not products, enabling the competitive environment in Germany to continue while encouraging the development of research and development into new chemical processes. Murmann would have done well to include more detail on the origins of this novel patent approach, which supported the dominance of the national industry but not individual firms.

Evolutionary theory has gained a foothold in economics by relaxing the unrealistic classical assumption that firms know how to maximize profits. Evolutionary theory’s substitution of random behavior for omniscience, which lets markets determine which firms come closer to the ideal, is a valuable modification to a technical theory. Any observer of modern public policy sees how firms attempt (and sometimes succeed) in altering their regulatory and economic environment and how government actions can sometimes drastically alter the structure of firms in an industry. Whether terming these alterations “coevolution” provides any better insight into the mechanisms by which they occur is debatable. In some types of market competition, firm survival is certainly an issue, and the idea of evolutionary pressure is a natural fit, although the extent to which it implies that intelligence and foresight are unimportant in the fortunes of individual firms is unclear. Murmann characterizes all trial and error as evolutionary—including the process by which dye firms created huge numbers of molecules and then winnowed the results to those most promising.

John Neufeld
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Bowker has written an ambitious and intriguing book—in his words, “a reading of the ways in which information technology in all its forms has become imbricated in the nature and production of knowledge over the past two hundred years” (2). However, it is more a work of cultural geography than narrative history, concerned with the way in which time and space are constructed and represented through scientific practice. Bowker calls science “one of very few modern institutions that claim a perfect memory of the past,” adding, “This book is about the work that goes into creating this avowedly perfect memory” (4).

Creating this perfect memory necessarily involves developing a social and technical set of operations and infrastructures, which Bowker
terms “memory practices” (7). With respect to science, memory practices result in the production and reproduction of what Bowker calls the generalized “archive”—not just a system for storing, naming, standardizing, and classifying data, but an interlocking (and often hidden) set of claims about how the world works, about how to construct and remember facts that support these claims, and about how to use these claims and remembered facts to generate new knowledge. Bowker suggests that every archive is a “jussive” construction about what can be said about the world and not just a catalog of neutral facts about the world. It is a system designed with a particular worldview in mind, which in turn affects the reproduction (or replacement) of that very worldview.

Bowker develops this thesis by tracing the practices of knowledge production through three eras: “uniformitarian” geology in the 1830s, computer-inspired cybernetics in the 1960s, and database-driven biodiversity research in the present day. But for all of Bowker’s attention to temporality, he is not himself writing a history of the disciplines that he investigates; he makes no attempt to arrange or explain chronologically the various claims, projects, funding sources, institution-building efforts, reproductive structures, critical challenges, or successes and failures within geology, cybernetics, or biodiversity. Rather, Bowker deconstructs claims and texts, looking for the key spatial and temporal metaphors that connect to the new information technologies and practices in each period—statistics and accounting for geology, automation and computerization for cybernetics, and networking and visualization for biodiversity.

This technique works poorly for the first two eras, about which Bowker is often unnecessarily cryptic, literary, and playful—so much so that he may bewilder or alienate readers. Moreover, he often exceeds the limits of what his sources can tell him. For instance, he claims that nineteenth-century geology was mainly “a cosmology inspired by factory production developed in the early nineteenth century in Britain and France” where “disordered human events were being made orderly” (43), and that in the twentieth century, “the problems cyberneticians were tackling (managing large systems necessary to keeping complex systems stable) were problems that were central to the new capitalist order” (76). Besides a longer treatment of historical context and development, along the lines of Stephen Kern’s *The Culture of Time and Space: 1880–1918* (New York, 1986), such arguments demand a richer theory of the spatial-temporal connections between culture, capital, and technology, such as in Neil Smith’s *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space* (New York, 1991).

Bowker’s discussion of the development of database technology and its application to biodiversity research, however, is required reading for scholars of both science studies and information studies, and for historians interested in the recent development of “technoscientific” efforts on a global scale. In this context, Bowker’s political-economic and disciplinary concerns finally emerge directly; he convincingly argues that “the work of producing these databases is inherently political and philo-
sophisticated and about our relationship with our past despite their acclaimed practicality in the present.” He reminds us that in the virtual world of biodiversity data, “exclusion from databases has drastic consequences” in the material world of funding and attention, since “you can only protect through policy interventions that which can be named, that which can be shown to have been important in the past” (127).

What Bowker really seems to want is for the next generation of science-studies researchers to focus on the “data set” as a unit of analysis—on par with the research paper or the research animal—possessing its own agency over the development of scientific findings and scientific theories. “We need to open a discourse—where there is no effective discourse now—about the varying temporalities, spatialities, and materialities that we might represent in our databases,” Bowker writes (184). His book, though not perfect, has achieved this aim well.

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Models: The Third Dimension of Science. Edited by Soraya de Chadarevian and Nick Hopwood (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2004) 488 pp. $65.00 cloth $24.95 paper

This book concerns three-dimensional (3-D) models produced in the sciences of Europe and North America between the mid-eighteenth and mid-twentieth centuries. Sixteen articles by a distinguished list of museum researchers and historians, philosophers, and sociologists of science examine a stunning variety of models and their uses: wooden ships and extinct monsters rebuilt in bricks and mortar, casts of diseases, displays of stuffed animals and perspex models of a Keynesian economy, monuments in cork and mathematics in plaster, wax embryos and plastic molecules, and many others. Although all of these models embodied and displayed knowledge, their manner of doing so varied enormously over time and circumstance. The term “model” persisted throughout the period covered in this volume, but its meaning evolved greatly.

Recent studies of representation in scientific practice have shown how scientific tools and instruments and the engravings, traces, and printouts that they produce are fundamental to the scientists’ tasks of convincing colleagues, training students, and winning public support. Yet these studies have been almost entirely concerned with the two-dimensional (2-D) flat surface, and have neglected 3-D. This volume restores models to their rightful place among the basic materials of knowledge production. Several essays emphasize the varieties of structural details that could not be conceived any other way. Hopwood shows, for example, how late nineteenth-century wax embryological models, which could be seen from all sides and even “dissected” with hot wires, were more important than printed works, since they made
features of development—which could not be grasped in words, images, or equations—perceptible.

Like images and texts, models routinely ventured between private places of discovery and public venues of display. Some models, like the Phillips model of the economy, mediated between words and worlds. Other models, such as those of buildings, inventions, or displays of stuffed animals or dinosaurs, interceded between patrons, producers, and publics. Models representing natural or technological objects often performed political work. Simon Schaffer shows that Enlightenment entrepreneurs displayed models of everything from electric fish to ships to show how both nature and society could be brought under rational control. Christoph Meinel argues that chemical models developed in the late nineteenth century promoted the power of the new synthetic chemistry by showing how a new world could be built out of new materials. Molecular biological models displayed at the 1958 Brussels World’s Fair promoted what Chadarevian calls a “physics of life” over a “physics of death” in the hot phase of the Cold War.

Material models usually required enormous care and labor to construct. What justified the trouble to make these models for scientific purposes? Taxidermy, plaster casts, blown glass, museum dioramas, perspex models, and computer programs often represented state of the art skill and technique in different media. According to Ludmilla Jordanova, models brought diverse forms of pleasure by virtue of their changes in scale, their tactile verisimilitude, or their promise of bringing something new into being. Like the dancing, preaching, and gauging that Baxandall famously used to understand fifteenth-century Italian paintings, scientific models can be instructively juxtaposed with a variety of cultural practices and artifacts to reconstruct historical specificities. As Herbert Mehrtens reports, surrealist artists like Man Ray perfectly understood that mathematical models turned into unruly objects when set in unfamiliar contexts.

One of the lessons that emerges repeatedly in these essays is that models engaged the human body in cognitive activities in ways that other forms of representation could not. Moulages gave medics an intimacy with diseases that word and image could not. Mathematical, chemical, and economic models could be taken apart or altered to show process or variations of configuration, and to train the mind’s eye to grasp these variations. Dioramas of animal groups—extinct or existing—gave emotional charge to the natural world. James Griesemer observes that these 3-D models are frequently not only models of but also models for; their dimensionality invites a “gestural heuristics” that governs swinging hammers, gluing plastics, cutting waxes, and writing software.

It is easy to imagine this kind of analysis joining forces with recent work in art history to forge a broad material approach to cultural history that escapes the narrow confines of 1-D words and 2-D images. In his

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important book, *Real Spaces: World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism* (London, 2003), David Summers argues that well before it becomes an object of aesthetic appreciation, all art orients the body toward nature and social space, allowing us to “acknowledge” and transform the world. Sites, buildings, and images, he shows, organize rituals, power relations, and access to the divine in every culture. Images and artifacts of different kinds that often “slip through the net of the aesthetic”—whether linga, stela, menhir, ex-voto, death mask, or painted portrait—“complete” the social and political differentiations initiated by the sacred site or the temple. All human knowledge, all meaning, it would seem, begins with making models in three-dimensions. In the age of the ubiquitous flat screen, this claim should invite further investigation.

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Documents produced during the second half of the sixteenth century in the Jewish community of Safed attest to a significant spike in the number of spirit-possession cases. Most historians who have examined the textual evidence of these incidents have sought to explain the rise of paranormal events among early modern Jews in rational terms, interpreting these cases as a delayed response to the trauma of the Spanish expulsion in 1492 and frustration that messianic redemption had not yet occurred. Chajes brings a fresh perspective to these texts and the phenomena that they describe. He accepts early modern reports of spirit possession and exorcism on their own terms. Bringing together historical, anthropological, and literary methodologies, Chajes identifies an international, interfaith context as the backdrop against which these cases and their literary accounts should be read.

*Between Worlds* is an extremely ambitious work which challenges commonly held assumptions about normative Judaism, gender and female spirituality, rabbinic culture and authority, and the encounter between rational thought and belief in spirit possession. The author contends that the early modern history of Jewish spirit possession began on the Iberian peninsula before the expulsion of 1492. This concern with controlling the entry of dead spirits into living bodies was then exported to Safed, a hub of Sephardic mysticism and culture, where it became valuable currency in religious and cultural power brokering.

Chajes has divided his study into five thematic chapters, plus a theoretical introduction and an appendix containing critical translations of several spirit-possession narratives. Each chapter maps out its own distinct phenomenological and interpretive realm of investigation: Chapter
1 deals with the history of Jewish spirit possession; Chapter 2 addresses
the interaction between spirits of the dead and their host bodies; Chap-
ter 3 examines the history of exorcists and exorcism in Jewish tradition;
Chapter 4 explores the distinctive role of women as victims of spirit pos-
session; and Chapter 5 steps outside the mystical community of Safed
and turns to Menasseh ben Israel of Amsterdam to consider the transfor-
mation of narratives about spirit or demon possession as skepticism about
such phenomena became more widespread.

Chajes places early modern Jewish spirit possession squarely in the
historical frame of early modern European religious history. Many of
the chapters begin with thick contextual descriptions, frequently stretch-
ing back to late antiquity, to lay the interpretive groundwork. This
means of organizing the material facilitates a close reading of a wide vari-
ety of sources. At times, however, the repetition of form—deep histori-
\[...\]
contributions. In this respect, her work resembles the studies of Bennett about gender roles in medieval manors.¹

The book contains much of interest. The endnotes are filled with references to complementary works on speech, literacy, and gender studies. But Bardsley makes fewer artistic and literary references than might have been expected. In addition to major authors such as Geoffrey Chaucer and William Langland, Bardsley mentions lesser-known and anonymous poems and songs, such as those collected and printed by the Early English Text Society. The only artistic references are misericord and wall-painting motifs of a demon eavesdropping on two women. Bardsley offers abundant speculation about what village children felt like growing up with such images, and about what medieval women might have concluded upon hearing misogynist literature, but she defers to other people’s studies for deeper analysis of the relationship between orality and literacy or the patronage structure of local art.

Scolding as prosecuted and identified in medieval society may strike modern ears more like slander or defamation of character. “Thief” and “whore” were the accusations most likely to bring prosecution, although the formulaic quality of legal records may have influenced what was preserved on parchment. Based on Bardsley’s sampling of the records, scolding garnered legal notice when such words were exchanged in a public setting, when the victims decided to bring a formal accusation of abuse, and when local legal elites determined that court time was worthwhile. Depending on the village or town venue, women accounted for 80 to 95 percent of the accusations and were more likely to be single or married than widowed (that husbands did not bring legal procedure against their own wives contradicts our modern view of spouses as chief victims). Bardsley presents valuable data on other verbal issues taking up court time, such as the decline of hue and cry procedures, and changes in defamation charges.

The patriarchal argument, of men wanting to silence and devalue “uppity” women, runs into difficulties when males accused of scolding have to be acknowledged, or when the near immunity of widows is noted. The work calls attention to important trends in legal history and should inspire closer examination of late medieval power structures both within and beyond gender lines.

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¹ See, for example, Judith M. Bennett, Women in the Medieval English Countryside: Gender and Household in Brigstock Before the Plague (New York, 1986).

Despite its focus on Protestant demonism (and more specifically on the role of diabolical temptation) in England from Reformation to Restoration, Johnstone’s book probably holds little interest for most readers of this journal because it offers few interdisciplinary insights and essentially recycles old-fashioned religious history with relatively modest methodological dressing. It never engages with theology, either Protestant or Catholic. Johnstone quickly acknowledges that there was no reformation of demonic theory during the Reformation (29), that English Protestantism never tackled the problem of theodicy or explored what might be called demonic political geography (that is, the names, ranks, and numbers of demons). Those who wish to learn about the devil’s preternatural powers in early modern England should read Clark’s work.\footnote{Stuart Clark, Thinking with Demons (New York, 1997).}

Although Johnstone describes diabolism as a “language of negotiation” (17), he insists repeatedly that demons possessed an “agency that was experienced rather than speculated about” in Protestant England (30), a “profound experiential reality” that revolved around temptations in various forms.

In addition to shunning theology, this account never engages with English literature. William Shakespeare’s Othello and Macbeth are compressed into a footnote alongside two minor playwrights (171 n. 97); John Milton appears once (235), but only to justify regicide. Because he stops abruptly at the Restoration of 1660, Johnstone mentions neither of the greatest English Protestant masterpieces built around Satanic temptations—Milton’s Paradise Lost (1677)—a Summa of Thomas Aquinas—like proportions about Johnstone’s topic—and John Bunyan’s Pilgrim’s Progress (1678–1688).

Johnstone’s work thus offers a largely familiar portrait of England’s internecine Protestant struggles mainly from the Elizabethan era through the Civil War, drawn from the almost inexhaustible well of tracts and pamphlets and employing a recipe that might be uncharitably described as “add Devil, season with a large dash of temptation, stir, and print.” Diabolical temptation certainly forms a locus communis of Protestant—indeed, Christian—experience, but its very ubiquity makes it slippery and difficult to contextualize effectively. For this reason, we have, for example, no history of blasphemy. The enterprise seems even more futile when the perspective is as relentlessly insular as Johnstone’s is in this book.

A few memorable nuggets stick in the memory—the wonderfully evocative adjective “ugglesome” (131), or the early Restoration comedy (which, notes Johnstone, was too brief to be actually performed), in which Nicolo Machiavelli presides over a squabble in Hell among Oliver Cromwell, Gustavus Adolphus, and Jules Cardinal Mazarin about which of them had served Satan best (248). This is the only sentence in
the book that mentions as many as three non-English personages, but it is also one of very few that does not derive from an earnest Protestant.

William Monter
Northwestern University


This book of paradoxes argues that the period in English urban history between 1530 and 1688, heretofore considered stagnant, was actually dynamic. It contends that oligarchic urban corporations were hotbeds of democracy and that the utopian prescriptions of English humanists were accurate descriptions of the experiences of urban denizens. It also claims that the exclusion of women from borough government was the source of influence and power and, most incongruously of all, that the “democratic” values of city commonwealths, which made the English Republic possible, were among the Revolution’s first casualties (83).

Withington’s arguments about the vitality of early modern urbanites rest largely upon the dramatic increase in the number of royal charters of incorporation granted following the English Reformation. He defines urban areas by their incorporation rather than by criteria like central place, demographic density, or occupational diversity. By these traditional tests, towns and cities stagnated during the early modern period, with the exception of the tenfold explosion of London’s population. Chartered boroughs, however, increased throughout the period. Although charters were a set of specific legal rights, Withington maintains that they more importantly enabled a definition of community that provided its citizens a primary identification and cultural loyalty. Freeman status within a corporation conferred more than the simple rights bestowed by enrollment in a company or participation in an election. It conferred the values of citizenship upon its holders, encouraging both a sense of ownership within the community and a sense of sacrifice to it.

This ethos of citizenship gave individuals a “calling” for government that they exercised in the places that “adopted” them (113–115). It was the vital characteristic of urban life, expanding political consciousness and political participation in the early modern world. This expansion is unhelpfully labeled “democratic,” sometimes because it manifested itself in struggles against corporate oligarchies (sixteenth-century Ludlow) and sometimes because it encompassed such humble occupations as tallow chandlers and plumbers (late seventeenth-century Newcastle-upon-Tyne). Yet, even the most optimistic estimates of the numbers of borough freemen excludes more than half of the adult males from citizenship; an even larger percentage of them was barred from meaningful political participation. Not even the smallest urban corporations were democratic. All of them were deliberately established as oligar-
Withington roams freely across period and place in his history of urban political culture. With nearly 200 boroughs and the experiences of millions of people from which to choose, the dangers of tendentiousness are readily apparent. But Withington cleverly avoids such dangers by the implicit assertion of a *histoire immobile* that makes one piece of evidence as powerful as another and by occasional in-depth portraits of three vastly different corporations—Ludlow, Cambridge, and York. This sample provides a diversity of location and size, although all three corporations exist in overshadowing proximity to greater royal jurisdictions that complicate their ideology of commonwealth. Until 1641, Ludlow was the site of the Council of the Marches of Wales, Cambridge of an autonomous University, and York of a Council and a Cathedral with overlapping and competing immunities. Withington convincingly makes use of these complexities to deny any simple typology of boroughs, loyalties, and experiences.

The most interesting aspect of *The Politics of Commonwealth* is its author’s imagination. This book displays unusual intellectual curiosity and methodological capacity. Its sources span nearly every imaginable genre, each more unexpected than the last. Charts and graphs are juxtaposed with long quotations of poetry and analyses of apprenticeship contracts with exegeses of humanist texts. Smith and Habermas serve equally as sources of social theory, though the one idea that underpins the work’s conception, corporatism, is more frequently associated with French than British history.¹

Withington wishes to believe in a communitarian past in which the modernizing engine was the freeman rather than the farmer, and the fuel was ethics rather than surplus value. Thus is explained his ambiguous account of the role that the English Revolution played in British history. Withington is not always generous in acknowledging his debts to others, and his grasp of early modern political history is not always surehanded. His elaborate geographical analysis of the members of Parliament chosen in the general election of 1641 might well constitute an example of the ecological fallacy were it not for the fact that no general election took place in 1641 (42–43).

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Empire Families: Britons and Late Imperial India. By Elizabeth Buettner (New York, Oxford University Press, 2004) 310 pp. $85.00 cloth $29.95 paper

Counterflows to Colonialism: Indian Travellers and Settlers in Britain, 1600–1857. By Michael H. Fisher (Delhi, Permanent Black, 2004) 487 pp. $36.95

When George Orwell famously described himself as a member of the British lower-upper-middle class in The Road to Wigan Pier (London, 1937), he noted that he had gone to work as a colonial official in Burma as a member of this socially anxious, upwardly aspiring group. As he wrote, “the attraction of India (and more recently Kenya, Nigeria, etc.) for the lower-upper-middle class . . . [is that] in India, with cheap horses, free shooting, and hordes of black servants, it was so easy to play at being a gentleman” (123). Indeed, in pursuit of gentility, respectability, and social status, many Britons throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries found their way to the Indian subcontinent. The story of these largely middle-class Britons’ families and childhood experiences in India is the subject of Buettner’s thoughtful and carefully researched book. Empire Families adds complexity to the widely circulating image of British children being sent “home” for their education. Empire Families examines how colonial service in India was an opportunity for many “upper-middle-class” families to live better abroad than they might have at home. Through discussions about education, family, and self-representation, Buettner shows how questions of class, race, and gender were negotiated by the families of Britons living and working in India.

The specific need of colonial families to improve their social status was supported by an infrastructure of schools and relatives in India and in Britain to educate and Anglicize the children of middle-rank civil servants, soldiers, missionaries, and other professionals. The members of this in-between group had to be careful to distinguish themselves from the mixed-race populations in India among whom they lived or attended school (74–97), preferring to receive their educations in Britain as a sign of their whiteness and wealth. Yet these colonial employees were not rich; they had to be more practical, if only because they could not afford the kind of schooling and training that the upper middle classes in Britain could (163–175). Because employment in imperial enterprises was actively encouraged, schooling for colonial children became a feeder system for supplying colonial labor. To support and supervise young children who were separated from their parents, a network of relatives and “aunts for hire” emerged to service the familial needs of children whose parents were stationed in India.

One of the most intriguing arguments in Buettner’s book is that the
vision of ideal middle-class family life in an appropriately appointed house and surroundings, whether it was a memory or an aspiration, sustained the traffic of young British children leaving their families and homes in India to attend schools in Britain. The story of the Talbot family epitomizes some of the strains and demands that the empire’s families faced (118–120, 131–136, 192–196, 245–251). Alienated both from Britain and from their families in India, white colonial children could imagine only a peripatetic life for themselves and often tended to return to imperial vocations as adults and recreate similar situations for their children.

One of the book’s major interventions is in examining the disjunctures between textual discourses and archives of everyday practice. Although various prescriptive texts warned that the tropics were dangerous places for small children, many participants remembered childhood with great fondness, rarely recording the physical and social threats to which children were exposed (45–62). Buettner returns to the impact of hegemonic imperial narratives on colonial subjects in later chapters, in particular when examining the shadow that Rudyard Kipling’s writings cast on the ways in which lesser-known figures wrote about their childhoods (121–130).

Buettner is respectful of her subjects, using oral histories, memoirs, family papers, and literature to examine how British men and women who had lived in India understood and narrated their experiences. She is more critical and incisive when describing the rationalizations that animated British imperial activity in India, particularly in Chapter 3 in which she discusses the long family separations that became de rigueur in many colonial families. She is at her analytical best in the conclusion, examining the production of archival sources that Britons formerly domiciled in India have initiated since the 1970s.

Britain’s recent public interest in the empire has fueled an appetite for hearing, collecting, and recording its histories of the empire by those who experienced it, particularly the ones who spent their early childhoods and adulthoods in India, interrupted only by schooling in Britain. As Buettner notes, “Former participants certainly were not the only Britons upon whom the end of empire had an impact, but they did play disproportionate roles in shaping broader national understandings of the raj through generating and disseminating a rich seam of recollection” (255). By highlighting the conditions under which many of her archival sources were produced, Buettner shows a healthy skepticism for some of the themes and narratives that these first-person accounts produced, especially the recurring implication that Indians were grateful for the presence of committed Britons who sacrificed “normal” family life for the progress of colonialism.

Whereas Empire Families addresses a phenomenon with which many Britons and British imperial historians are certainly familiar, Fisher’s Counterflows to Colonialism takes up a topic that few have treated, much less with such detail and original research. The book follows the travails
of Indian travelers to Britain in the early imperial era, roughly from 1600 to the middle of the nineteenth century. Following the life stories of such figures as Dean Mahomet (whose memoirs Fisher edited and published in 1997), David Dyce-Sombre, and various Indian princes, Counterflows describes the ways in which some Indians were able to remake themselves when they arrived in Britain. Like Buettner, Fisher is sympathetic to his subjects, detailing their many trials endured in surviving the costs of being in Britain with few friends or funds. He is critical of the racism that many Indian arrivals faced and notes that the East India Company was ruthless in its efforts to limit the financial claims that Indians could make against it.

Fisher details more counterflows in his book than Buettner does in Empire Families. In contrast to the social climbing available to Orwell and other Britons traveling to India, Counterflows to Colonialism is filled with Indian subjects who found their social status downgraded upon arriving in Britain. Elite noblemen were reduced to poverty; middle-class educators and scholars could become little more than clerks and secretaries; lascars inhabited human warehouses in the East End. Although Fisher makes a strong case that traveling to Britain allowed Indians to finesse their identities—for instance, playing at being royal when they were not—or to experience the pleasures of public life, the recurring theme of the book is that traveling to Britain was not a way for Indians to become upwardly mobile, as it was for the Britons who traveled to India.

One of the strengths of Fisher’s book is its detailed description of the development of a service industry to meet the needs of these new arrivals. From his exposition of the depot system, in which visiting seamen were housed in the East End (150–179), to his discussion of the communities in which Indians lived, Fisher’s research shows that particular communities, especially working-class and lower-class areas, were more permeable to visiting Indians than others. These arguments complement the sections in Buettner’s book that describe where returning Britons settled—on the seaside where a seasonal population that was firmly middle-class tended to go.

Both these books share a commitment to destabilizing national boundaries as a way of writing historical narratives. Although neither author claims any affiliation with a particular school of historical practice or methodology, both contribute to what has been called the “new imperial history” (some may claim that this moniker is no longer as innovative as it once was). Through their ground-breaking, thorough scholarship, both Buettner and Fisher bring together the study of Britain and India into one analytical framework and depart from older conventions that differentiated British historians from South Asianists. This

1 Fisher (ed.), The Travels of Dean Mahomet (Berkeley, 1997).
generative approach enhances our understanding of the multicultural foundations of Britain's history.

Durba Ghosh
Cornell University


In *Men, Women and Property in England, 1780–1870,* Morris combines several different historical approaches to examine the emergence of the English middle class. By mixing econometric data with middle-class self-presentation in wills, correspondence, oral histories, and the occasional Victorian novel, Morris is able to draw firm conclusions about the sources of middle-class economic power, while putting some cultural flesh on quantitative bones. His revelations about the nature of middle-class real-estate ownership are particularly enlightening.

The experience of being middle class in England depended on gender, location, and birth order. In his first chapter, he introduces the Leeds family of Joseph Henry Oates. Plagued by hemorrhoids and by financial uncertainty, Oates struggled to maintain a sense of familial order and to create continued profit for the family firms after his father's death. His main goal was to support dependent family members.

Having introduced this microcosm of the larger problem, Morris turns to a valuable and searching essay that mixes a review of the secondary literature on the middle class with an examination of trends in income and property ownership. He concludes that the first half of the nineteenth century provided persons like Oates with the opportunity to control the urban public sphere and to associate with like-minded men. Ambitious entrepreneurs, working largely with family capital, might make fortunes (causing increasing economic stratification within the upper third of the middle class). But the unprecedented risks included bankruptcy, or, even worse, insolvency without the protection of bankruptcy, downward mobility, and illness or death that destabilized the economic unit.

Wills provide a window into the economic strategies of the middle classes. Morris shows that a priority was to maintain family unity through equitable divisions of property to daughters and sons and the restriction of income to widows to ensure that they would continue to support minor children and that they would remarry wisely. Despite stereotypes about domesticity, keeping a business viable for a succeeding generation or holding onto a family homestead were not as important. In a telling contrast with the will-making strategies of the aristocracy, for whom primogeniture was a way of retaining status, these equitable distributions of property helped to diffuse middle-class power. To the extent that women had their own property, they were much more likely
than were men to focus in their wills on prized possessions, and more likely to include friends, servants, and others outside the nuclear family in their circles of beneficence.

The middling classes were also notable for their investment strategies. Because many of them were able to amass considerable savings by spending as little as 20 or 30 percent of their incomes, members of the middle classes were avid investors, supporting the development of urban areas and, later, railroads and utilities on a national and international scale. Many followed a cycle of real-estate purchase whereby they would invest in “urban estates”—mixed-use parcels of real estate around their homes and businesses, which were used first for domestic occupancy, later for rental income, and after death for the support of widows and dependent daughters. For a discrete period in the nineteenth century, these strategies helped to commit the middle classes to promoting urban development.

Morris’ book is clearly intended for specialists. Although his arguments are clear and well reasoned, and his prose welcomingly informal, the book contains long examples and repetitive tables that add little to the argument. Morris also might have been more attentive to what members of the middle classes had to say about property ownership and distribution in their letters, diaries, and public pronouncements. A chapter on networks and place is a step in the right direction, but it is based on oral histories from only two female members of the Leeds middle class. The process of property acquisition and management is well documented, but the motivations are not: How did religion influence acquisitiveness? Was the lack of interest in passing on a family business related to a belief that children should make their own fortunes?

Despite these few drawbacks, Morris’ work is valuable for its detailed insight into the process that Davidoff and Hall described in *Family Fortunes*. 1 In an era in which economic information might be unreliable, members of the middle classes relied heavily on the “networked family” for their economic survival.

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In his study about the role of family members in identifying a relative’s behavior as mad and in need of intervention, Suzuki sets out to show that the family was the primary force in determining psychiatric treatment in nineteenth-century Britain. Thus does he seek to offer a differ-

1 Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780–1850* (Chicago, 1987).
ent emphasis in the historiography of psychiatry, which has focused on
the rise of the asylum during this period and the presumed decline of the
influence of the family in the care of mad relatives, in favor of state inter-
vention and alienists who worked together to send the mad to places of
confinement. Suzuki argues that families have not been given the attention
that they deserve in caring for mad relatives at home and in in-
fluencing the emergent psychiatric profession through “domestic psy-
chiatry.” His most notable insight is in regard to the development of
moral treatment, which, he argues, doctors observed in homes and then
borrowed for their own practice.

Suzuki’s research is based on Commissions of Lunacy proceedings
to determine whether to declare someone insane that were reported in
contemporary newspapers. These reports provide a window on family
members’ perspectives toward mad people within their own homes.
Since the original documents from these hearings were lost or are inac-
cessible, Suzuki relied on newspaper accounts of 196 hearings reported
in the Times (London), as well as other primary source documents, such
as a son’s writings about his mother. The most serious limitation of these
sources is the fact that they refer only to well-to-do families. This elite
view of madness at home calls for some caution in applying Suzuki’s
conclusions too widely; the views of families of the poor mad are not
covered in this study. The author notes this limitation but does not draw
its implications. Without a comparable study about how poor families in
the nineteenth century viewed and treated their mad relatives in the
home and how they interacted with the state and psychiatry, Suzuki’s as-
sertion that families trumped alienists must be taken with a grain of salt.

Nor is Suzuki’s further claim of “men’s new vulnerability” to being
declared insane because of Evangelical moral strictures about proper do-

cumentary behavior proven on the basis of just seven cited cases (139–148).
Suzuki acknowledges that cases of abusive fathers and husbands being
confined for cruelty were “very rare.” Males comprised about two-
thirds of his sample subjects whom family members considered to be lu-
natics (148, 24).

The author’s contribution is also seriously undermined by his gen-
eralized caricatures of mad people as putting on “performances,” engag-
ing in “antics” and “tricks,” being equated with “homicidal maniacs,” or
as “depraved,” “weak-minded,” “subnormal,” “cunning,” and in need
even refers to a present-day “lunatic,” as if it were appropriate terminol-
ogy about people in the twenty-first century (135). Such views have
more to do with “timeless” popular prejudices than an assessment of the
people and historical evidence in this book.

Geoffrey Reaume
York University
Neilson’s detailed study of British foreign-policy decision making during the interwar period focuses on British relations with Soviet Russia from 1933 to 1939. It challenges one of the most durable myths of twentieth-century European history—that the British government’s Manichaean inclusion of both “guilty men” and “anti-appeasers” led to both the Munich agreement and the Nazi–Soviet pact (41). In his welcome corrective to this caricature, Neilson explores the internal politics of the British government as well as its international obligations and constraints.

British relations with the Soviet Union form the “core-sample” for this study. According to Neilson, Soviet Russia was a variable in every foreign-policy equation for the British government, and the study of British–Soviet interaction provides a wide window onto British foreign policy more generally (2). Neilson does not limit his discussion to bilateral relations. However, he concentrates on Britain’s motives, strategies, and perceptions regarding Soviet Russia and, to a lesser extent, on Soviet Russia itself. This relatively narrow scope proves both useful and effective for Neilson in his effort to explain why the Versailles order failed.

Neilson also closely examines the internal dynamics of the British government. He does not follow the traditional model of diplomatic history that considers states as monoliths. Instead, he draws on a rich range of ideas from international relations and literary theory to illustrate the particular worldviews of each government and its important representatives. British foreign-policy questions went through a labyrinth of meetings and committees before being resolved, and Neilson ably describes just how these processes worked. Furthermore, “personalities complicated negotiations” (303). Neilson justly emphasizes the “influences and predispositions” of such key figures as Neville Chamberlain, Maurice Hankey, and Sir Robert Vansittart (23). This depth of analysis clearly demonstrates the ambiguities of international relations during the 1930s, in contrast to more stylized accounts.

Neilson buttresses his assertions with meticulous research in British archives. Although concentrating on the voluminous record of the British Foreign Office, he also draws on Treasury records and British military archives and on secondary works in English, French, and German. However, Neilson neglects another vein of useful material. His arguments, compelling as they are, would have been further strengthened by the use of Soviet sources, whether in Russian or in translation. Reliance on a British diplomat’s excerpts of “Soviet newspapers,” to cite one instance, leads inevitably to the question of how closely the British account hewed to what was actually printed (233).
This shortfall is relatively insignificant given the book’s many strengths, particularly the sharply focused topic combined with detailed and interdisciplinary analysis. Neilson rightly emphasizes the complexity and variability of British policymaking during the interwar period. His is a balanced and thoughtful account of the mutual suspicion between Britain and Soviet Russia and of how the profound differences in each side’s “mental maps” prevented them from derailing the German war machine (328).

Evelyn Krache Morris
Georgetown University


The so-called renaissance of marriage has its origins in the ancient debates about whether celibacy was preferable to marriage. Fearing that demanding wives and children would undermine the philosopher’s higher calling, the Cynics advocated celibacy, in opposition to Aristotle and Plato, who held that fertile marriages assured the survival of the polis. The Stoics, meanwhile, encouraged child-bearing marriages, considering celibacy unnatural. The early Church fathers, who preached the spiritual benefits of virginity and celibacy and became widely imitated models of asceticism, paved the way for Jerome’s thundering condemnation of marriage and sex–driven conjugal relations. Although he believed the celibate life superior, Augustine conceded that marriage was legitimate and that conjugal relations for the purpose of procreation were licit. Augustine’s teachings on the three pillars of marriage—fidelity, procreation, and sacramental indissolubility—became the cornerstone of Catholic marriage doctrine in the Middle Ages and beyond.

A thoroughly affirmative view of marriage reemerged in early Renaissance Florence, where the humanists, inspired by their Greco–Roman forebears, promoted the advantages of married life, robust families, and effective parenting. Moving beyond Florence, D’Elia presents the first comprehensive study of courtly wedding orations (epithalamia), a surprisingly neglected source, given that more than 300 of these orations have survived and given their potential to illuminate attitudes toward marriage and sexuality in fifteenth-century Italy. Modeled after ancient examples, wedding orations were composed and performed by humanists, such as Guarino Guarini, Ludovico Carbone, and Francesco Filelfo, in stylish Latin prose to celebrate courtly weddings at Ferrara, Milan, Rimini, and Naples. A chapter on extravagant weddings as political propaganda centers on the tropes employed by the orators to highlight the noble ancestry and virtues (magnificence, liberality, and clemency) of patron rulers. A second chapter foregrounds the orators’ exaltation of
heteroeroticism, physical beauty, mutually fulfilling conjugal relations, and companionate marriage. A final chapter suggests that the campaign to desacralize celibacy waged in the Reformation owed a debt to Italian humanists.

The author’s sure hand in rendering humanist Latin rhetoric falters when dealing with mundane matters. For example, the Dowry Fund of Florence (Monte delle doti) is mistakenly called a “savings bank” (29); the assertion that “all women had equal access to the law” in fifteenth-century Italy ignores ubiquitous legal restrictions that served to inhibit the ability of daughters, wives, and widows to act as independent legal persons (9); the assertion that condemnations of extravagant weddings were “generally limited to Tuscany” neglects the assaults on excessive nuptial expenses throughout Italy, including Ferrara, Milan, and Naples (45); and the link between population losses and the revival of wedding orations is raised but left unexamined. The failure to counterbalance the orators’ credulity-straining rhetoric of marital bliss with a discussion of the prevalence of extramarital sex and illegitimate children fathered by princes adds up to a distorted picture of what D’Elia calls the “the culture of marriage and sex in Italian courts” (83). By concentrating almost exclusively on wedding orations, moreover, D’Elia exaggerates their uniqueness. An array of literary texts and visual artifacts—especially painted wedding chests studied intensively by art historians—attests to the pervasive classical treatment of elite marriages in the Italian Renaissance.

D’Elia’s findings in the end are vitiated by a bias against celibacy, leading the author to conclude his liberatory account with Luther, a dedicated foe of the celibate ideal, whose knowledge of humanist arguments was at best tenuous. A nonteleological, yet probably more rewarding, approach would have led the author to extend his story to Italy during the Counter-Reformation, when the ideal and practice of virginity and celibacy were revitalized and the Church took unprecedented control over marriage rites.

Julius Kirshner
University of Chicago


Scarith were little capsules of mud and hair, so named because the word appeared on a document found inside one. Their “discoverer,” nineteen year-old Curzio Inghirami, claimed that they were of Etruscan origin and had been left buried at his family’s villa, Scornello, outside Volterra, where he began to find them in 1634. They contained writings, some in Etruscan and others in Latin, on linen rag paper in script imitative of
Etruscan inscriptions, all purportedly the prophecies and accounts of Prospero of Fiesole from the era of the Catiline wars.

Inghirami entrusted these finds to the learned academy of the Sepolti. Subsequently they were exhibited at the university in Pisa and for the grand duke himself, Ferdinando de’ Medici, who became interested in a discovery that involved an important family and purported to present a venerable and distinct Tuscan heritage. Eventually, thanks to such interest, Inghirami was able to publish the scarith texts in 1636 in a handsome and elaborate edition.

Broadcasting of the discovery, however, met with immediate doubtful responses. One line of criticism was simply that the Etruscans had not known paper but had written on bolts of linen cloth (no one noticed until 1700 that one sheet in fact bore the watermark of the ducal paper factory). The book only raised further problems. Urban VIII, himself Tuscan, the same pope who only a few years earlier had engineered the condemnation of Galileo, took an interest in them. Their authenticity now became a political issue between Rome and Tuscany. Others generally made much of the paper as historically out of place. Leone Allaci drily noted that the sequential recovery of the texts followed the narrative devised within them too closely for coincidence.

Inghirami found defenders, and he continued to advocate the authenticity of the texts, publishing a response in 1645. What Rowland mainly covers are the scholarly debates, fulsomely analyzed in terms of personalities and institutionalized interests. She employs a wide-ranging intellectual and literary historical approach. Despite the dust jacket’s label—an “outlandish prank”—Rowland treats it as a serious attempt to deceive that also became a topic of interest and a diversion among delegates to the meetings and councils culminating in the Treaty of Westphalia ending the Thirty Years’ War. Rowland has no doubts from the handwriting that Inghirami authored the forgeries. She accounts for his actions by his desire “to become a historian rather than, as his parents hoped, a lawyer” (111). Discovery of the scarith allowed him to remain at Scornello, to play the part of Volterra’s historian. Rowland maintains that his unpublished *Annals of Tuscany* rests on a foundation of similarly falsified papers, an invented past. Comparing him to another notorious forger, Thomas Chatterton (1752–1770), she concludes that for both, “forgery was an aggressive act, a way for a young man of restless intelligence to take quiet revenge on a stifling social system, especially on its scholarly elite from which they were so definitely excluded” (116).

Inghirami’s forgery ran in the vein of Annius of Viterbo (d. 1502). What he added to the heritage of making up an Etruscan past was supplying “archival” support. But he also crafted his presentation of them, the *Ethruscarum Antiquitatum Fragmenta*, as “a monumental parody” (129). The problem was that his beffa (a characteristically Tuscan form of sadistic practical joke found in the work of Boccaccio, among others) charged beyond his control, dragging him into ducal politics, Reformation-era sectarian squabbling, and regional rivalries. Inghirami was never
able to disclose his role and enjoy the “joke.” Perhaps he enjoyed a posthumous laugh when the scarith were stolen in 1985 by thieves who apparently thought they were genuine.

Thomas Kuehn
Clemson University

*Patrons and Adversaries: Nobles and Villagers in Italian Politics, 1640–1760.*
By Caroline Castiglione (New York, Oxford University Press, 2005)
254 pp. $72.00 cloth $19.95 paper

In this book, Castiglione investigates a collection of villages near Rome that constituted a princely enclave, Monte Libretto, within the Papal state. The Barberini family, originally Florentine, purchased these rural estates, in effect a stato, in 1644 for 1.16 million scudi. (How they obtained this fortune would make an interesting story not relevant to the purpose of this book.) The principal aim is to uncover the political life of the villagers, usually about 2,500 in number, as they used literacy, the papal bureaucracy, and the occasional paternalistic impulses of their lords to survive the Barberinis’ need for income and the papacy’s for taxes.

Castiglione produces some marvelous records to illuminate life in these villages. The Barberini lords were indefatigable correspondents who bombarded their local officials with letters and kept good archives. Even rarer, for a number of years in some of the villages, records of local communal meetings survive, providing important evidence of local government at its literal grassroots. Hence, this study provides a fresh glimpse at the early modern countryside in a part of Europe generally neglected in broader debates about rural life and agriculture.

Monte Libretto, in the mountainous Sabine country of Latium, provides the setting for Castiglione’s extended look at political culture and how what she calls “adversarial literacy” shaped village ways of pushing back against the claims of Barberini lordship. All parties used the written word to foster their own interests, a dynamic probably going back to the dawn of literacy. Villagers and lords assumed that oral customs and documents formed a contract that all parties were bound to respect. The individual Barberini nobles emerge as distinctive characters, but Castiglione’s emphasis is on what remains an amorphous mass of villagers. It is not entirely clear who these country people were. These villagers must have had different levels of wealth and education that shaped their political, social, and economic goals. Nor are enough details provided on the local ecology, crops, and animals, wild and domesticated, to permit a deduction about how these villagers made their living. Without a clearer sense of the social composition of these villages, their political culture becomes not much more than a vague desire to pay as little in rents and dues as possible, and to defend local customs in the face of perceived innovative lordly exactions.
Few local people emerge as distinct individuals with ideas and goals of their own. The local records seem to mask the village leaders—a wise policy since the Barberini would punish their opponents. Lords and popes needed more income from the countryside over the course of the eighteenth century, and in Rome itself the public debt and other investments provided the context in which agriculture did or did not pay. Even the villagers had choices, and it is not clear whether fairly stable population levels hide migration of the talented and ambitious to the big city or better rural prospects.

This book does not tie the political–culture questions to other mountainous regions of Europe where similar issues have been studied. Without a closer look at Barberini or village budgets, which may simply not exist, the local political culture that emerges seems detached from a broader context.

Steven A. Epstein
University of Kansas


Reminiscent of earlier eras, this handsome volume (with footnotes at the bottom of the page) evokes the Risorgimento without directly addressing politics and recalls a patriotic historiography long out of fashion. Mueller deviates from that tradition, however, by not reproducing letters in full, summarizing them instead. Her sympathetic and informative commentary, as gentle as that of an elderly aunt pouring through the family album (the study has forty-nine photographs), carries the book. Aided by lavish notes, the book also points to social issues central to much current research. Thus, disparate approaches intersect, brought full circle through focus on the family.

Mueller begins with the Manins’ seventeen-year-old daughter, who turned from reading Plutarch’s life of Caesar to ask, “Mamma, what does epilepsy mean?” The anguish of life with her epilepsy becomes a major thread of the family drama. It started with Daniele Manin as an ambitious young attorney who read the major European and Italian authors; edited learned legal texts; translated from Latin, Greek, and Hebrew; and wrote on the history of Venice, while negotiating for a railroad line (the very symbol of progress) from Milan to Venice. He then fell in love with Teresa Persinotti, whom he met in one of the city’s prominent intellectual salons. Their early love letters fairly burst with admiration for Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the ideals of the French Revolution, and Italian patriotism. Passionate letters, full of high seriousness, they forecast a life between intellectual equals; their subsequent delight in marriage and ambitious plans for educating their children (Emilia, born in 1826, and Giorgio, born five years later) predict happiness.
Instead, their correspondence reveals Teresa’s gradual subordination to worry about everyone’s health, about her children, and about the dangers to Daniele when arrested and imprisoned by the Austrians in 1848 and about the risks that they faced as he led the revolution and the new Venetian republic in time of war. Devoted parents, Daniel and Teresa made sure that both children read the classics, learned languages, and studied mathematics. In seeking a private tutor for their epileptic daughter, however, they considered the dangers of youthful (and feminine) passions, choosing a priest tolerant of their Deism. Daniele read recent works on epilepsy, starting with Erasmus Darwin; and they consulted the best physicians available in the Veneto and later in Paris. Over her lifetime, Emilia endured treatments with herbs, drugs, electricity, baths, bleeding, and magnetism, none of which brought lasting relief. If there is something remarkably modern in the Manins’ comprehension for Teresa’s sister, caught in an unhappy affair with a married man, there is something disturbingly modern in the recurrences of depression: Emilia’s understandable and public, Teresa’s intimated but hidden, Manin’s a response to fear of blindness and to familial and political disappointments.

When the Venetian republic fell after only seventeen months, following an extended Austrian seige, the family sailed into exile. Theresa’s letters to friends, sisters, and brothers described the despair of their last days in Venice and on the crowded ship that took them to Corfu at the end of August, 1849, for difficult weeks in quarantine. Just days after they finally landed in Marseilles, Theresa died of the cholera that had racked Venice. Manin and his two children made their way to Paris, where he eked out a meager living by giving Italian lessons. Emily died there in 1854, followed by Manin three years later, an old man at fifty-three.

The dwindling family’s gloom was only sporadically lifted by considerable (and historically significant) moral support. A stoic, loving correspondence with their extended family is brightened somewhat by outpourings of admiration and sympathy—on Corfu, in Marseille at Theresa’s death, in the French press, and at Emilia’s funeral, which the size of the crowd and the famous people in attendance made into a notable public event. Manin remained regularly in touch with the principal Italian exiles and with an astonishing array of France’s leading progressive figures. His last important political act was to urge Italy’s republicans to support Piedmont’s monarchy as the realistic path to Italian unification.

Giorgio, devoted to sister and father, continued his engineering studies in France. At seventeen, he had donned a uniform to fight beside his father, and in 1859 he served as an officer under Garibaldi. Once Venice became part of Italy in 1867, Giorgio served as the official in charge there of the entombment of his father, mother, and sister. When he died in 1882, Ernest Renan eulogized the character with which Giorgio had borne the difficulties that befall sons of great men and
praised him for character above the petty ambitions of their age. With that enigmatic assessment, the family formed less than sixty years before came to its end.

Throughout this carefully constructed study, Mueller remains as discrete as her nineteenth-century sources. The information that she provides might nevertheless stimulate study of the international network of European liberals and the conception of law and history that they shared. So should its suggestive insights into the lives of middle-class women, the nineteenth-century preoccupation with health, and the confident expectations from science. For the participants, all of these matters were part of the Risorgimento itself. Well aware of these implications, Mueller settles for the compelling saga of a famous family.

Raymond Grew
University of Michigan


This study of monasterial peasants in the Allgäu, Upper Swabia, tries to reconcile what the author sees as a fundamental contradiction in the periodization known as “early modern Europe.” Although still considered in a dynamic period of transition, most “early modern” societies on the European continent actually proved unable to break free of their social and demographic constraints, thus being unable to achieve significant breakthroughs in economic output. According to Sreenivasan, however, the problem lies in historians’ fixation on technologies of production, which overlooks the fact that “superficial continuities of form can conceal dramatic shifts in underlying mechanisms” (7). For the peasants of “Ottobeuren, this “underlying mechanism” was the creation of a dense infrastructure of cash-based market exchanges that the author has uncovered through massive research on the notarized protocols. These documents were used by Ottobeuren peasants to record inheritances, family obligations, and many other aspects of village relations.

By 1550, the rural population of Ottobeuren was approaching a demographic crisis in which the division of farmsteads into parcels had left most households with plots dangerously close to, or below, the subsistence level. Realizing that the continued subdivision of peasant farmsteads would create holdings too small to be economically viable, the monks of Ottobeuren (aided by village leaders) effectively put an end to partible inheritance, strictly controlling creation of new households while preserving existing farmsteads.

On the surface, this strategy had the effect of freezing village property relations in their mid-sixteenth century mold; landholding patterns in Ottobeuren apparently changed little in the period from 1560 to 1620 (148–151). Sreenivasan argues, however, that a dynamic transformation
was taking place below the surface of this apparent immobility. The new impartible inheritance, as practiced in Ottobeuren, was not a “winner take all” proposition in which the noninheriting siblings were left with nothing. On the contrary, the designated heir to the farmstead had to purchase the farmstead from the current owner (normally his parents), with each noninheriting sibling receiving equal shares of the purchase sum. The new “cash intensive inheritance practices” forced the the heir to borrow money both to buy the farm and to settle his kinship obligations with cash payments. Regular and frequent participation in the cash economy, driven by impartable inheritance, thus became dominant in the new village order and survived the Thirty Years’ War. Although the war cut the population in half, creating a land reserve that could have easily supported a return to partible inheritance, the village elites were able to maintain the system of impartible inheritance.

Sreenivasan’s treatment of his sources is skillful and engaging, but the changes that he has so ably analyzed do not necessarily add up to “dramatic shifts in underlying mechanisms.” Indeed, the old Europe that he describes seems to have been much better at perpetuating itself than at making the transition to modernity.

Edgar Melton
Wright State University


Inequality in compensation and valuation of men’s and women’s work has persisted for hundreds of years. Although Ogilvie focuses on early modern Germany, the questions that she pursues and the methods that she deploys offer models for any scholar who seeks to understand why “[p]ower and influence over worldly goods is divided between the sexes very unequally” (1). She argues that women throughout history have enjoyed less access to resources because they “have had less freedom of choice in production and consumption” (1). Scholars have advanced a number of explanations for this situation. Some have maintained that the reasons are technological: Women’s work depended on their physical endowments. Others have preferred a cultural approach that highlights customs and mentalities, focusing, for instance, on how particular cultural factors structured marriage patterns, education, sexuality, and so on. A third major approach—which Ogilvie terms “institutional”—analyzes the organization of the particular societies in which women lived and worked.

Although Ogilvie notes that each of these approaches provides general answers to the question of inequality, they all have their flaws and, when assessed one against the other, fail to satisfy. Therefore, she rejects these moncausal, macrolevel interpretations in favor of a time-
allocation model that, she insists, better reveals the dynamics of work for both men and women. In short, she proposes that differences in gender-specific work patterns arose “from individual decisions about how to use one’s time” (13). These decisions inevitably occurred within a “framework of constraints,” among which were technology, cultural norms, and institutions (13).

After setting the stage through a careful examination of the social and demographic makeup of her selected area, two districts in Württemberg, she applies her time-allocation analysis to four groups of women—daughters and maidservants, married women, widows, and independent unmarried women. She usually prefers socioeconomic and social-institutional explanations rather than cultural or technological ones. She maintains, for instance, that “the retention of offspring in the household was not determined . . . by technological considerations” but was strongly influenced by the socioeconomic characteristics that her econometric analysis uncovered (55). Household structure was never “a faithful expression of either technological efficiency or cultural norms” (55). Broader and more provocative is her assessment of the overall economic results of inequality in male–female work. Preindustrial societies placed restrictions on women’s work, consumption, and productivity, thereby hurting not only women (and children) but also wider society in “terms of reduced welfare and stifled growth” (351). The costs were high.

One of the great strengths of Ogilvie’s study is the rigorous testing of each interpretation against the others. By employing qualitative and quantitative materials for Wildberg and Ebhausen and by drawing comparisons from secondary literature on other areas, she weaves an intricately patterned cloth of influences and results. Hers is not an easy book to read, requiring close attention to the structure of her subtle and complex arguments. But the effort will be well spent by anyone interested in the role of women in early modern times, in how economies grew (or did not), and in how various methodological approaches can be convincingly combined.

Mary Lindemann
University of Miami


The growing body of literature on the “biological standard of living” has contributed to our understanding of well-being in societies of the past, when other indicators such as income are difficult to assess. Measures of average height or longevity can be compared relatively well over time in populations with constant distribution of genetic traits. Height, in par-
ticular, is affected by the balance of nutritional intake and claims by diseases and physical activity during youth. Schuster’s book provides new anthropometric and mortality evidence for nineteenth-century southern Bavaria and complements Baten’s earlier research.¹

Schuster’s chosen path is to focus on a small area but to provide in-depth analysis. His main source of evidence are conscription records of about 20,000 young men born between 1813 and 1842, with information on height, disease, and socioeconomic background (occupation of the conscript and his parents, legitimacy of birth, and orphan status). He obtained a sample of conscripts from the three court districts that constituted Munich, the capital city of the then Kingdom of Bavaria, and collected data on all conscripts from four additional, rural districts: Miesbach, Reichenhall, Tölz, and Wasserburg. Since conscription was virtually universal (and did not depend on physical stature), the data are representative of the general population and not only the poorer strata seeking employment in an army. However, as is the case with many other anthropometric studies of historical populations, they provide no evidence about the height of women, whose trajectory of well-being could have deviated slightly from that of men if one of the genders had systematically received preferential treatment by parents.

Prior to engaging in statistical analysis, the book offers meticulous descriptions of the districts’ economic diversification, agriculture, and demographical patterns, making extensive use of reports by contemporaries and historical statistics. From an international perspective, a common feature in this region was its high infant mortality rate, in both towns and the countryside; about 40 percent of infants died within the first year. A chapter is devoted to this topic, arguing on the basis of previous literature that low prevalence of breast feeding and inadequate feeding practices can be regarded as a main culprit.

When turning to the twenty-one-year-old conscripts, the picture is less bleak. The average height of about 168cm compares well with other European countries in the nineteenth century, and the decline in height over time is much less pronounced than in areas witnessing industrialization. But height differed significantly by district and socioeconomic provenance. In particular, farmers cultivating their own soil and people working in food-related trades were able to confer nutritional advantages to their sons. Schuster also uses the information on diseases from the conscription records to create several major disease categories. He shows that several types of chronic diseases were associated with a significant reduction in physical stature, even when controlling for other socioeconomic factors.

That Schuster was able to link records from local parish registers in Miesbach into the 1920s is probably the most remarkable part of his book. In a comparison of a conscript’s last occupation before death and his parent’s occupation at the time of conscription, he finds that taller men were more likely to experience upward intergenerational mobility.

¹ Jörg Baten, Ernährung und wirtschaftliche Entwicklung in Bayern 1730–1880 (Stuttgart, 1999).
and they had a higher probability of being married. In the last part of the book, Schuster studies the mortality risk in this linked sub-sample, using stratified Kaplan-Meier plots, logit models, and Cox proportional-hazard models. On the basis of the statements on cause of death, or at least the symptoms—which often required translation into modern notions of diseases—Schuster even estimates competing risk-mortality models. Consistent with the demographical literature, marital status is found to be a strong predictor of mortality risk, even though the mechanism at work—protective effects of marriage versus its selective character—remains to be studied. Occupation was significantly related to mortality as well. So far as height is concerned, the results are dramatically mixed, ranging from not statistically significant to mortality-enhancing. Considering the small number of historical studies on the association between mortality and height, this result is remarkable, in particular since the literature on modern (male) populations suggests the opposite relationship. A full appreciation of the results in this section requires consulting the tables in the appendix (on CD-ROM); at this point, the text proceeds more rapidly than the more descriptive parts in the beginning.

Although the book’s geographical coverage is limited to a region that remained mostly untroubled by the industrialization occurring elsewhere in Europe, it should be valuable to those interested in past living standards (and able to read German). Combining elements from anthropometric history, historical demography, and narrative history, Schuster is able to paint a colorful picture of the living conditions of Bavarians. More anthropometric studies that virtually trace subjects from the cradle to the grave, even if the record linkage involved in such an interdisciplinary approach is labor-intensive, would certainly be useful.

Marco Sunder
University of Munich


At the turn of the twentieth century, Jews in the Russian and Ottoman Empires shared a number of important characteristics. Both lived in multinational empires undergoing revolutionary change in which questions of national identity played an important role. Both retained distinctive cultural features, among the most important of which was language—“Judeo-German,” or Yiddish, in Russia and Judeo-Spanish, or Ladino, in Ottoman lands. On a more mundane level, there were numerous contacts. The dynamic Russian port city of Odessa thronged with Jews from the Ottoman Empire, while Constantinople was a magnet for Russian Jews, including the small groups of proto-Zionists using it as a transit point to Palestine.
Yet, the two empires were almost never paired as Jewish places, either by contemporaries or by historians. For Russian Jews, comparisons were to be made with France, Germany, or Britain, which served more as favorable models than the presumably backward lands ruled from the Sublime Porte. Ottoman Jews looked almost exclusively to France. Moreover, the Jews of both empires were heirs to very different cultural traditions, the Ashkenaz (western) and the Sephardi (eastern). Nor did it help that Russia and the Ottoman Empire were frequently at war during the nineteenth century.

A comprehensive comparison of Russian and Ottoman Jewries would be daunting in any case, even if it ignored further internal subdivisions, such as those represented by Constantinople/Salonika and Warsaw/St. Petersburg. Stein has begun this difficult process by examining one aspect of their respective cultures, the Jewish-language press in Yiddish and Ladino (and only tangentially in Hebrew). She presents three case studies, in which the comparative aspect is usually close at hand: the creation of a modern Jewish press culture; the use of images to convey an ideological message; and the information conveyed to Jewish readers by newspaper advertising. In her study, the press serves as an index to the process of the modernization of Jewish communities, as vehicles for “making Jews modern.”

The process of modernization within Jewish communities, which involved the formation of modern Jewish identities, occurred within empires that were themselves engaged in the search for a national identity. Was the Russian Empire to be ethnically Russian (russkii) or multi-ethnic (rossiiskii)? Was the Ottoman Empire to remain based on the millet system of corporate bodies based on religion, or to become a centralized Turkish state? Given these themes of constructed national identity within the public sphere, the work of Anderson and Habermas—both cited in the bibliography—come immediately to mind. However, this book is largely theory-free. Stein prefers to deal with the specific test cases of two newspapers that were published in Russia and the Ottoman Empire during the fin de siècle—Russia’s first Yiddish-language daily, Der fraynd (St Petersburg-Warsaw, 1903–1913) and the long-lived Ladino paper El tiempo (Constantinople, 1872–1930).

The strongest chapters in the book are those describing how the two newspapers created a “newspaper culture,” which involved defining a role as well as attracting readers. Their most obvious goal was to serve as a conduit of modern values and sensibilities to the Jewish masses. For Der fraynd, it entailed the promotion of secularism, support for the Yiddish language (then being accepted as “a national language of the Jewish people”), and a lukewarm support for Zionism, as the movement

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grew in popularity. The paper tried to be all things to all readers, exemplified by its initial foundation in the national capital of St. Petersburg and subsequent movement to Warsaw, in the very midst of “Yiddishland.”

*El tiempo* had to fight language battles that were largely resolved in Russia. In Eastern Europe, enlightenment-minded novelists of the nineteenth century yearned to write in Hebrew but were constrained to write in Yiddish in order to find an audience. Similarly, for the editor of *El tiempo*, Ladino was a mark of shame, “a bastard tongue and a dying language.” Far preferable for Jews was the acquisition of French—not a surprising choice, given that the paper was funded in part by the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris. The language politics of *El tiempo* grew more convoluted at the turn of the century, when the paper became an advocate of Turkish-language acquisition, as part of its support of Ottomanism, “the construction of one country made up of different religious elements.” The irony was that the other advocate of Turkish language for the Ottoman minorities—the Young Turk movement—was in the process of undermining the very ideal of Ottomanism.

One of the symptoms of modernization in both imperial settings, the creation of constitutional regimes between 1905 and 1908, was detrimental to the health of both parties. The relaxation of censorship and controls on publishing, as well as the emergence of Jewish party politics with distinctive ideologies, meant that no newspaper could pretend to speak for *klal Israel* (all of the Jewish people). The “here-ism” of the Bund, with its emphasis on Yiddish culture in the Diaspora, could never be reconciled with the *Erets Israel* orientation of the Zionists, and their stress on Hebrew culture. *Der Fraynd*, despite a move to Warsaw in 1908 to be closer to its contributors and readership, closed in 1913. *El tiempo* lingered until 1930, but with a much reduced influence.

The test cases that comprise the rest of the book are less comparative. Stein investigates how the Yiddish press began to use images—cartoons and photographs—to communicate messages, especially against the backdrop of the revolution of 1905 and its attendant pogroms. In contrast, she devotes a short chapter to Ladino supplements to *El Tiempo*, published between the 1870s and 1890s, which sought to convey Franco-Jewish bourgeois models to promote a more modern Ottoman Jewry.

The book’s final section deals with that quintessentially modern phenomenon, newspaper advertising. Stein’s most interesting contention is that study of the advertisements in *Der fraynd* reveals the emergence of a “Yiddish consumer culture” in which participants “were imagined to have different commercial and aesthetic needs than the readers of Russian” (159). This interesting hypothesis, however, requires a broader database than just the columns of *Der fraynd*. Moreover, one theme is curiously absent from this discussion—emigration. Only one paragraph is devoted to advertising by shipping companies, although the great transatlantic Jewish migration was then at its height.
The chapter on advertising in *El tiempo* takes the large leap of linking advertisements for patent medicines and fire-insurance companies to the growing economic crisis affecting Ottoman Jewry. It is hardly a certainty, however, that ruined Jewish artisans sought to assuage their insecurities with either “pink pills” or policies from the London and Lancashire Fire, Ltd.

Given the pioneering nature of Stein’s book, quibbles about omissions and overgeneralizations need not be stressed. The work raises a host of important issues regarding two Jewish communities in the throes of modernization, seen from a rare comparative perspective.

John D. Klier
University College London


Gorlizki and Khlevniuk present a detailed, intriguing study about the last years of Joseph Stalin and his ruling circle, using Russian archival sources dealing with the Communist Party’s governing body—the Politburo—and its members that have only recently become available, as well as newly published memoirs and oral interviews. They show that, far from being at the complete disposal of one man or of various Party factions, the Soviet ruling circle had become a mixture of personal dictatorship and modern state bureaucracy. It was a “neo-patrimonial” system marked by two elements in tension with each other—one based on a need to have predictable, specialized, committee-based methods of governing and the other based on a system of personal loyalty that threatened “any notion of a continuous routine bureaucracy” (9).

In clear, concise prose, the authors show that Stalin, attempting to control autonomous tendencies among his colleagues during World War II, resorted to bullying and vilifying them to restore the prewar equilibrium rather than initiating mass purges of the Party and state. Stalin’s personal whims weighed heavily on the actions of members of the ruling circle, as seen in the campaign against Western influences wrongly attributed by others to advisor Andrei Zhdanov. Yet elements of predictable, committee-based forms of governance emerged as the Soviet government—the Council of Ministers and its committees—assumed greater responsibility for the economy. The Leningrad and Gosplan Affairs of 1949 to 1951, concocted by Stalin, were purges of a limited, surgical nature rather than signs of radical changes in governance. In the Nineteenth Party Congress of 1952, Stalin shook up the Party and state apparatus by fiercely attacking potential successors and instigating a campaign of hysteria against a supposed “Doctors’ Plot.” His failing health and declining mental state, however, increasingly removed him from the
workings of the inner circle, the members of which turned to collective forms of leadership and initiated comparatively radical reforms in the months after Stalin’s death.

Though it is a fascinating, well-researched analysis of Kremlin inside politics, *Cold Peace* lacks a comparative approach to the study of twentieth-century dictatorships. It makes only passing reference to those of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, failing to engage contemporary scholarship about either of them. In some cases, its arguments could have been more clearly explained. The authors often refer to the growing Cold War tensions that had begun to influence Soviet policy by 1947/48, but they do not show them having an impact on the dynamics of the ruling circle. Nor do they pursue their suggestion that Stalin’s seventieth birthday in 1949 played a role in his motivation for the Lenin-grad and Gosplan Affairs and his change of leadership tactics. In addition, the oral interviews that they conducted with lower-ranking officials and relatives of Politburo members did not receive critical treatment as sources.

William Jay Risch
Georgia College and State University


The three editors open this collection with an introductory essay on “Adjudicating Homicide: The Legal Framework and Social Norms,” which ranges over nearly four centuries in British North America and the United States. On the one hand, they trace the development of formal criminal-justice systems, from the different codes and procedures of seventeenth century Virginia and Massachusetts through the late eighteenth-century establishment of state and federal constitutions to the policies of the near present. This part is a story, mostly, of expanding rights granted to defendants. The process moved slowly but strongly through the colonial period, rapidly in the early states, and slowed down again until the 1860s and the Fourteenth Amendment. The “due process” clause first inspired procedural changes, and, almost a century later, demanded them, once the United States Supreme Court determined that the federal Bill of Rights should extend to the states.

The authors also point out that “changing community ideas about insanity, the development of children, gender roles, and racism have affected the law” (3). In broadest outline, legal reform has been driven by changing contemporary mores, notably by the humanitarian ideals of the Enlightenment and by the expansion of democracy to include not only white male defendants but women and minorities. Yet, even apart from some backing and filling—notably about capital punishment—at the case level the black-letter law has often in effect been subverted by pros-
Executors, judges, and juries, all with biases of their own involving not only the usual academic trio of race, class, and gender but also in this context mental competency, the four subjects of the chapters to follow.

As a guide to the history of murder jurisprudence, the opening essay is a model of concision and clarity. But its very comprehensiveness makes it a little misleading as an introduction to this particular collection, in that only two of the nine individual chapters reach past this geographical bound and/or the nineteenth century. But, with this caveat, the volume as a whole should be useful to students in criminal-justice programs. Five of the contributions, by Elizabeth De Wolfe, Lawrence Goodheart, Dave Lindorff, Alan Rogers, and Nancy Steenburg, build on, or are taken from, full-length books already published or nearly published. If, accordingly, the versions published in this collection are not the most authoritative now available, and the other pieces, by less established authors, are not truly pathbreaking in themselves, they all serve as useful guides to a number of relevant and interdisciplinary topics. Taken together, they sketch, either as case studies or short surveys, the differences among English, colonial, and Native American systems of justice; the conflict among legal, medical, and popular definitions of insanity; the question of *mens rea* in minors; and the impacts, positive and negative, of race, class, and gender in determining the outcomes of murder trials.

Roger Lane
Haverford College

*Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769–1850.* By Steven W. Hackel (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2005) 476 pp. $59.95 cloth $24.95 paper

Alta California was a colony of the Viceroyalty of New Spain, founded in 1769 to keep Russian and British traders from claiming that part of the Pacific coast. Although missions were on the decline in Latin America, opposed by regalists and reformers alike, mercantilist theory required that this late-coming colony pay for itself. José de Gálvez revived the mission reduction as an economical way to occupy territory and support presidios. Without conquerors to demand encomiendas of tributary Indians, chronic wars to supply a stream of captives, or a repartimiento system to draft and allocate minimum-wage laborers, California’s economy rested on the missions, which sold the neophytes’ products at low prices and retained half of their wages when they were hired out.

The Franciscans had a low opinion of their “rude” converts, who chanted the “Rezo” in all too many languages and in foraging season looked longingly at the hills and seashores. As time passed, and the Indians of California met and exceeded European norms—becoming productive farmers, pastoralists, and craftsmen; establishing town governments on the Spanish model; learning to play musical instruments;
and converting the missions into general stores—the missionaries continued to marginalize them as unfit for communion. Father Junípero Serra (about whom Hackel has little to say) in fourteen years of ministry at Mission San Carlos de Borromeo, near the presidio of Monterey, never once administered the Viaticum to a native (173).

In a significant reinterpretation of North American colonial history, Hackel concludes that the conquest of Alta California was ecological. California’s 300,000 native inhabitants were not subdued by the seasoned gobernantes, by the 1,000 settlers and soldiers from upper New Spain, nor by the spiritual power of the Spanish-born Franciscans. From seacoast to hinterland, they were conquered by European pathogens, animals, and plants. Epidemics devastated the villages and drove the survivors to take refuge in the reductions, where endemic diseases like syphilis lay waiting to reduce them further. Escaped livestock caused an “ungulate irruption,” degrading the environment and allowing European weeds and grasses to replace the native species. Under this double onslaught, hunting-gathering-fishing peoples could no longer sustain their families nor pass along their ancient skills. The “dual revolutions” answer, at last, the vexing questions of why wave after wave of Indians continued to enter the confines of the reductions, and why, despite mistreatment, they stayed in them instead of returning to the freedom of their valleys and villages.

The first to apply the technique of family reconstitution, developed for the study of early modern communities in England and France, to an Indian community in colonial Latin America, Hackel has mined the exhaustive nominal records of Mission San Carlos, covering about 3,000 Indians who lived there between 1770 and 1850 (see the methodological comments in Appendix A). His findings, presented in dozens of tables, are poignant. Less than a quarter of mission-born infants lived to be fifteen, the average age at first marriage for mission-born females. The average length of a union was only eight years; a majority of couples were infertile; and fewer than one in ten mission-married women reached the age of fifty (106–113, 215–216). Recognizing that a single mission could be anomalous, Hackel has applied the same technique to the populations of Missions San Diego and San Gabriel, using data compiled under his direction by the staff at the Early California Population Project at the Huntington Library, with similar preliminary results. He has also checked his conclusions against existing research for all twenty-one California missions. Everywhere, Indian population was in free fall.

In his last chapter, Hackel shows that a remnant of Christian Indians survived the secularization of the missions—which in California, unlike Florida or Mexico, became doctrinas only after they were secularized—to take up lands and employment as citizens of the Republic of Mexico. But there is an epilogue. Early Americanists expanding the canon to include all colonies within the bounds of the present United States will note that the California Constitutional Convention and the U.S. Con-
gress, not Spaniards or Mexicans, denied California Indians the rights to vote and to appear in court.

Amy Turner Bushnell
John Carter Brown Library


Rothman’s work examines the dynamics of interracial sex in Virginia prior to the Civil War. The foundation of Rothman’s argument rests on three consistent themes. First, prior to the Civil War, white Virginians largely ignored interracial liaisons so long as the relationships remained informal and relatively inconspicuous. Rothman cites a myriad of examples of blacks and whites traversing the sexual color line with relative impunity. For white Virginians, interracial relationships that lacked legitimacy and existed mostly beyond the radar of polite society posed little threat to the slavery system or notions of white hegemony.

A second theme suggested by Rothman was that whites in Virginia designed the legal framework and social norms to protect the prerogatives of white men. The desire to promote white male privileges also afforded interracial sexual liaisons involving white males/black females certain immunity from social attitudes and even the laws that opposed them. This fact helps in our understanding of how white men like Thomas Jefferson and David Isaacs could live for decades in the same households with women of color without receiving much interference from their neighbors. Even when others protested, as in the case of Isaacs, courts generally ruled in such a way as to protect the reputation and property of the accused white men.

A third theme promoted by Rothman centers around the complexity of interracial relationships involving white men and black women. Rothman gives agency to black women implicated in interracial relationships. He depicts these women responding in a variety of ways to the sexual demands of white men. Rothman explains that “the power dynamics between slave owners and enslaved women were never as simple as choices between submission, compromise, or resistance. In most cases, black women and white men constantly battled over who controlled the bodies of female slaves. Slave women capitulated when they believed they had no choice” (155).

Probably the most intriguing, yet controversial, part of Rothman’s work is his treatment of the Thomas Jefferson/Sally Hemings affair. In Chapter 1, Rothman attempts to present a balanced account of the relationship, interspersing historical fact with speculation. However, at times his statements are cloudy and contradictory. For example, Rothman intimates that the Jefferson/Hemings liaison was probably
consensual, Hemings trading her body for personal privileges and her children’s freedom. Rothman even goes as far as to guess that if Hemings had chosen to refuse Jefferson’s advances, she “probably would have suffered no harsh consequences” (24). Yet, later in the same paragraph, Rothman acknowledges that the power that Jefferson had over the status of Hemings and their descendants made their relationship inherently coercive.

Rothman also refuses to rule out the possibility that genuine intimacy existed between Jefferson and Hemings. Rothman suggests that Hemings might have seen Jefferson as many other women saw him—“charming, handsome, talented, and intelligent, a man worthy of great admiration” (24). However, Rothman again raises the power difference that existed between them as a problem to establishing a relationship based mostly on mutual caring.

With regard to Jefferson, Rothman appears to fall prey to the scholarly tendency to excuse and justify the racist actions and attitudes of the nation’s founders. It is hard for the scholar and non-scholar fully to accept that Jefferson was far from the enlightened embodiment of contemporary notions about race and gender. Jefferson was a product of his society, an America riveted with racism; gifted scholars like Rothman need not work so hard to redeem him.

Charles Robinson
University of Arkansas

Planting a Capitalist South: Masters, Merchants, and Manufacturers in the Southern Interior, 1790–1860. By Tom Downey (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 2006) 262 pp. $49.95

This study of economic development in the Edgefield and Barnwell Districts of South Carolina “attempts to inject the transition to capitalism focus of market revolution studies [predominantly focused on the northern United States] into the older historiographical debate over the capitalist-noncapitalist nature of the Old South” (6). Such an approach, Downey argues, allows for a better examination of the “interaction of agrarian, commercial, and industrial capitalists” and the impact of those interactions on “the local political economy” (6). Specifically, the study charts the growing influence of merchants and manufacturers in what, according to Downey, remained an “agrarian landscape” shaped by cotton and slavery. Downey describes the development of internal improvements, the growth of a merchant class in new towns such as Hamburg, and the coming of railroads and cotton mills. Drawing on private papers, court documents, government and company records, he illuminates his straightforward narrative analysis of economic change with stories of significant individuals like Henry Shultz, who led the way in the creation of Hamburg, and William Gregg, whose vision of southern industrial development came to life in the town of Graniteville.
Downey sees an increasingly intense “series of contests between different classes of capitalists,” one of which “wielded influence through the agrarian capital of land and slaves [and] the other through the control of liquid capital in commercial and corporate forms” (7). Yet evidence for the development of a new commercial class, with a common sense of interests and values, is limited—especially so regarding claims, admittedly mild, for the increasing influence of cultural values antithetical to those of agrarians and slaveholders. Downey does not make a persuasive case that the efforts of manufacturers like Gregg to encourage moral reform and temperance offer evidence for the development of a coherent class or for a cultural transition tied to the growth of mercantile and manufacturing activity. The study might have engaged the rich body of “market revolution” studies that focus, often from an interdisciplinary perspective, on the interrelationship of interests and ideals, economic development, and cultural change.

Downey’s argument rests more securely on legal and political changes and conflicts, which offer stronger evidence for the success of merchants and manufacturers in asserting their economic interests. Over time, Downey argues, political and legislative decisions on such matters as eminent domain increasingly favored the private interests of merchants and manufacturers over once dominant “agrarian” values and interests. Downey’s argument is modest and restrained, appropriately so as it rests heavily on the successes of a few corporations (such as the South Carolina Railroad) and individuals (such as Gregg). Nonetheless, not even his individual cases demonstrate that, by the eve of Civil War, merchants had coalesced into a class capable of pursuing and defending common interests by the kind of political, cultural, and even military means that the slaveholders could muster.

Downey’s study certainly meets its goal of illuminating the changing “local political economy” that he studies (6). Its contribution to the larger debate on the economic and cultural character of the slave states is less certain. Historians who view southern slaveholders as capitalists who just happened to own their workers will, as Downey notes, see his conclusions as entirely compatible with their interpretation. Yet, proponents of the opposing view, which rests on the distinctiveness of those very relations of labor, are not as dismissive of the impact of railroads, cotton mills, and other elements of modernity as Downey suggests. He overstates the “intellectual gymnastics” required of those who seek to assimilate his well-told tale of transition to their own story of the continuing power of slavery to drive the region’s economy and culture down a path so distinctive as to lead eventually to secession and war (226).

James David Miller
Carleton University

The first article of the U.S. Constitution, in its enumeration of the powers of Congress, includes among them the power “to promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries.” Kahn’s fine book begins with an effort to understand some of the implications of how the federal government sought to carry out the provisions of this intellectual-property clause in the Constitution. As her title suggests, the key area that she attempts to illuminate is economic development. How, in other words, did the American patent and copyright systems, as they came to develop, contribute to the American economy in the first 130 years of the republic?

Of particular interest to readers of this journal will be the range of approaches that Kahn brings to her study. Her work is deeply grounded in the legal literature. Kahn shows a sure knowledge of both relevant legal citations and the related literature throughout the period covered. This orientation is supplemented by references to legislative history, official patent office reports, and a wide range of material from the general press. More striking, however, are Kahn’s statistical efforts, most of which deal with issued patents or court cases. They attempt to eke out correlations for a host of factors, including locations, occupations, gender, and patterns of patenting activity. Kahn’s approach is one of the most substantial investigations of who was patenting in nineteenth-century America. It further suggests why the American patent system was seen as the most successful in the world. For statistically inclined readers, Kahn provides a number of regression analyses, attempting to gauge the significance of correlations among locations of patent holders, legal changes, occupational specialties, and the like. Non-specialists will have some trouble making complete sense of these efforts, but most statistical elements are explained fully and clearly. For those looking for models of how to aggregate and parse the disparate data of nineteenth-century legal and commercial activity, Kahn’s efforts are well worth a look.

Copyrights receive more cursory treatment than patents in this work. The differences in the two forms of intellectual property are more apparent than their similarities, extending from their legal and philosophical foundations to their economic functions. Khan is at pains to point out that the United States did not deal with foreign patents and patent holders in the same way as it did copyrights and their owners. Although U.S. political and economic interests promoted strong protection of patent rights, and their extension to foreigners (with the expectation of reciprocal treatment), those same interests led to a cavalier treatment of copyrights that made Americans among the most notorious
of copyright pirates in the nineteenth century. Kahn’s exploration of this disparity suggests that giving the two forms of intellectual property equal economic significance is not necessarily the most logical approach.

This fine work is grounded by intelligent research of a considerable range of sources. Some of the definitions that guide the analyses may be controversial (a discussion of the distinctiveness of “great inventors,” for example, hinges on debatable characterizations of that class of patentees), but, by and large, Khan is to be congratulated for confronting questions that do not always lend themselves to simple formulations. Similarly, despite some of the difficulties involved, Kahn’s comparative analysis, of British and French experiences in particular, to frame her conclusions is compelling. Its relevance to current issues surrounding intellectual property are more implicit, but the discerning reader will appreciate them nonetheless.

Robert Friedel
University of Maryland


The life of no other nineteenth-century American painter has been scrutinized so much as that of Thomas Eakins (1844–1916). His proclivity for nudity (his own and that of friends, students, and studio models) and his artistic and pedagogical methods (including dissection), unconventional for their time and place, have garnered at least as much attention as his stunning paintings of sport, leisure, family, and the Philadelphia elite. As Kirkpatrick demonstrates in his thorough, lucid, and engrossing biography of the artist, such scrutiny is justified; Eakins was a complicated and fascinating man who can provoke sympathy, bewilderment, and repulsion in a single instant. An account of Eakins’ life (and, secondarily, his art) from birth to death, Kirkpatrick’s biography brims with anecdote and incident—from the artist’s struggles as a student in Paris to his irreverent response to being awarded a gold medal, late in life, by the previously dismissive Pennsylvania Academy (he exchanged it for cash)—even as it offers an expansive and reasoned view of what made Eakins tick, from his dedication to the facts of human anatomy to his attempts to reform American art pedagogy and his use of the knowledge and methods of science in his teaching and his art.

Kirkpatrick’s book does not so much present a new or deeper understanding of Eakins as it gives him a good scrubbing, washing off the dirt flung at the artist by other scholars, most notably Henry Adams in his Eakins Revealed: The Secret Life of an American Artist (New York, 2005). Kirkpatrick critiques Adams’ account of depravity, repression, and desire throughout (and at times justifiably, although something like an interpretive middle ground, a warmer embrace of speculation, or at
least a greater willingness to push observation and fact toward interpretation or conclusion would have been welcome). The book also permits a view of Eakins in context. Indeed, one of the chief merits of Kirkpatrick’s study is its attention to the world in which Eakins lived and how it shaped his life and art. This is not to say that other writing on Eakins has failed to adopt a contextual approach (the best of it has, often combining it with other critical tools, including psychobiography). But Kirkpatrick’s is the first strictly biographical (rather than art-historical) account of Eakins to concentrate in such a sustained fashion on extra-biographical, more broadly historical material that, according to Kirkpatrick, constituted a large part of what influenced Eakins. To his credit, Kirkpatrick offers an account of Eakins that combines an art-historical and biographical methodology with the tools of the historian such that the artist emerges as an idiosyncratic malcontent, a man perpetually ahead of his time but also, and emphatically, of his time.

It is unfortunate that Kirkpatrick frequently only hints at or implies the connections between art and context, between what happened in the studio and what was happening on the street, without exploring them more deeply. For example, after describing Philadelphia’s response to the outbreak of war in 1861, including the enthusiastic enlistment of hundreds of young men, Eakins’ friends among them, Kirkpatrick writes that Eakins’ decision not to fight must have been difficult for him. Yes, but what of this difficulty? The chapter ends without exploring this insight and the point is dropped entirely, despite numerous occasions when further discussion may well have illuminated Eakins’ actions as well as his art.

What emerges is a narrative, albeit fluid and gripping, that is constituted by parallel tracks of analysis—biography, art history, social history, and the history of science—rather than a fully integrated, interdisciplinary account. This is a missed opportunity, for sure, but, in signaling the importance of looking at Eakins through the lens of multiple disciplines, Kirkpatrick pays tribute to a growing body of genuinely interdisciplinary work on the artist.

Rachael Ziady DeLue
Princeton University

*Rape and Race in the Nineteenth-Century South.* By Diane Miller Sommerville (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 411 pp. $59.95 cloth $24.95 paper

Sommerville challenges conventional wisdom by asserting that the myth of the black male rapist did not pervade Southern or American thinking until late in the nineteenth century, concomitant with the rise of white supremacy, black disfranchisement, and changing social constructions of sexuality. Historians who have argued that Southern whites have always
feared that black men posed a threat to the purity and chastity of white women are perpetuating an “invented tradition”; in the antebellum South, the myth of the black rapist did not prevail, even if black male sexuality may have been suspect. Even as Southern white men went off to fight for the Confederacy, they were unafraid to leave women on the farm with black male slaves.

To make her case, Sommerville has extensively mined local criminal trial and state appellate court records, state statutes, governors’ papers, executive journals, federal census reports, pardon papers, prison and county records, private collections, newspapers, and periodicals. Her research focuses mostly on Virginia and North Carolina. Although Sommerville states that the book is not a legal history per se, she relies heavily on legal sources. She falls into the “law and society” school when she posits a symbiotic relationship between the law and those who make, enforce, and interpret it. She also invokes the “law in action” advocates when she demonstrates how the draconian rape law on the books differed from the more practical law practiced by local courts. Sommerville’s study of the myriad cultural sources produced within local communities primarily employs the methods of social history. She shows the ways in which community members tended to elide local customs into antebellum rape trials.

Sommerville’s study of black-on-white rape yields some significant findings. Most whites of the antebellum South acquiesced in the legal process and abided by the outcomes, whether for or against the defendant, in cases that saw black men charged with raping white women. The lynching of black men accused or acquitted of the rape of a white woman was rare before the Civil War. She also finds that the white community did not always support a white woman’s claim of rape. The antebellum South’s social construction of gender played a significant role in deciding rape cases, but Sommerville asserts that a woman’s class rather than her sex tended to be the most important factor in her believability. Rape cases in the antebellum South demonstrate a lack of concern for the protection of females, especially poor ones, and most of the women who charged slaves or free black men with rape were poor and socially marginal. According to Sommerville, white men were better able to identify with male slaves accused of rape than with their female accusers. Whiteness was not necessarily a unifying factor in antebellum rape trials.

Sommerville also notes that although the law mandated death for a slave convicted of raping a white woman, Southern lawmakers were aware of the financial consequences and provided alternative punishments. Slaveholders routinely hired lawyers to defend slaves against a rape charge and appealed guilty verdicts to state appellate courts. White community members often petitioned the governor to commute the sentences of black men convicted of raping a white woman from execution to transportation out of state, and their requests were granted with a fair degree of regularity. Such actions would hardly be expected from
people preoccupied with the notion that all black males were rapists. Only after emancipation did Southern whites begin to perpetrate extensive violence against black men for the rape of white women. Nonetheless, not until after Redemption and the return to “Home Rule” in the South did violence against black males accused of rape become significant, though even then accusations might be mitigated by the socioeconomic status of the female accuser. Sommerville also found evidence to corroborate what Ida B. Wells called the “old threadbare lie” that black men were predisposed to rape white woman and were lynched for that reason.

Some may criticize Sommerville’s conclusions as based mostly on sources from states in the upper South; equally exhaustive research in mid- and deep-South states would certainly be in order. This reviewer has examined different sources from throughout the South and come to the same conclusion about the absence of the myth of the black male rapist in the antebellum era. This well-researched and well-argued book has much to contribute to the stereotyping of Southern race relations.

Mary Block
Valdosta State University


In this engaging, earnest book, Nudelman tells the story of the transformative impact of Civil War battlefield deaths on genteel northerners. The book is indebted to the emerging specialty of “violence studies” or “body history,” which, some critics complain, lacks methodological sophistication and scholarly rigor. Nudelman addresses these concerns explicitly. To decipher the meaning of death in war for nineteenth-century Americans, she looks at three discursive contexts: sentimental reform culture, scientific racism, and public punishments.

Her primary finding is that a process of “abstraction” or conceptual distancing and universalizing of personal loss enabled Americans to cope with the carnage, accept violent death as a source of collective rebirth, and rededicate themselves to national union. Civil War culture, she argues, “nationalized a sentimental view of the enduring and benevolent influence of the dead” (6).

Nudelman takes her theme from the popular Civil War song, “John Brown’s Body,” which Union soldiers sang to celebrate the transformation of Brown’s “actual body” into a “diffuse, inspiriting presence.” This

salute to the memory of the abolitionist “martyr,” Nudelman says, offers a “succinct and memorable example” of the creation of cultural nationalism. In representing the war as a sign of divine retribution, Julia Ward Howe’s “Battle Hymn of the Republic” elevates the John Brown song and prefigures that evolving wartime nationalism (169).

In successive chapters, Nudelman illustrates the variety of ways in which artists and political leaders clothed the dead with the imagery and rhetoric of rebirth and national community. Before the war, memorial culture affirmed the continuity of life and death in private ceremonies, ritual mourning, photos of bereaved mothers holding a dead child, and sentimental poetry. But the war changed everything. For loved ones, the death of a soldier on the battlefield was remote, anonymous, and unattended. Whitman, grappling with the challenge that battlefield death posed to memorial culture and evangelical faith, found new ways of conceptualizing those who died “unburied and unknown.” But if Whitman rehearsed the narrative of “organic transformation” that rationalized the war’s appalling death toll, Melville’s poetry rejected the vision of war as integral to a “natural cycle of death and regeneration” (97).

Nudelman observes that the bodies of African Americans, Native Americans, and the poor were degraded by postmortem dissection, burial in “potter’s fields,” and the desecrations of hired grave robbers—so-called “resurrectionists”—seeking specimens for medical schools (46). A pseudoscientific ethnography reified racial stereotypes and “reanimated” the skeletons of African Americans as a type. Dissection excluded the dead not only from a “religious narrative of burial and resurrection” but also from “forms of community that depended on the body as a figure for common experience” (7–8). The mutilated and exposed bodies of soldiers, she observes, recalled the insults inflicted on the corpses of these disadvantaged groups. Thus, the cultural project aimed at elevating the remains of dead soldiers “worked not only to sanctify the war but also to disentangle it from the violence traditionally visited on powerless people” (3). Military punishments and executions of black soldiers, Nudelman argues, foreshadowed a “postbellum order in which African Americans were marginalized by new forms of discipline” (148).

Photographs of battlefield deaths, Nudelman says, could strip away the “familiar forms of artifice” employed “to invest the dead with meaning”; such images implied that violence begets “isolation” rather than a spiritual community (106). In focusing on the dead bodies of soldiers and slaves, she hopes to point the way toward a “methodology that reverses the trajectory of abstraction by reconsidering the process of idealization in light of some of war’s particulars” (12). Despite the wartime cultural linking of violence with rebirth and nationhood that she demonstrates, Nudelman insists that “far from breeding life, or strengthening commu-
nity, violence wreaks havoc on our physical and conceptual worlds. At times, the corpse, in all its grim materiality, calls the idealization of death in war into question and suggests a less inspiring relationship between death and national community” (3–4). Evidently, the dead may cry aloud.

Yet, however we may seek to “objectify” the dead, Nudelman’s study implies that cognitive schemata of some sort will structure our perceptions. We inevitably bring meaning to the scene. Whether we view the dead with medical detachment or seek the consolation of faith in ritual observances, we too distance ourselves from “dead bodies.” As Fredrickson showed in *The Inner Civil War*, psychic numbing inured intellectualists like the young Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., from feeling overwhelmed by the horrors witnessed in combat.3

At times, Nudelman attributes a significance to the “stark materiality” of dead bodies that, for nineteenth-century Americans, more often derived from the belief that death represented the release of a “soul” from its body. Thus, when Brown wrote to a kinsman, “I am worth inconceivably more to hang than for any other purpose,” Nudelman concludes, “Brown recognized that his body, subject to the violence of the state, had become a source of public meaning” (18). But surely it was the sacrifice of his life, not the presumed public contemplation of his corpse, that Brown thought enhanced his “worth.”

Nudelman is right that Brown’s contemporaries understood the symbolic power of dead bodies. Witness the apotheosis of Lincoln that enshrained his funeral train on its two-week journey to Springfield and Secretary of War Edwin Stanton’s secret burial of John Wilkes Booth’s body under the floor of a room in the Washington Arsenal. Yet despite the many insights that Nudelman gains from her analysis of the treatment of dead bodies, her book is less about bodies than the cultural meanings of death and self-sacrifice. Although she does not examine how leading religious thinkers responded to what Lincoln called the “mighty scourge of war,” Nudelman helps to justify recent Brown biographers in raising him from his historiographical grave to become once again the “unrelenting voice of his own Calvinist God” and a symbol of “both a suffering slave population and a guilty white nation” (35).

Robert E. McGlone
University of Hawai‘i, Manoa

*After the Glory: The Struggles of Black Civil War Veterans*. By Donald R. Shaffer (Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 2004) 281 pp. $34.95

The Civil Rights movement revived interest in the black soldiers of the Civil War, but little work has been done on their struggles afterward.

Hence, *After the Glory* fills a real gap in the scholarship, using the testimony of the veterans themselves at every opportunity. Constructed from the records of pension petitions, from letters sent home and to the government, and from census reports and newspapers, and leavened with the work of other scholars, this is a meticulous, insightful, and often moving history.

After an introduction that frames the book, Shaffer looks at the war experiences of the veterans. A brief prologue sets the stage for the thematic organization to follow. Six “discernible areas” of struggle emerged for the veterans during the postwar period: “politics, veteran-government relations, economics, family and marital life, and historical memory” (5). An epilogue offers a historiographical look at the ways in which black soldiers were remembered in both scholarship and popular culture during the twentieth century.

What Shaffer finds is not “merely another tale of race” but “a story of gender” (9). Black soldiers fought for what one of them called “Manhood & Equality” rather than the Union or a paycheck. Shaffer found the idea of “manhood” to be ubiquitous in their writing. Although its meaning shifted depending on the context, or “what was being fought over,” it stood for many things, “including, but not limited to, money, power, pride, dignity, respect, self-control, citizenship, autonomy, bravery, physical prowess, fraternal solidarity, and patriarchal authority” (5). The struggle for manhood and the privileges and meanings that it embodied was the central purpose of the black veterans. Although their participation in the war gave them added authority in the postwar world, it proved extraordinarily difficult for them to achieve the manhood that they desired—and deserved.

Veterans just after the war commanded a respect in their community and a prestige that served them well. Compared with those who did not serve in the war, veterans were more likely to be literate, economically stable, engaged in local politics, and mobile. In fact, many of them moved North. Veterans joined the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), sought and won pensions from the government, and sometimes lived in veterans’ homes, occasionally alongside white soldiers.

But their struggle was ongoing. African American soldiers had to fight to earn the same pay as whites during the war and after it. Only allowed to vote after the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified, their presence in politics was brief, already eroding by the late 1870s. Any public presence was by its very nature dangerous for black men, especially veterans in the fraught postwar era. When applying for pensions, black men were at a severe disadvantage. Because former slaves often changed their names to claim new identities, and had little documentation, it was often difficult to establish their records of service. Racial prejudice played a role as well: “Practically speaking, black veterans and their families had a greater burden of proof than white persons had, despite the formal equality of black and white applicants under the law” (130). So it went—two steps forward and one and a half back.
Recording this struggle is important work. Shaffer honors these veterans by refusing to exaggerate either their successes or difficulties. He ends on an optimistic note, fully aware that these veterans could not share it in their lifetimes.

Lyde Cullen Sizer
Sarah Lawrence College


Historians of the nineteenth-century urban experience in the United States have long understood that working-class immigrants achieved surprisingly high rates of home ownership. The question—really a raging debate—is how to explain this phenomenon. Were the strivings of unskilled immigrants for home ownership a counterproductive life choice that sacrificed education and health in return for a tenuous hold on property, as Progressive Era critics and later historians argued? Or did home ownership represent a reasonable strategy for weathering the vicissitudes of capitalism and securing social and political status, as more recent scholars have contended? Garb’s well-written City of American Dreams includes evidence that could support both sides, though the book sidesteps the value judgments implicit in the debate and instead focuses on the clashes between workers and reformers in Chicago over the “social meanings of property rights.”

Desperate to hold onto their investment and home-owning status, unskilled workers wanted the freedom to build inexpensive wooden homes (especially after the great fire of 1871), to reject expensive city services like sewer hookups, and to rent to income-producing boarders. Reformers, on the other hand, wanted to trump property rights with fire codes, public-health requirements, and morally imposed occupancy standards. Garb thus presents nineteenth-century home ownership as a contested field in which property rights have economic, social, and, to a lesser extent, political meanings.

Much of the story of nineteenth-century Progressive reform and working-class resistance has been previously told, but Garb offers new and important knowledge. Her most original contribution involves details about how the unskilled achieved high home-ownership rates. Garb uses Cook County handwritten tract books to trace the property history of one block on Chicago’s west side in the 1880s, showing the remarkably sophisticated transactions conducted by impoverished immigrants to achieve and then sustain home ownership. She highlights an unskilled Irish bread peddler named Bernard Brophy, who borrowed from
an informal capital market of friends and neighbors to purchase a home. Brophy then mortgaged it three times for various purposes, including the purchase of a rental property. Garb’s compelling evidence suggests a great deal more initiative among the unskilled in their relations with property than previous accounts.

More provocatively, Garb argues that the working class was the driving force behind America’s love affair with the single-family home: “The home ownership ideal was inspired by the immigrant working classes and gradually transformed into a middle-class aspiration” (7). The evidence for this influence is strained; she attributes this transformation to large developers, such as Samuel E. Gross, who shifted his marketing prowess from a working-class to a middle-class market in the 1880s. But once empowered by ownership, the working class created its own social meanings around property rights and demanded, among other restrictions, racial segregation (201).

Similarly, Garb sees a “calamitous underside” to working-class home ownership (8). She argues that once the “dream” of ownership became less attainable as housing costs rose in the early twentieth century, property rights divided the skilled and unskilled and undermined working-class unity. Historians have found numerous sources for intraclass conflict; whether property ownership is seminal to this divide or merely a small force among many is less clear. Moreover, the argument that ownership opportunities diminished in the early twentieth century relies on the limited analysis of Progressives with their own agendas; a detailed understanding of housing affordability in the early twentieth century still awaits further historical analysis.

In a chapter on the creation of Chicago’s African American “black belt,” Garb blames low ownership rates on low incomes, a discriminatory housing market, and “the lack of capital.” The first two conditions make sense, but the third deserves the kind of scrutiny that the book’s earlier research methods employed to uncover the Brophy story. Did unskilled African Americans also engage in sophisticated property transactions? What do the county tract books say about the aspirations of black home owners?

Nonetheless, the “property rights” framework in *City of American Dreams* brings into clearer focus the crucial cleavage between working-class immigrants and reformers during the late nineteenth century. Unskilled immigrant home owners scraping to hold onto property did not want the reforms pushed by such Progressives as Jane Addams; the implications of this distrust have been undervalued in previous works. Reformers’ arguments based on public health were strongest, but immigrant owners, working-class landlords, and poor renters viewed any change as restricting opportunity and raising rents. They wanted to keep housing inspectors out and to use their property as they saw fit. As such, Garb’s well-told, mostly nineteenth-century story is less a story of Progressive triumph than one more premonition about the later twentieth-
century working-class movements that appropriated property rights rhetoric to demand racial segregation and challenge other liberal interventions.

D. Bradford Hunt
Roosevelt University


Why do men kill? In his study of 5,645 homicides reported in Chicago between 1875 and 1920, Adler analyzes homicide patterns that begin to answer that question. Adler cites Elias’ concept of the “civilizing process” that most historians use to explain the long-term decline in homicide in Europe and the United States, except that something surprising happened.1 As Adler shows, the sources of homicide changed in ways that the civilizing process predicts, but the homicide rate increased in Chicago.

Adler divides his analysis into two periods, 1875–1890 and 1890–1920. The first period was dominated by a male, working-class culture that produced alcohol-induced violence directed against male acquaintances, usually in a public setting. Drunken brawls far surpassed the next two categories, domestic violence and robbery, as the cause of homicide.

In the second period, domestic violence became the leading cause of homicide. Adler links this shift to marriage formation and changing definitions of masculinity that followed from the growth of an industrial economy. Chicago underwent a demographic transition from a setting with large numbers of young, single men in the 1870s to one with nearly equal gender ratios characterized by family formation by the turn of the century. The marriage market absorbed men at the same time that rapid industrialization forced them to succumb to factory discipline. Men defined their masculinity not through public challenges in front of drunken peers but by providing for a family through their labor. It followed that murder shifted in location, victim, and age of perpetrator: Older men, faced with industrial de-skilling and thus denied middle class norms of respectability, slaughtered their families as their households teetered on collapse.

Women also murdered more during this period. Whereas men killed their children and sometimes themselves after murdering their wives, women directed most of their violence against their spouses. Frequently the victims of domestic violence, these women argued successfully that homicide was a form of self-defense.

Different ethnic groups experienced different levels of violence.

African Americans had a homicide rate seven times that of the city average, and Italians had a rate five times the average. Both groups were disproportionately young, male, and single. Public brawls accounted for much of the homicide, most of it intragroup. As gender ratios came into balance, domestic violence became more prominent, although it took different forms with each group. African Americans resembled whites in their homicidal practices; Italians rarely killed women, focusing their violence on male relatives, usually in defense of family honor. Both groups relied on personal or familial retribution, which was reinforced by police unwillingness to investigate intragroup violence.

Eventually, Chicagoans defined deviance more strictly, reflecting the civilizing impulse but also raising the homicide rate. Infanticide and abortion both became subject to legal intervention, and efforts to control the public streets produced vehicular homicide charges. A homicide rate of 2.25 per 100,000 in 1875 became 9.7 in 1920 as new categories of homicide were introduced. The robbery-homicide became a new cause for alarm, the rate surging after 1890. Primarily a young man’s crime that targeted older, wealthier residents and crossed racial lines, robbery homicides accounted for the sharp increase in Chicago’s homicide rate between 1890 and 1920. So much for the civilizing process.

The questions that emerge on the first page of the book are, Why did Chicago have a homicide rate higher than that of any American city outside of the South? And why did that rate increase, even when taking into account the introduction of new definitions of homicide? The processes that Adler discusses were at work in other cities, but they produced different results in Chicago. Clearly, place mattered, though in a way that remains unspecified.

Adler supports his argument not only with an analysis of the modal locations of homicides but also with evidence taken from witnesses, statements left by murderers, and newspaper and police reports. Although the claim of a man who said he loved his wife so much that he had to kill her is suspicious, Adler offers a supple reading of murderers’ statements about their motivations that reveals the larger cultural forces behind the statistical patterns of homicide. Each chapter is introduced by a case study, and Adler weaves together his qualitative and quantitative evidence to produce a compelling and well-written analysis that deserves a wide audience.

Eric C. Schneider
University of Pennsylvania

*The Democratic Party Heads North, 1877–1962.* By Alan Ware (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2006) 281 pp. $70.00 cloth $24.99 paper

Ware has written an ambiguous book that seeks to revise the conventional wisdom about the competitiveness of American political parties.
from Reconstruction to the 1960s. Taking his cue from Mayhew’s misgivings about the veracity of party-systems theory and his own prior research, Ware examines change and continuity in party electoral outcomes from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century.\footnote{David Mayhew, \textit{Electoral Realignments: A Critique of an American Genre} (New Haven, 2002).} He argues that critical election theory has overdetermined the reordering of partisan coalitions, especially following the election of 1896. Continuity more than abrupt and sharp alterations in partisan competitiveness characterizes the eight decades after 1877.

The key to this story lies with the Democratic party, the constituent base of which was anchored in the South for most of the period reviewed. Not until the post–World War II era did the Democrats gain a viable foothold in northern states. From 1877 to 1889, Democrats managed to achieve a fragile competitiveness with Republicans nationally by establishing a toehold in five northern states. Following a period of ineffectiveness from 1896 to 1910, about which the author has little to say, Democrats regained competitiveness after 1912, when the party began to attract more votes in the nation’s big cities. Whereas Woodrow Wilson failed to build a lasting national base for his party, Ware argues that Democratic party leaders had reassembled a competitive coalition that would have given Herbert Hoover and the Republicans a run for their money in 1932, even without the severity of the Great Depression. Yet Democratic successes under Franklin Delano Roosevelt did not destroy the Republican party, which remained competitive in most northern states, spearheaded by the emergence of the party’s moderate wing. By mid-century the Republicans also benefited from fissures along racial lines among the Democrats.

By necessity, given its panoramic coverage, Ware’s book is largely synthesis. It is also partly theoretical and leavened with analysis of election outcomes, measured with state-level data, supplemented with some returns for urban congressional elections. The work can be seen as an extended essay that questions orthodox understandings about “critical elections.” Ware hypothesizes that parties are not passive vessels shaped by the hands of their constituents but entities with a destiny largely in the control of their leaders, who seek to build successful electoral coalitions. When parties lacked viable leaders, as in the instance of the Democrats (1896–1910), they suffered. To the author’s credit, he is sensitive to the federal factor in the management of partisan competitiveness. But Ware did not directly examine how party leaders assessed the political terrain or tried to capture votes. Rather, he deduced strategic calculations largely from the analysis of electoral outcomes, and, especially, the geographical patterns in partisan strength.

Ware surveys the American polity from the perspective of a scholar working within the American political development school. His work is synthetic, conjectural, filled with ex-cathedra and counterfactual observations, and organized topically within chronologically framed chapters.
He ignores scores of historians who have reconstructed patterns of voter and legislator behavior and party organization from the Civil War era to the Great Society. Neglecting this rich literature undermines the effectiveness of *The Democratic Party Heads North* as a synthesis of partisan history. Mining this lode of scholarship could have broadened the author’s analysis of coalitions and “coalition-building.”

Ware conceives of coalitions largely in a national sense, that is, as states that party leaders aggregated into winning collections of electoral votes in presidential elections. An alternative reading of coalitions would have focused on distinct voter groups, as well as organized and unorganized interests. Analysis of partisan victories at the state level cannot penetrate deeply into this behavioral foundation of American party politics. Ware’s mismatch of evidence with research objective calls into question much of his extensive data presentation. This analytic weakness, coupled with the skewed references to the secondary literature, and an argumentative format, undermines the work’s success as a reinterpretation of American politics.

Ballard C. Campbell
Northeastern University

*Next to Godliness: Confronting Dirt and Despair in Progressive Era New York City.* By Daniel Eli Burnstein (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2006) 200 pp. $38.00

Following the lead of Rosen more than a half-century ago, a literature on urban sanitary reforms has emerged, focusing particular attention on the achievements of the Progressive era. This compact study of Progressive sanitation reforms in New York City is a valuable addition to this literature, deepening our understanding of the relationship between Progressives and immigrants while also discussing effective implementation of public health policy.¹

Burnstein uses records of municipal agencies and reform groups, as well as newspaper accounts, to provide a narrative reflecting Progressive-era views of sanitation. He begins by discussing the garbage workers’ strike of 1907 as an example of how important street cleaning was to New Yorkers’ conceptions of order and public health. Uncleaned streets produced odors and nuisances that caused the Woman’s Municipal League of New York to warn, “there seems to be every danger of disease developing” (11).

The garbage crisis of 1907 speaks directly to the reforms of George

Waring the commissioner of the Department of Street Cleaning (dsc) between 1895 and 1898. Burnstein breaks chronology with a chapter on Waring’s innovations following his look at the strike. The discussion of how Waring’s methods related to the miasma theory of disease transmission is not new. However, Burnstein’s treatment of how Waring’s political acumen produced an effective dsc, despite resistance from elements of the Tammany Hall machine, is instructive. From the start, Waring deliberately exceeded his department’s budget to clean the streets because he calculated that citizens would notice the improvement and demand better services. Although machine politicians attacked Waring in the local newspapers, some within Tammany felt that his municipal housekeeping was both important and popular. Waring received his budget, allowing him to modernize street cleaning in New York City. His accomplishment serves as a reminder that, as with Raymond Tucker implementing meaningful smoke control in St. Louis in the 1930s, successful reformers combined progressive ideas with political calculation.

A strength of the book is its discussion of the relationship between ethnicity and Progressive ideas, which goes beyond simply stating that Progressives and immigrants either cooperated or clashed. Burnstein maintains that first-generation immigrants adopted modern sanitary practices in an attempt to be perceived as clean by native-born Americans, consequently making hygiene an aspect of American identity. Yet although many immigrants accepted new sanitary practices, Burnstein also reports conflicts between Progressives and New York’s thriving immigrant pushcart trade, citing concerns about the cleanliness of food from peddlers and ethnocentric caricatures of Jews as filthy in newspapers. Tensions between middle-class reformers and working-class (and impoverished immigrants) led to restrictions on peddlers. Burnstein’s observations reflect similar clashes in Chicago involving immigrants and Progressive reformers.

Burnstein concludes by examining Waring’s employment of children in the juvenile streetcleaning league under the rationale that municipal housekeeping saved children from the chaos of the polluted city. Though Waring’s tenure as dsc commissioner was short, Burnstein ably shows that this politically savvy Progressive’s reforms lasted long after his death. Next to Godliness will appeal to historians interested in the complicated history of immigrants, reformers, and public health, as well as to those seeking inspiring examples of effective reform.

Carl A. Zimring
Oberlin College


In the haunting film *The Woodsman* (2004), Kevin Bacon plays Walter, a parolee who is guarded about his past. When pressed repeatedly by his new “girlfriend” (Kyra Sedgwick) to reveal what he had done, he finally tells her, “I molested little girls.” She laughs until he says, “Twelve years in prison is no joke.” After a long and painful silence, she asks, “How young?” Stephen Robertson’s remarkable book helps to explain why this question sounds so natural, and why Walter’s age-specific answer (“between ten to twelve”) is so deeply unsettling. Moreover, Robertson’s analysis also suggests why Walter’s violent assault on a man who molests young boys serves as a symbolic act of rehabilitation and a pathway to social acceptance.

To research the subject of sexual violence in New York City, Robertson draws on a large sample of case files from the Court of General Sessions in 1886 and 1891, and from the District Attorney’s Office from 1886 to 1955. He uses his findings to ground his claim that twentieth-century Americans increasingly viewed sexuality through the prism of age, which involved seeing pedophiles as developmentally immature. In the process, Robertson builds on the important work of such scholars as Chudacoff, who argue that “age” is a significant category that should guide “the analysis of American history” (234).¹

In addition to demonstrating the fluidity and contested nature of age, Robertson also contends that scholars should take a local (as well as a long) view of legal-cultural constructs like sexual violence. From this perspective, he reconstructs a history of sexual violence that highlights the interactions among working-class communities, middle-class reformers, and the legal system. Thus he reveals why the efforts of child savers—for example, the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children—to define and monitor childhood met resistance, and how assistant district attorneys learned which cases of sexual violence to prosecute and how to present child witnesses to skeptical jurors.

Robertson faces a major challenge in moving from the individual case files to a broader cultural history of sexual violence. By paying close attention to language, he makes this move gracefully. He highlights how Americans invented and used the terms *boyfriend*, *girlfriend*, *jail bait*, *child molester*, and *sexual psychopath* to make sense of appropriate sexual actors and to classify criminal ones.

Although Robertson does a splendid job of crossing humanities-based disciplinary boundaries, ranging from critical legal history to cultural studies, his nuanced approach raises an important question about the limits of historical approaches to age. For instance, historians who

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privilege the social construction of human nature often have a difficult time conversing with scientists who start from essentialist assumptions about human development. Despite such collaborative efforts as *Children in Time and Place: Development and Historical Insights*, a fundamental divide remains.\(^2\) If historians follow Robertson’s call to make age a category of historical analysis, they will need to do more to bridge this divide.

David S. Tanenhaus
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

*Standard of Living: The Measure of the Middle Class in Modern America.* By Marina Moskowitz (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004) 300 pp. $45.00

Moskowitz mixes material-culture studies and traditional historical methods to explore the origins and meanings of the phrase “standard of living.” Observing that “standard” refers both to standardization and to various measures of “the good life,” Moskowitz argues that this was a fluid new concept in the early twentieth century. Distinct from such economic measures as wages or the cost of living, the standard of living was a qualitative rather than quantitative gauge. “It is at once personal, applied to an individual or household, and collective, shared by groupings as large as a class or a nation” (3). Progressive-era discussion of an American standard of living occupied social scientists, artists, producers and providers of goods and services, politicians, urban planners and boosters, and middle-class consumers presumably anxious to demonstrate their status by using the correct fork or living in the right kind of house.

Four chapters present case studies in which consumerism, the market-driven need for standardized products, middle-class cultural competencies, and national changes in living patterns intersected between 1900 and 1932. The case studies involve silverplate flatware, bathroom fixtures, mail-order homes, and zoning plans. A conclusion—more like a fifth chapter—brings together period texts such as Robert Staughton Lynd’s *Middletown* (New York, 1930) and Sinclair Lewis’ *Babbitt* (New York, 1922) to suggest the ways in which social scientists and artists, for different audiences, reflected and carried forward the work of delineating, critiquing, and exposing American middle-class mores.

Some of this ground has been explored before. Bushman’s work on early nineteenth-century manners comes to mind. Mail order and other forms of prefabricated homes have fascinated historians of vernacular

architecture, and household plumbing has been a favorite topic from Catharine Beecher’s day to our own. What Moskowitz adds to this discussion is sensitivity to the ways in which businesses consciously used complex cultural signs to sell products, and the pervasiveness and flexibility of the notion of a standard way of life as expressed in things.

Moskowitz shows that manufacturers of such seemingly mundane items as silverplate flatware, bathroom fixtures, and houses all rallied around the notion of standardization to sell a weird variety of concepts. For example, products came in standard forms—so many forks to a set or so many rooms to a house—whereas choices in patterning or room arrangements allowed consumers to express individuality. The notion that individuality could be contained and expressed in a standard form is only one of the paradoxes that Moskowitz explores.

Although she discusses the motivations of consumers throughout, the book is stronger on the producer side, largely because of the types of sources that Moskowitz uses—objects, magazines, corporate records, and literature. But the discussions among producers about their goals, and their adjustments to the market, make a compelling argument for the complexity and pervasiveness of a shared fascination with a standard of living.

Angel Kwolek-Folland
University of Florida


History has rarely been kind to southern textile mill workers. Writing in 1923, Tannebaum described mill folk as existing in a “state of childish impotence... Their faces seem stripped, denuded and empty... and their eyes are drawn and stupid. They give the impression of being beyond the realm of things daily lived and experienced by other people... they are men and women who have been lost to the world and have forgotten its existence.” Although such interpretations went unchallenged for decades, one of the most welcome trends in the historiography of the American South has been the effort to restore the dignity, humanity, and voice of this much-maligned segment of the southern population. Like A Family and Bryant Simon’s A Fabric of Defeat (Chapel


1 Jacquelyn Dowd Hall et al., Like A Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World (Chapel Hill, 1987), xvi.
Hill, 1998) are especially noteworthy in this regard. Though not as au-
thoritative, Roscigno and Danaher’s *The Voice of Southern Labor* builds
upon these earlier works, examining how music and the radio helped
white southern mill workers articulate shared grievances and mount
some form of collective resistance at a time “when unions had virtually
given up on southern organizing, and southern businessmen and politi-
cal leaders adopted the view that southern workers were apathetic or
conservative” (ix).

In describing life and labor in the early mill villages, the authors pay
special attention to the heavily paternalistic worker/owner relationship
that went a long way toward muting class tensions. These relationships
grew more confrontational during the late 1920s and the 1930s, how-
ever, as mill owners looked to circumvent labor guidelines through
“stretch-outs” and other scientific management techniques. Workers
expressed their dissatisfaction with this orientation in several ways, in-
cluding song. Much of the music and many of the musicians that they
favored had deep cultural and economic ties to the mill village. Per-
formers such as Gastonia’s Dave McCarn amplified themes of dangerous
working conditions, deadly and debilitating poverty, and debt and injus-
tice with a distinct message about who was to blame. This point is made
abundantly clear in the Ella Mae Wiggins’ tune “Big Fat Boss and the
Worker.” As families and communities gathered around their radios,
they began to develop an oppositional framework that set the stage for
the dramatic but ultimately unsuccessful walkouts of 1929.

The events of 1929 laid the groundwork for the massive general
strike of 1934. The music and messages from local radio stations helped
to sustain and broaden workers’ collective anger. While mill villagers
nodded their heads and stomped their feet to the Dixon Brother’s “Hard
Times in Here” and “Spinning Room Blues,” Franklin Roosevelt’s
“fireside chats” convinced many listeners that they had a potentially
powerful ally in the White House. These assurances offered less than
concrete dividends, however, and lacking adequate political and union
support, the strikers of 1934 succumbed to the pressures applied by
southern governors, judges, police, and vigilantes.

Although certainly provocative, Roscigno and Danaher’s analysis
requires more clarification. The authors privilege the voice of white
southern labor, tending to overlook the uglier side of their subjects’ ra-
cial politics, which played no small part in undermining southern labor
movements. The authors also struggle at times to make a strong causal
connection between forms of cultural protest, such as music, and direct
political action, such as labor strikes. The lyrics that Roscigno and
Danaher cite would certainly appear to stoke worker unrest, but the link
between the two remains implied in many cases.

Criticisms of this nature are neither original nor peculiar to this
work. Roscigno and Danaher’s larger argument is noteworthy. The au-
thers emphasize that the strikes of 1929 and 1934 were the product of
“southern workers’ native radicalism,” and in standing up to the considerable political and economic forces arrayed against them, the “indigenous radicalism” of the cotton-mill villages proved that textile workers were genuine forces in—not men and women lost to—the world that they had created (78, 99).

Alex Macaulay
Western Carolina University

Television in Black-and-White America: Race and National Identity. By Alan Nadel (Lawrence, University Press of Kansas, 2005) 224 pp. $29.95

Nadel’s stimulating and engagingly written new book argues for the crucial role played by 1950s prime-time television in the construction of a Cold War culture characterized by normalized whiteness and a mythified notion of “the West.” Nadel persuasively argues that the nascent network television industry successfully asserted itself as a purveyor of “truth” and “realism” because of the medium’s presumptions of liveness. This assertion had significant ideological implications in that television’s representations of “America,” past, present, and future, did not merely reflect an already developed Cold War sensibility, but, according to Nadel’s argument, helped to produce that sensibility.

One of the major strengths of Nadel’s book is that he convincingly shows that television—as medium and as narrative—needs to be studied by historians and cultural critics as a key generator of cultural meaning. Typically, cultural historians, when paying attention to television at all, discuss the medium shallowly with little attention to its technological attributes, its industrial history, its ways of constructing narratives, or its relationships to other cultural forms. Nadel’s work is refreshing because he pays attention to all of these matters: For instance, he focuses on the monopolistic attributes of the three-network setup and how that industrial model assisted—and actually necessitated—programming that was characterized by blandness and a lack of diversity or anything likely to antagonize white viewers in the South.

At the heart of the book are Nadel’s symptomatic readings of Walt Disney’s “Disneyland” (both the ABC TV series and the theme park that the series heralded and promoted) and the hugely popular cycle of “adult westerns” that dominated prime time from the mid-1950s to the early 1960s. Nadel argues that these shows presented to audiences a specific vision of “the West” that supported the geopolitics of anti-communism and the idea of America as the apotheosis of the “Free World.” But the “West” created by the Disneyland theme park and the “West” of such programs as “Gunsmoke,” “Wagon Train,” Disney’s “Davy Crockett,” and “Zane Grey Theater,” were strangely depopulated of African Americans. Nadel suggests that in order to deal with the inherent contradiction of America’s race relations, with its history of slavery and Jim Crow,
and its presumptions to being the world’s beacon of freedom and liberty, these narratives needed to provide a pleasing fiction to Americans about their past and what that past meant for the present and future. Not only did prime-time deliver an America in which blacks were invisible, but it also constructed an America in which southern whites were aggrieved victims of northerners, who needed to atone for wrongs perpetrated on them. The depopulated West typically functioned as a place of redemption.

Nadel’s chapter on “Disneyland” is thematically rich and well argued, particularly in suggesting how television as medium, the new interstate highway system, the theme park, and the TV series interconnected literally and figuratively to move Americans away from the spatial integration and desegregation called for by the 1954 decision in Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka. However, most of the chapter relies on the work of other scholars, particularly that of Marling. Nadel synthesizes the literature on Disney effectively and shows how that scholarship supports his arguments. However, more primary research would have been welcome.

Nadel’s examination of adult westerns relies significantly on extended readings of episodes from a range of popular programming. Although his symptomatic readings are compelling, Nadel does not reveal how he chose the episodes and series that ground his arguments. He also neglects to indicate where he viewed them. The only clue is in his acknowledgements, where he mentions that he viewed “hundreds” of episodes at the Museum of Television and Radio in New York and at the UCLA archives. More specific citations would be helpful.

This book makes a significant contribution to historical studies of television, a growing area of scholarship that still lacks a deep body of work mindful of the specificities of the medium. Adding much to the historiography of the Cold War, it is also a significant companion to Nadel’s Containment Culture: American Narratives, Postmodernism, and the Atomic Age (Durham, 1995).

Aniko Bodroghkozy
University of Virginia

Farming, Hunting, and Fishing in the Olmec World. By Amber M. VanDerwarker (Austin, University of Texas Press, 2006) 244 pp. $45.00

VanDerwarker has recognized that any tenable discussion on the relationship between the development of agriculture and the rise of sociopolitical complexity among the Olmec on the southern Gulf Coast of Mexico requires, as a base, direct archaeological data of what people ate and in what quantities. She approaches this sizable topic through models of agency and environmental circumscription, focusing on the

strategies of agricultural intensification and risk management evident at the small archaeological sites of La Joya and Bezuapan in the Sierra de los Tuxtlas of southern Veracruz, Mexico. Occupations at both sites spanned the Formative Period (c.1400 B.C. to A.D. 300), thus being contemporaneous with the larger Olmec centers in the surrounding lowlands.

That the Sierra de los Tuxtlas is a region of relatively recent volcanic activity guides VanDerwarker’s discussion about the changing subsistence strategies throughout the Formative period there, as evident from her analysis of the faunal and botanical data. VanDerwarker argues that volcanic activity in the Tuxtlas during the beginning of the Early Formative Period (c. 1400 to 1000 B.C.) may have stimulated the aggregation of egalitarian populations into permanent settlements, as well as the adoption of a diversified subsistence strategy that included maize as a staple, and broad-scaled hunting and fishing. By the Late Formative period (c. 400 B.C. to A.D. 100), when settlement and social ranking in the Tuxtlas appeared for the first time, the subsistence strategy focused on intensive maize agriculture and selective hunting; fishing was marginalized. Such a strategy reflects a decrease in subsistence risk, which itself was likely stimulated by the aggrandizing desires of emerging elites, who may have sought to create an agricultural surplus to further their social and political aspirations within the community. VanDerwarker credits environmental instability (renewed volcanic activity) with increasing subsistence risk in the subsequent Terminal Formative period (A.D. 100 to 300). This risk is reflected in the further intensification of maize agriculture, as suggested by the appearance of field terracing and a return to diverse hunting and gathering strategies.

The outline of changing subsistence risk throughout the Formative Period is amply supported by the relatively small data set. The record of changing subsistence, and how it varies from that in the surrounding lowlands, is one of the most valuable contributions of the study. Although the models of social agency and environmental circumscription used to frame the discussion are useful in explaining these observed patterns, they also contain ample room for additional data and testing.

VanDerwarker is commended for producing a solid, clear, and concise study that is mercifully free of specialized jargon. Although her study would have benefited from a comparative analysis with other contemporaneous regions of Mesoamerica (a point not lost on the author), her detailed explanations of the quantitative methods employed and her logical application of them make this study approachable and valuable to both specialists and non-specialists. This book represents one of the first comprehensive studies of botanical and faunal remains on the southern Gulf Coast within an archaeological context, for any prehispanic time period.

Charles L. F. Knight
University of Vermont
In spite of the power asymmetries that characterized the colonial Americas, recent interdisciplinary studies have confirmed the strength and persistence of the indigenous contribution. Lara’s erudite and amply illustrated book on sixteenth-century conventual architecture in New Spain (Mexico) both analyzes the powerful European and Judeo-Christian heritage (artistic, conceptual, and theological) introduced by the Spaniards and locates the corresponding indigenous cosmological concepts that reinforced and transformed this Old World legacy. The book is organized around the three interlocking root metaphors reflected in its title, City, Temple, and Stage, as facets of the historical and celestial Jerusalem that were transplanted to the Americas to inform the ambitious building program of the mendicant orders.

The overarching, driving metaphor is that of the “Last Things,” such eschatological events as the imminent second coming of Christ and Last Judgment, which held an intense grip on the European visual and spiritual imagination. Apocalyptic concerns around 1500 justified the acquisition of new territory to capture more souls for Christianity in anticipation of the final establishment of the city of God or the New Jerusalem. In a hefty exegesis of both Judaic and early Christian texts, the author explores the varied threads of eschatological thought as mandates for global conversion, in particular stressing the writings of the twelfth-century Joachim of Fiore, whose utopic views included that of the “monastery city as a new promised land” (54).

Lara gives a clear and detailed exposition of the reticulated colonial city plan and the standard monastic complex, including the single-nave church as well as the multifunctional walled patio (corral), with its open-air chapel, four corner stational chapels (posas), and stone cross. He convincingly tracks all of these architectural components to classical or Christian prototypes, specifically to the Muslim and temple structures on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, ironically conflated in their New World counterparts. The author painstakingly reconstructs possible modes for transporting these influences overseas, including Nicholas de Lyra’s “blueprints” of the Temple of Solomon.

Given the global reach of this study and the diversity of his sources, Lara’s interdisciplinarity is nonetheless driven primarily by his prodigious expertise in Judeo-Christian religious history. Although he displays an acute eye for iconography, Lara’s confidence is invested in the conceptual templates that manifested themselves in stone and paint. That is to say, written words, rather than images, are the primary carriers of meaning, indicating a methodology that is necessarily weighted to Euro-Christian interpretations. Although characterized as a partnership,
neither the dynamics of friar-native interaction nor the factors that motivated native Americans to cooperate are fully explored.

In his final chapters, Lara partially corrects this imbalance, demonstrating how long-standing Amerindian traditions and cosmologies had a demonstrable influence over the shape and function of these monastic complexes. Lara convincingly interprets the atrial crosses placed at the center of the four-square patios as Mesoamerican World Trees as well as “icons of the soon-to-appear Messiah” (162), with their elaborately carved arma Christi (symbols of the Passion). As does Edgerton’s recent publication, Lara develops the theme of convent as liturgical stage for Christian narratives activated in “rituals of conversion.”1 Within the intersecting political and spiritual goals of colonialism, Amerindians, as neophyte Christians, are inserted into a “trajectory of salvation history together with the myth of the Last World Emperor in the person of Charles V” (180).

Jeanette Favrot Peterson
University of California, Santa Barbara


Kuhn and Koyré once characterized the “scientific revolution” as a tectonic shift in worldviews. According to their influential interpretations, seventeenth-century mathematicians, cosmographers, and natural philosophers suddenly embraced heliocentrism and mechanical philosophy and threw Aristotelian physics and geocentric theologies into the dustbin of history.1 Kuhn’s and Koyré’s accounts bolstered the status of Nicolaus Copernicus, Johannes Kepler, René Descartes, Galileo Galilei, and Isaac Newton as cultural heroes, the ushers of modernity. Later, however, sociologists of science like Stephen Shapin and Simon Schaffer upset this heroic, revolutionary narrative by linking the history of seventeenth-century English mechanical philosophy firmly to the welter of partisan interests unleashed by the Civil War, Restoration, and the Glorious Revolution. Shapin and Schaffer also added artisans and instrument makers to the list of modernity’s founding fathers. Shapin and Schaffer’s narrative, however, remained wedded to the history of physics and cosmography. Historians of science have more recently begun to question this emphasis on momentous philosophical and cosmographical transformations and pay more attention to the mundane and the obvious; the

1 See Thomas Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (Chicago, 1962); Alexandre Koyré, Etudes d’histoire de la pensée scientifique (Paris, 1983).
Scientific Revolution took place amid a commercial revolution triggered by Europe’s imperial expansion to the New World, Africa, and Asia.

This new emphasis on commerce and empire has suddenly prompted historians of science to study the history of collecting, curiosities, and botanical gardens. Yet the role of Spain and Portugal, the two most important early modern European empires, has received little attention. This silence should surprise no one, for the history of these two countries has long been associated with a narrative of backwardness not progress, obscurantism not enlightenment, ignorance not science. The Black Legend has long blinded historians to the fact that the roots of European scientific modernity lie in fifteenth-century Portugal and sixteenth-century Spain, not seventeenth-century Amsterdam or London.

Barrera-Osorio’s book is a fine first step to render the obvious and long-ignored visible. His book is solely concerned with demonstrating that both empire and New World novelty forced Spanish merchants, bureaucrats, and intellectuals to dispense with classical, humanist epistemologies and fully to embrace “experience” (eyewitnessing and experimentation) rather than the authority of texts. This simple yet radical conclusion flies in the face of a well-established historiography that maintains that, despite all its novelties, the New World had a blunted impact on Europe and that European scholars easily incorporated the flurry of new data coming from the Indies into classically based textual narratives.

But Barrera-Osorio cracks the proverbial nut differently. Rather than dealing with scholars, his focus is to study merchants, settlers, and bureaucrats. Free from the hindrance of textual authority, merchants, artisans, entrepreneurs, and royal officials time and again settled disputes about the commercial value of new commodities and technologies by appealing to “experience.” Entrepreneurs sought to establish monopolies over new botanical resources by demonstrating the therapeutic value of plants through clinical trials. The Crown, in turn, handed out patents and licenses only after proving those claims valid. Empire and commerce quickly led to the creation of institutions with the sole purpose of apportioning credit to competing claims.

The Casa de Contratación emerged to settle disputes and regulate trade. It also worked as a clearing house of knowledge about the New World, where cosmographers debriefed pilots to create ever more accurate charts and maps, where pilots were trained to calculate longitude and latitude in the open sea and thus to avoid costly sea wrecks, and where cosmographers developed new instruments of navigation. These two cultures of the textual and the experiential were often at loggerheads at the Casa; cosmographers and pilots more often than not failed to agree.

Barrera-Osorio also describes a culture of technological innovation triggered by empire and commerce, offering a sixteenth-century Spain teeming with artisans and entrepreneurs, not painters and bards.
Whether concerning innovative devices to pump water out of ships, metallurgical processes to extract metals from ores, or diving instruments to fish oysters loaded with pearls, the procedure was always the same: Experience trumped textual authority. Bureaucrats, settlers, and merchants routinely developed the means to gather, and reflect on, the novelties of the New World. The occasional original report expected from pilots and conquistadors soon gave way to an institutionalized circulation of information through questionnaires, which were centralized and processed by specialists (royal cosmographers, historians, and natural historians) hired by the Crown to winnow the grain from the chaff. Barrera-Osorio ends this provocative study by showing that this culture of experience ultimately had an impact on scholars. José de Acosta, for example, came to challenge the textual authority of Aristotelian meteorology, and Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo found Pliny’s natural history wanting.

Barrera-Osorio’s is a short, richly documented study, mostly based on archival research at the Archivo de Indias. To the traditional narrative of the scientific revolution, he offers an alternative plot that has remained muted for too long. Would historians of science listen to Barrera-Osorio’s soft-spoken yet forceful voice? Probably not. They most likely will need the shouts of a crowd, but this book is a fine first wake-up call.

Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra
University of Texas, Austin


The author states as his main theme that the Spanish colonial city “evolved during the age of Atlantic capitalism and was itself a circumstance of that capitalism” (xi). He advances well beyond this goal, however, offering a detailed class and caste analysis, overt and implicit comparisons with Western European cities, and various assertions about urban class structure. Included are repeated statements that what he terms a “lower-middle class” was common and often a large component of the urban population. The author, however, also falls short of some of these aims in important ways.

The book ranges widely, covering such topics as what constitutes a Spanish colonial city; the pre-Columbian city; the politics and institutions of urban government; the city architecture, layout, and space; the urban economy, with particular emphasis on petty trade and artisanal production; the official, as opposed to the actual, caste and class structure; the nuclear family and its alternatives; and the many forms of social
interaction. In general, the book is a condensed and useful synthesis of previous studies, plus suggestions of questions for future research.

Yet, the author’s contention that the urban function “derived from the western European commercial enterprise of the early modern period” remains unproven (130). Specifically, nearly all his evidence comes from the period 1780 to 1825, when new technologies in mining, bureaucracy, urban management, and, above all, navigation had begun to transform Spanish-American structures. The Hapsburg society of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was much more local, isolated, and traditional. Kinsbrunner’s identification of the trade and other exchanges found in many European cities long before the onset of capitalism as “capitalistic” strips the word of definable meaning. Moreover, since his analysis is predominantly local, primarily within the cities themselves, the importance of the great fleets and the silver cargoes, of smuggling, and of the “Columbian exchange”—surely the bearers of incipient capitalism—receive little attention.

Kinsbrunner is decidedly optimistic about these colonial cities. To him, they were places of opportunity, dialogue, and, to some extent, social mobility. Although he admits to their “downside”—destitution, filth, congestion, high crime, and the mistreatment of domestics, women, and children—on balance he nevertheless praises them. He barely mentions that murder, dearth, disease, and mortality were probably so much worse there than in the countryside that, were it not for immigration, many of these colonial cities would eventually have declined, or even vanished, as happened in early modern Europe. Another unfortunate omission is the book’s failure to incorporate the work on urban Guadalajara by Anderson and his school, and the lengthy debate over caste versus class that engaged such leading scholars as Chance, Taylor, McCaa, Schwartz, and Seed.1 Hence, although this book is a compact and useful synthesis of some of the leading studies of the Spanish colonial city, its main theses find only questionable support in the evidence and the analysis.

Murdo J. MacLeod
University of Florida


This book forces historians to think about maps and space in new ways. Craib provides a theoretically sophisticated, ground level view of land disputes and state formation in Mexico through the contested terrain of maps and mapmaking. Employing Certeau’s and Scott’s suggestive ideas about everyday practices of resistance and uses of space, the author analyzes the struggle to define and interpret space by cartographers, surveyors, state officials, large landowners, and villagers in nineteenth and early twentieth century Mexico. The main theoretical argument that space and cartography, not being transparent, neutral, or static, require critical and historical analysis may seem old hat to geographers and historians of the built environment, but for most of us, Craib’s analysis offers a new way of understanding state formation.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Mexico was a loose confederation of largely autonomous state governments and local caudillos. Creating a national map allowed elites who dreamed of a modern nation to “make real” their “imagined community.” Antonio García Cubas’ 1858 national map was useless for military expeditions or development projects, owing to its lack of detail, but it did delineate Mexico’s national boundaries at a moment of great insecurity about the nation’s territorial integrity. Mexico had lost almost half of its territory to its northern neighbor a decade earlier. For the first time, the map positioned Mexico in relation to the Greenwich meridian rather than the cathedral in Mexico City, bringing “Mexico into cartographic consonance with what were then construed to be the icons of advanced civilization, giving it a ‘modern’ spatial sensibility” (33). Multiple spaces and place names were “fixed” on this map and “reduced to the linearity of a singular narrative” (53).

In addition to projecting Mexico’s national portrait onto an international stage, maps had more mundane and instrumental uses. In particular, survey maps allowed the government to fix landholding boundaries, thereby giving the state a tool by which to “see” and intervene in the chaotic and multiply layered space of rural Mexico. However, resistance succeeded through the first half of the nineteenth century in preventing the state’s efforts to divide land into individual private holdings. The author notes the astonishing fact that in spite of a series of land division laws in Veracruz, beginning in 1826, not a single community’s land had been divided by 1856 into individual freehold parcels (98–99). However, he rejects the usual explanation that attributes failed land division exclusively to resistance by Indians and villagers, showing instead

that large landowners also fought state intervention and that a lack of trained surveyors and financing hindered land division.

Under the presidency of Porfirio Díaz, Mexico institutionalized and fortified its mapping efforts through the Comisión Geográfico-Exploradora, which came under the jurisdiction of the War Ministry by 1881. Whether due to the military effort to record multiple local place names for counter-insurgency purposes, to the post-1890s emphasis on property division, or to the post-1911 revolutionary land reform, scientific maps, rather than titles and local memory, became the authoritative texts over which people had to struggle.

The epilogue brings the narrative to the 1990s when Mexico’s President Carlos Salinas reformed the sacred Article 27 of the revolutionary Mexican Constitution, permitting communal ejido lands to be rented, privatized, and sold. Though at first glance, this development might appear to signal the state’s withdrawal from managing land, the author notes that it created a mammoth state bureaucracy to oversee surveying, certification, and titling. The state, its surveyors, and their maps emerge as the winners in this history. However, this book is a reminder that in spite of constant state efforts to fix and make permanent the landscape, people keep moving, changing place names, and inventing new uses of space, remaining forever one step ahead of the state surveyor.

Elliott Young
Lewis & Clark College


The academic literature about changes to Latin American rural society caused by the spread of coffee cultivation during the late nineteenth century is extensive. But Dore’s work on the municipality of Diriomo in the Granada district of Nicaragua makes it clear that much remains to be learned about this period.

Informed by interesting theoretical and conceptual perspectives, and using a variety of sources, Dore traces the history of Diriomo in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, concentrating on the period after 1870. Her most important sources are municipal archives, through which she has sifted painstakingly. Dore augments them with oral history, using conversations with residents both to deepen the account contained in the archives and to suggest alternative understandings of the events described. She explores the changes in Diriomo through an analysis of arguments about the commons, private property, and agrarian capitalism—drawing from the work of Polanyi and Burns; gender, patri-
archy, and debt bondage—using arguments derived from Stern and Knight; and ethnicity—gleaning insights from Adams and Gould.¹

By the latter part of the nineteenth century, indigenous elites in the community acted with regional elites and national governments to title land and to extinguish common property rights in the municipality. Dore puts this process in the context of “private property revolutions” elsewhere and discusses the extent to which the titling of private property and the spread of coffee cultivation led to agrarian capitalism. In Dore’s analysis, this issue is tied up with questions of labor. The continuation of a form of debt peonage leads Dore to argue that Diriomo was not in transition to a “free labour” regime; nor did the spread of coffee cultivation lead to the dominance of capitalist relations of production in the municipality.

Debt peonage was linked to the continuing importance of patronage and patriarchy. Local elites used continuing relations of patriarchy to cement their elite positions and to tie labor to their estates. This “patriarchy from above” connected to a “patriarchy from below” that reinforced the role of the male head of the peasant household and helped bind peasants to the coffee regime. Nonetheless, one of Dore’s central arguments is that private property enabled women to title land in their own names, freeing them from legal dependence on a head of household for access to land. Unfortunately, most of the evidence that Dore is able to bring to bear on this issue consists of census records; the argument remains suggestive but unconvincing.

Dore is more persuasive in discussing ethnicity. She argues that the effective termination of communal lands in the second half of the century removed the most important difference between indigenous and nonindigenous residents. Thus, Diriomenos no longer described themselves as indigenous. Dore also ties her arguments about Diriomo’s history to an understanding of the mistakes made in the Sandinista agrarian reform of the 1990s.

Those trying to understand agrarian change and rural society in Latin America, and elsewhere, can find much that is informative and useful in this marvelous book.

Jim Handy
University of Saskatchewan

Argentina’s long history of political instability has made it an unlikely candidate for judicial independence. With dramatic and frequent swings between civilian and military regimes throughout the twentieth century, judges have often been caught in the crossfire: new regime, new court. Impediments to independence, including impeachments, threatened impeachments, and other methods, continued even after the 1983 transition to democracy (62). Given these conditions, the assumption might be that the Supreme Court would unavoidably serve as an executive pawn. In *Courts under Constraints*, Helmke questions this supposition. Drawing on substantial research and a wide variety of methodological approaches, Helmke seeks to show that even in Argentina’s highly constrained court, judges do decide against the executive.

Helmke demonstrates persuasively that the very vulnerability of judges in an unstable situation can, in fact, encourage them to dissent from the incumbent government, especially as a change in administration looms near. Judges are most likely to engage in this “strategic defection” when they believe that the government’s popularity is declining and expect the subsequent government to have a different set of preferences. Although strategic defection may risk the wrath of the incumbent, it may enhance the possibility of surviving the administrative change.

Beyond her findings, what makes Helmke’s work unique is her willingness to embrace an unusual breadth of methodological approaches, including everything from formal modeling and statistical analysis to qualitative analysis. The formal modeling may not have contributed enough insight to have warranted the considerable effort that went into developing it, but it is nonetheless an interesting exploration. If Helmke’s methodology had a flaw, it might be an over-emphasis on “scientific” testing, rather than learning from results. Although she makes a good case for her argument, and tests it from a variety of angles, her rigor also confines her. The vast amount of information that she has collected would allow her to indulge in considerably more substantial theory building, developing the many nuances and exceptions that she discovers and integrating them into the general theory. For example, Figure 5.1 demonstrates apparent “strategic defection” in, for example, 1982/83, 1987/88, and 1998/99 (101), but the model does not really explain the jumps in “anti-government judicial decisions” that occurred, for example, in 1986 and 1993.

The consistent emphasis on testing the strategic-defection model also leads the author occasionally to miss alternative explanations for particular outcomes. A case in point is the Court’s 1987 reversal of its position toward a “Due Obedience” law, which essentially granted amnesty to junior and mid-level officers for most human-rights violations committed during the 1976–1983 military regime. According to Helmke,
the Court’s shift from opposing the legislation to accepting it stemmed from the new convergence between the Radical Civil Union (UCR) administration and the Peronist legislature, once the legislature passed the law (142). Following the author’s line of argumentation, which has both major parties signaling the same preferences, justices would be unlikely to please any future administration by dissenting. However, it seems equally, if not more likely, that both the Court and the Legislature were responding to the same conditions, the threat from the April 1987 military rebellion. Thus, despite her methodological breadth, in this instance, Helmke’s focus on hypothesis testing may have misled her.

The effort to develop an elegant, nomothetic model also has led to some significant exclusions—for instance, regarding the extent of convergence between the legislature and the executive. As Helmke notes, since Latin American legislatures are notoriously weak in relation to the executive, they have been unable to play a significant role in selecting, or inhibiting selections of Supreme Court judges (10). Nonetheless, the legislature is the branch with the power to impeach judges. The cases that Helmke develops reveal some interesting differences regarding how different legislatures exercised that power. During Eduardo Duhalde’s presidency, Congress appeared to have raised and dropped impeachment proceedings at Duhalde’s behest (148–151). Yet the case of Fernando de la Rua, a Radical attempting to govern with a Peronist Congress, provides the striking contrast of a divided government apparently impeding the president’s ability to pursue impeachment as an option, despite his initial intents to do so (145). Helmke, however, mentions the implications of divided government only in passing.

Despite these limitations, this book remains a valuable contribution to the literature on two fronts. First, Helmke has conducted admirable research, both quantitative and qualitative, on the Argentine judicial system, providing a wealth of information. Second, the book’s unusual methodological breadth makes it an intriguing exploration of various tools’ ability to answer different social-science questions. The challenge, as always, is to integrate these methodologies effectively to maximize the gains.

Deborah Norden
Whittier College

Creating the Creole Island: Slavery in Eighteenth-Century Mauritius. By Megan Vaughan (Durham, Duke University Press, 2005) 341 pp. $84.95 cloth $23.95 paper

In this richly textured and engagingly presented work, Vaughan explores the creation of the complex world of créolité in eighteenth-century Mauritius. As she notes, “creole” is a slippery term in Mauritian history, society, and culture; its meaning has been reshaped by various sociocultural
and political considerations over the years. Coming to grips with such a multifaceted concept can be difficult, especially on an island in the Indian Ocean where research on many important aspects of colonial life remains to be undertaken. However, as this important contribution to Mauritian history and the literature on comparative slavery demonstrates, a willingness to embrace rather than eschew complexity, to make perceptive use of hitherto ignored archival sources, and to draw discerningly upon the insights of others can pay handsome dividends.

Vaughan’s examination of the “complex, conflictual engagement between self and other” at the heart of Mauritian master–slave relations rests on a careful reading of court cases and related legal documents, sources that have hitherto been largely ignored in studies of eighteenth-century Mauritius and its slave regime (254). Because of the manner in which the judicial system in this French colony worked, these materials provide a rare opportunity to hear the voices of Mauritian slaves themselves, even if these voices are mediated through court officials. Moreover, these materials provide an excellent vantage point from which to discern various aspects of the sociocultural world that these slaves shared with the island’s white and free colored residents who were of equally diverse social, cultural, and geographical origin.

The fluidity and complexity of local life are revealed in greater detail in chapters that examine, among other things, the role of ethnicity, gender, language, race, and sex in shaping the eighteenth-century Mauritian experience. Vaughan’s discussion of these topics is enhanced by her viewing them in light of relevant economic, intellectual, and political developments, both locally and in France. Her arguments also benefit from a willingness to examine Mauritian developments in light of work on other eighteenth-century slave-plantation societies, and to make judicious use of the analytical tools and insights offered by other disciplines, including literary studies and psychology.

Missing from this work, unfortunately, is a careful and explicit consideration of the ways in which the Mauritian case study deepens our understanding of the nature and dynamics of creole society formation. Vaughan makes no reference, for example, to Brathwaite’s classic study of the development of a creole society in Jamaica and to subsequent debates about creolization.¹ Her nuanced arguments about master–slave relations, slave agency, and class in eighteenth-century Mauritius will nevertheless give students of such societies much to consider. Her careful weaving together of the stories about slaves, local whites, and free persons of color is a refreshing departure from the historiographical norm in which these populations are frequently viewed in relative isolation from one another. In so doing, Vaughan highlights the pressing need for slave plantation studies to examine the history of colonial white

and free plantations of color in much greater detail, and to approach the history of these societies much more holistically. Failure to do so will leave us with incomplete, if not potentially distorted, views of the development of these fascinatingly complex societies and cultures.

Richard B. Allen
Worcester, Massachusetts

Village Governance in North China, 1875–1936. By Huaiyin Li (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2005) 325 pp. $60.00

Huaiyin’s book on village governance is a welcome addition to the study of the relationship between the state and society in late imperial and Republican China. The study’s location is Huailu County of south-central Hebei, a province in north China. Although many books, along with a slew of articles, have discussed similar subjects within past three decades, the book finds its own niche by focusing on the village level of a peasant community. The author is therefore able to provide new information on this intricate relationship.

The book consists of two major parts. In Part one, the author focuses on the mechanism that allowed villages to function as a community. Unlike Popkin, who sees peasants as “rational” participants, Japanese researchers who view peasant communities as “corporate” entities, and those Western scholars who perceive them as “natural villages,” Li views the villagers in Huailu as united not only by common values and a tacit moral code but also by such informal sanctions as cursing, gossip, ridicule, and even open denunciation. The author insists that those seemingly trivial behaviors played a crucial role in enforcing village rules (cungui) as well as local regulations (xianggu), helping to form the basis for village governance. In this sense, Li treats the village community as a “field” within which villagers calculated the gains and losses of their interest according to each circumstance before deciding whether to participate in, or to defy, village undertakings.

Another focal point of the study is the Xiangdi system, whereby the village head (xiangdi) served as the intermediary between the country government and the village community. Disagreeing with previous studies that regarded these local community leaders as middlemen or brokers, Li argues that their duties were much more onerous and complex, especially during the Warlord period when various self-proclaimed governments levied heavy taxes on villagers. The xiangdi often had to decide to continue mediating between the resisting community and the

intruding authority. As villagers, they themselves often calculated the

gains and losses of each circumstance and acted accordingly.

Understanding the evolving role of the xiangdi requires a thorough

examination of the ever-changing state/society relationship, the primary

concern of the book’s second part. After carefully scrutinizing the selec-

tion process, personal background, and daily duties of these village lead-

ers, Li sets his eyes on the villages’ actual operation. He argues that pre-

vious researchers over-emphasized the formal structure of local

governance when the “informal institutions” were in need of more at-

tention. The state deliberately stayed distant from the villages until major
disputes erupted. As Li suggests, the Chinese state—unlike that of West-

ern Europe with its feudal lords and decentralized monarchical power—

was highly centralized and standardized above the village level but de-

centralized and informal at the village level. The author uses the term

“substantive government,” as well as Mann’s concept of “infrastructural

power,” to describe this nature of the Chinese state.\(^2\) Li believes that the

Chinese state refrained from fully exercising its power at the village level

to preserve its image of benevolence, which was crucial in maintaining

its legitimacy. Nor would the state have benefited if it acted otherwise,

creating resistance from the local community. The key to the existence

of such a relationship was that the state and village communities were

interdependent.

The book confirms that the Nationalist government was able to

penetrate the local communities in Huailu. Although the state-making

process was visible throughout the entire period under study, it was

more apparent, as well as effective, during the Guomindang era. Under

the pressure of state making, the informal institutions at the village level

were destroyed and replaced by a formal system of government control.

It is no surprise that shortly after 1930, elite activism at the village level

almost completely disappeared.

The book’s strength is its focus on Chinese rural society at the vil-

lage level. The author based his research on local archives filled with

documents related to litigation cases, taxation records, and petitions. Its

analysis of peasant behavior, which reveals the informal government of

the village communities at Huailu, is particularly lucid. Although

the discussion of state making in the Republican period is not distinctly

different from that of previous works, the book nevertheless provides

valuable information below the county level.

Xin Zhang

Indiana University, Indianapolis


This concise, lucid, and well-documented study provides a valuable schema and key concepts for understanding the historical transformation of Japan from a society based on status to one based on national identity and socioeconomic class. Through detailed examination of two marginal groups in Japanese society, Howell reveals how identity categories functioned in the early modern polity under the Tokugawa shoguns and their transformation under the modern state established in 1868. Although this approach leaves aside many questions about the social character of the majority population, it is better than that of more sweeping social histories as a means of testing the formal logic of the state as it defined the boundaries of the polity and governed groups within them.

The book divides roughly in half between chapters dealing with the status of outcastes (called eta and hinin in the early modern period; today called burakumin) and chapters dealing with the Ainu ethnic group living in Hokkaido and other northern islands that Japan began to claim in 1868. Both cases show the workings of an early-modern state the legitimacy and stability of which rested on maintenance of an elaborate system of status distinctions governing identity and social interaction. Within the bounds of the Tokugawa regime, these distinctions were not the absolute, hereditary distinctions of caste. Rather, they functioned situationally, permitting instances of what Howell calls “status transvestitism”—the licensed temporary adoption of another group’s status markers. In Hokkaido, on the borders of Tokugawa territory, sumptuary regulation and ritual exchanges with Ainu leaders were used to manifest Tokugawa claims to the civilized center and the Ainu position as barbarian outsiders.

In broadest outline, Howell’s schema will appear readily familiar to historians of early modern societies. Indeed, the Tokugawa status order has prompted historians to point to similarities between Japanese and European “feudalism” for decades. What makes this a pathbreaking study, however, is Howell’s close reading of how status actually worked at the everyday level in precisely the places and times that it became problematical.

Under the modern state, outcaste groups were formally emancipated, and status distinctions were abandoned. Ainu were proclaimed to be full subjects of the state. Howell demonstrates that the modern state’s dispensation for these minorities was cruel at the same time that it was liberating. The buraku case is an instance of what Levi-Strauss called—in a pithy, and elitist, phrase—“that perfidious dose of homogeneity which permits comparison.” Whereas previously outcaste communities had been recognized for their separate identity within the Tokugawa system,

and their leaders given considerable autonomy by the state, after emancipation they came to be despised for their continued poverty. Moreover, neighboring peasants’ anger over the abandonment of their former humble positions sparked pogroms. Meanwhile, the Meiji government sought to assimilate Ainu by eradicating all signs of their ethnic identity and corraling them into reservations where they were expected to take up farming and become productive peasants.

At just one point in his analysis of this transformation, Howell’s schema seems inadequate to the history that he describes—namely, his treatment of the modern state’s “monetization of duty,” by which he means primarily the institution of a national system of taxation in cash, as well as, implicitly, the state’s embrace of capitalist industrialization after the elimination of the status system. The government’s reinterpretation of obligations as money payments and contributions to national productivity was unquestionably a central component of the modern transformation. Emphasizing this fact alone, however, overlooks the significance of the conscript army that replaced and ultimately defeated the samurai, and offers only a limited explanation for the samurai rebellions that occurred during the first years of the new regime. Howell’s intention to focus on actual institutions and to avoid questions of ideology, as stated in his introduction, results in an exemplary clarity. Yet, the case of anti-regime samurai, whose actions can be understood fully only by including a consideration of the ethos and political ideals that were also constitutive of mid-nineteenth-century samurai identity, suggests the limits of this strictly institutional analysis.

This said, Howell’s combination of careful historical research and a broad social schema has produced an exceptional study of nineteenth-century Japanese history, bringing the case of Japan’s transition to modernity into the universal frame of historical sociology and offering excellent material for comparison with other regimes.

Jordan Sand
Georgetown University

Smallholders and Stockbreeders: Histories of Foodcrop and Livestock Farming in Southeast Asia. Edited by Peter Boomgaard and David Henley (Leiden, KITLV Press, 2004) 344 pp. €30

Although no one would contend that the agricultural history of Southeast Asia is terra incognita, it is fair to say that the subject is terra incompleta. Much has been written about Southeast Asia’s plantation crops and about the region’s rice export sector during the modern period, but little about other dimensions of its agricultural history. For this reason alone, Smallholders and Stockbreeders would be a welcome addition to the scholarly literature on Southeast Asia. Because all of the essays included in this collection are empirically rich and because at least some of them offer
equally valuable interpretive insights, moreover, the contributions go far beyond mere gap filling.

Smallholders and Stockbreeders exudes interdisciplinarity. It includes essays by environmental scientists, historians, economists, geographers, anthropologists, animal scientists, and archaeologists, and it is nothing if not symmetrical in its coverage—six of the essays being about foodcrops and six about livestock. Furthermore, the volume’s temporal sweep matches its disciplinary breadth; the time frames of the essays range from the Neolithic in Southeast Asia to the present day.

That four of the six essays about foodcrops deals in one way or another with rice is no surprise given that cereal’s importance in the region. The remaining essays deal with the agricultural importance of sago (the starchy flour made “from the stem pith of various species of soft-centred palms” [69] in Southeast Asia and Micronesia) and with the diversified character of “traditional” agriculture in the region. Each of these essays is replete with information. Most groundbreaking is the evidence marshaled by Jan Wisseman Christie for a significant long-distance trade in rice in Java and Bali by the eighth or ninth century C.E. and a significant export trade by the eleventh century C.E. Several of the essays in this group, most explicitly Roy Ellen’s, make the point that the advent of irrigated rice cultivation did not always lead to the displacement of purportedly less complex agricultural systems in Southeast Asia based upon sago and/or tubers.

Three of the six essays devoted to livestock discuss the often overlooked role of horses and ponies in Southeast Asia; the other three essays treat the region’s large ruminants, particularly buffalo and cattle of one type or another. This impressively researched and extremely detailed section is probably more appropriate for—and appealing to—specialists than general readers. Indeed, the entire volume is characterized by the same large virtue and the same small vice.

Peter A. Coclanis
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill


Hunt recently used her platform as the President of the American Historical Association to argue strongly against “presentism,” a historiographical approach that seeks to both explore and explain the past in the context of current concerns. Instead, history, from the Huntian point of view, is a sphere of “difference” to be studied and approached on its own terms.¹ One of the most delightful aspects of Ansari’s *Life After Par-

ition is its contribution, even if unintentional, to this debate. The work triangulates the twin poles of the presentist question. Solidly grounded in the excavation and exploration, for its own sake, of a particular time and place, it nonetheless unequivocally speaks to matters of pressing contemporary importance, revealing how history is inherently linked to, and informs, the present.

*Life After Partition* investigates what happened in the province of Sindh and in Karachi, its major port city, in southeastern Pakistan, after the partition of India in 1947, when vast numbers of people of different languages, religious customs and interpretations, rituals, ethnicity, and regional place of origin both moved into and out of the area. Ansari interrogates the tensions between region/center, urban/rural, landed/landless, and migrant/settled, laying out the impact on, and response of, the state and its democratic and authoritarian institutions. Specifically, the book shows the category of the “Indian Muslim,” upon which the state of Pakistan was founded, to be highly problematical, loosely knitting together a wide range of competing and contested interest groups. In this sense, *Life After Partition* is a parochial history, albeit one that engages constructs of interest to scholars across temporal and spatial boundaries.

But the reach and relevance of Ansari’s work is not so limited. In the very specificity and nuance of her study, she uniquely provides new perspectives on ongoing and emergent disputes. Take, for example, her discussion of an episode in which Fareed Jafri, editor of the English-language *Civil and Military Gazette*, came into conflict with right-wing, religious parties and the Urdu-language press for defending the principle of religious tolerance (108). Jafri was forced to resign from the Council of Pakistan Editors, but as a parting shot, he wrote that “a press which is controlled by mullahs, self-interested capitalists, feudal lords, illiterate businessmen, unscrupulous politicians, cannot and must not be allowed to run riot on our already confused social order” (109). The pertinence to events of global concern in 2006 and 2007 is unmistakable. Another illustration of the way in which Ansari’s specifically located inquiry also resonates with broader themes and questions of present-day urgency is the book’s analysis of the 1958 Karachi Municipal Corporation elections, in which “mal-administration, mismanagement, nepotism and corruption” afforded the rightist religious party, the Jammat-i-Islami, the opening to win on a platform of “practical solutions” to Karachi’s “physical and moral” ills (172, 179).

The past, as these two examples demonstrate, is not a mere “sphere of difference.” It is, rather, a construction of knowledge that marks certain places and times as unique in some way but inflected by the common current of humanity nonetheless. This stream of sameness makes history, always removed in some sense from its interpreters, a looking glass through which interpreters can learn about themselves and their moment in time, even if not intentionally. *Life After Partition* tacitly acknowledges this facet of its argument with a final chapter that is at once
an “epilogue and conclusion,” a place where past and present (and future) are intertwined.

This book is a tight and detailed study that provides broadly applicable lessons regarding the repercussions of the failure to provide for basic human rights and needs in a free and just environment. It is a well-researched, narrowly focused piece of scholarship with wide interdisciplinary (and disciplinary) and political ramifications.

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