Reviews


The history of cartography, like so many histories of other sciences, has taken a long time to evolve from a triumphalist, positivist narrative of advances in a discipline to a more thoughtful account of its essence and development. Jacob clearly demonstrates how the history of cartography lies at the intersection of history, anthropology, semiology, geography, and cartography. His approach involves “looking at maps for themselves, as artifacts, as constructions, as a complex language, rooted in society’s visual culture” (xiv).

Eschewing a chronological organization, but always forthcoming on the timing of the maps under discussion, Jacob divides his argument into four stages: (1) the “discovery of the [cartographic] object, its properties, and its visual and intellectual effects; (2) the visual components of a map, which include “geometry, nonfigurative geographical drawings, and incrustations of iconography”; (3) “the writing and language on its surface”; and (4) the combined effects due to “the itineraries and the interpretations of the reader [and] the intentionality and the visual artifice of the cartographers themselves” (8–9).

A work like this one cannot be absorbed in a single sitting. Indeed, translating the book from its earlier French version required nearly fifteen years and the services of both a literary translator and an expert in early modern maps. During this time, Brian Harley and David Woodward launched the monumental series, History of Cartography (Chicago, 1987–), which is only now reaching the halfway point in its publication, despite the untimely demise of both the original editors.

Nonetheless, the subtlety of the author’s arguments will well repay the readers’ efforts. The first chapter examines the broad array of maps from drawings in the sand to wall drawings to individual printed maps to atlases, applying to them the terminology of visual culture. The next chapter considers every visual component possible on a map from its borders to the vital distinction between its lines, which suggest particular itineraries, and its surfaces, the forms of which provide overall impressions of a map’s contents.

Chapter 3 takes up the verbal component of maps, going beyond discussions of lettering and toponymy to that other primary visual element in mapping, the point. In a particularly brilliant passage, Jacob explains that “[t]he point is a ‘shifter’ between space and language, between what can be seen and what can be said, between perception and memory” (202). Finally, he contrasts the purpose of the mapmaker and the map reader: “For the conceiver, it is a construction, an assemblage of partial data, a graphic translation of measurements and observations, a patient labor of juxtaposition, of repetition of previous drawings, of their critical verification. . . . For the viewer, it is a completed process; the scientific scaffolding has been removed; the map is an image producing a
visual illusion, an effect of reality” (273). He concludes that “the map is a graphic prosthesis of the intellect, . . . the sign of recognition between those who share the image of the world that it proposes” (362).

The author and his translators have considerably expanded our ability to discuss what maps do and how they change.

Bruce Fetter
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee


If globalization ultimately diminishes the importance of states as institutions, the bureaucratic capabilities and institutional conditions created by states themselves will be the reason. Such is the central argument of Sassen’s important new book. Whereas most scholars focus on the ways in which globalization has diminished the importance of the state, Sassen instead emphasizes that state institutions play an essential role in enabling the process of globalization to unfold. Sassen identifies two key aspects of globalization—the creation of formal global institutions and the emergence of multifaceted transnational networks—arguing that these institutions and processes are actually facilitated by existing institutional conditions embedded in the state system.

Sassen’s methodological approach involves the use of the comparative method to examine a set of “transhistorical” variables in different periods to carry out what she calls an exploration of history “as a series of natural experiments” (404). Her goal is to identify factors that contribute to dramatic shifts in the organization of global systems. Sassen examines three key components of social and political organization common to almost all historical periods and cultural settings—territory, authority, and rights. She explores how these three variables are constituted in different historical contexts in an effort to identify the processes by which dominant institutional arrangements are transformed. By focusing on territory, authority, and rights, Sassen seeks to complicate our assumptions about the relationship between states and globalization. Sassen treats “the nation” as a crucial point of departure by examining the way in which different political assemblages across time and space institutionalize the organization of territory, governing authority, and political membership.

In Part 1, Sassen examines the processes that led to the national organization of territory, authority, and rights beginning in the medieval period. Although the state system that ultimately emerged is profoundly different from the medieval assemblages of territory, authority, and rights, she traces the features of the state system to institutional capabilities present in medieval political and social organization. She explores two cases in detail, the French Capetian state and the British state during the emergence of industrial capitalism, to elucidate the emergence of the
modern state system. Part 2 explores the denationalization of global systems during the current era of globalization with a particular focus on the United States in the post–World War II period. Although the institutional arrangements that are now emerging represent a dramatic transformation, Sassen traces their development to capabilities inherent to the state system itself. In Part 3, Sassen focuses on the digital aspects of the new institutional arrangements that are emerging during the current era of globalization.

Sassen has produced an ambitious and rich multidisciplinary investigation of globalization. She draws on an impressive range of knowledge in a wide array of disciplines, including sociology, political theory, law, comparative politics, political geography, history, and economics. The book provides a unique and provocative interpretation of both historical and contemporary processes of transformation in global systems. The density of her subject and the weightiness of her prose make it a challenging read. Nevertheless, the book demonstrates an impressive interdisciplinarity and has significant scholarly value. It should be widely read and discussed by scholars in a range of disciplines.

Debra L. DeLaet
Drake University


During the late nineteenth century, the leading students of criminality shifted their frame of analysis, focusing increasing attention on the criminal rather than the crime. A century later, the historians of criminality who contributed to this collection of essays shifted the focus again, this time from the criminal to the criminologist. *Criminals and Their Scientists* explores the intellectual construction of criminality, examining the scientists, psychiatrists, and criminal anthropologists who developed biological explanations for deviance and forged authoritative theories about degeneration and “born criminals.” More than any other single figure, Cesare Lombroso, an Italian, Jewish physician, commands center stage in the book, but less widely known experts—such as Emil Kraepelin, Gustave Aschaffenburg, and Alexandre Lacassagne—play important roles as well. Most of the essays concentrate on scientists and analyze the “history of criminology as discourse and practice” in Western Europe (1). This volume, however, also discusses the influence of judges, social workers, and prison officials, and it includes essays on the development of scientific criminology in the United States, Argentina, Australia, and Japan.

A huge, slightly unwieldy collection, with 21 chapters and nearly 500 pages of text, *Criminals and Their Scientists* contains essays that vary in quality, readability, and scope. Some of them are broadly conceived
and explain the larger process through which scientific—particularly medical—assumptions and methods redefined core ideas about the sources of criminal behavior. Other essays are more narrowly framed, such as Jane Caplan’s study of tattoos and discourses of criminality and Martine Kaluszynski’s examination of international congresses of criminal anthropology. A few offer even more unusual perspectives on the topic. David G. Horn, for instance, explores Lombroso’s experiments on pain sensitivity as a measure of evolutionary progress. Horn explains that, according to Lombroso, a “well-appointed laboratory” would include various tools and measuring devices, such as an Anfosso tachionthropometer, a Sieweking’s esthesiometer, an Eulenberg baristesiometer, a Nothnagel thermesthesiometer, a Zwaardesmaker olfactometer, a Regnier-Mathieu dynamometer, a Mosso ergograph, and a modified campimeter (321).

The essays provide cross-cutting perspectives on the intellectual history of scientific criminology. Many of them borrow from Foucault’s ideas about the history of knowledge, and few rely on social-scientific methods.\footnote{See Michel Foucault (trans. Alan Sheridan), \textit{Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison} (New York, 1977).} Taken together, the essays add nuance but also a dose of messiness to our understanding of the development of scientific assumptions about crime and punishment. Ideas did not develop or spread in a linear fashion and were not always received in coherent ways. Mary S. Gibson’s first-rate essay, for example, reveals that Lombroso’s theories changed significantly over time and gradually blended both biological and environmental components, a perspective lost on many contemporaries—and on many historians. Likewise, Richard F. Wetzell demonstrates that leading German criminologists continued to debate the environmental sources of criminality, even as the Nazi regime embraced genetic determinism. Social conditions also affected the particular facets of scientific criminology that became authoritative. In short, a century ago, as today, political debates, cultural pressures, and professional disagreements shaped and confounded efforts to use “science” to explain the roots of evil.

Jeffrey S. Adler
University of Florida


This book is a continuation of an earlier volume, \textit{The Western Medical Tradition, 800 B.C.–1800 A.D.}, which was published in 1995. Together, the two constitute a comprehensive history of Western medicine. This second volume consists of four essays, each of which could have been
published as an independent book. All of the authors cover both traditional history of medical science and practice, with frequent lists of contributors and contributions, and a substantial amount of social and sometimes political and institutional analysis. The authors tend to be Anglocentric.

The first essay, by Stephen Jacyna, covers 1800 to 1849. It starts with the Enlightenment tradition and includes both the Paris clinical school and the rise of the microscope, as well as sanitarianism and contagion. Jacyna addresses issues of professionalization (and lack of it), but his analysis is more abstract than that of the other authors and slightly dated, depending heavily on Foucault and other social theorists of the pre-1990 era.¹

Bynum, in a longer essay covering 1850 to 1913, gives a substantial and detailed history of the impact of science on Western medicine, including pathology, the germ theory, and the beginnings of immunology. He follows that impact into medical education, research, and hospitals, as well as medical technology, surgery, and the changes that the laboratory and statistics brought to the prevention and treatment of disease. Bynum uses the struggles of physicians caught between their patients and the state to explore the development of social aspects of medical innovation, conservatism, and organization, including the effects of medicine on the larger society.

Lawrence has a similarly detailed and comprehensive understanding of the period from 1914 to 1945. He writes of holistic thinking and scientific innovation. He is particularly effective in showing the way in which hospitals became central to health care—what Fox calls the system of “hierarchical regionalism” in medicine.² Researchers’ methods and results in all settings complete the picture of health-care systems in different countries. Lawrence’s discussion about the home, welfare, industrial medicine, and payment plans uses material from historical sociology as well as political analysis. His characterization of the impact of rigid, top-down scientific medicine by the Rockefeller charities around the world is particularly striking.

The last chapter, treating the years 1945 to 2000, by Hardy and Tansey, combines a great deal of institutional history with detailed information about what was discovered when, and by whom, and what the implications were. The authors introduce much information about changes in health and disease in Western countries, providing many suggestive charts and statistics. Health, especially preventive health, they show, was heavily political; they emphasize details of programs in Britain and international organizations.

Far more than most surveys of medical history, this one contains not

¹ See, for example, Michel Foucault (trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith), Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception (New York, 1975).
only a factual narrative but also select examinations of the intersections between health care and Western societies.

John C. Burnham
Ohio State University

_The Roman Clan: The Gens from Ancient Ideology to Modern Anthropology._
By Christopher J. Smith (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2006)
393 pp. $100.

Early Rome has always been a scholarly war zone. Virtually upon awak-
ening, modern historical criticism found its sea legs with a unflinching
exposure of the hopeless “incertitude” of the first five centuries of the
history of Rome, by such Age of Reason scholars as Louis de Beaufort
(_Dissertation sur l’incertitude des cinq premiers siècles de l’Histoire romaine_ [La
Haye, 1738]). Since then, endless debates have raged about the docu-
mentary value to be assigned to key literary texts—for example, the first
ten books of Livy. At root is a problem of long-term ethnohistory, given
that the earliest surviving historical works dealing with early days of the
city were written in the second and first centuries B.C.E., long after the
period that they described (eighth to fifth century B.C.E.). As in the case
of African or Polynesian royal genealogies, the effect of multiple genera-
tions of nonliterary transmission on the history of Rome is hard to assess.
In the last century, archaeology added a whole other complex layer of
data to the debate, thanks to many important discoveries in the city, but
the integration between the material and the textual evidence remains
problematical.

As a consequence, any serious book on early Rome cannot build
on any wide scholarly agreement but must instead create a new self-
contained and self-consistent historiographical universe. This is precisely
what _The Roman Clan_ sets out bravely to accomplish. Taking the Rome
lineage group, the _gens_, as a convenient point of departure, Smith at-
ttempts a comprehensive reconstruction of the sociopolitical organiza-
tion of Rome in its early days. This interesting move centers on real
agents like family and other corporate groups, rather than on abstractions
such as the state or the city, to explain the emergence of complexity.
Building upon a painstaking review of the available information, Smith
argues convincingly that the clans, like many other structures of early
Rome, were fluid and dynamic entities, constantly redefined and rene-
egotiated over time and in different contexts. His approach is clearly in-
spired by recent developments in historical and social anthropology, par-
ticularly by the deconstructions of monolithic views of power and
hierarchy. However, if Smith had pushed the traditionally unwieldy
classical envelope by making a greater and more explicit space for the
concepts of agency and _habitus_, he would have provided his work with a
firmer theoretical underpinning.
Smith’s main substantive conclusion—that the gens cannot be shown to have yielded power and influence consistently as a coherent pressure group—is slightly anticlimactic. This finding, like most of those ventured in early Roman studies, is debatable, but, more importantly, this categorical view is at odds with the context- and time-sensitive conceptualization of the gens referred to above. Nonetheless, discourse about the origins of Roman sociopolitical organization will for the future be shaped by Smith’s ponderous work, making an exemplary historical problem more accessible to nonclassical scholars broadly interested in the role of clans in emerging states.

Nicola Terrenato
University of Michigan


This study of hostages in ancient Rome is both more and less than what is implied by its simple title. It is not a history of the practice of hostage taking, nor a study of the hostages themselves, both paths well trodden by previous scholars. Instead, it is a nuanced and brilliantly articulated consideration of Roman attitudes about hostages and how those attitudes reflected Rome’s growing hegemony. As such, it does not chronologically restrict itself to the principate, but considers the de facto empire from its expansion in the second century B.C. to the beginnings of its decline in the second century A.D. Allen’s central thesis is “that Romans expected to exercise authority over their hostages in ways that both reflected and reinforced their attitudes toward the periphery” (28). Although this may not seem an unexpected assertion, it is a perspective that has been only a tangential concern of earlier scholarship. The novelty of Allen’s book is both its detailed exposition of this thesis and its methodological approach.

Allen’s decision not to restrict himself to historical instances of hostage taking during the period in question necessitates an interdisciplinary approach. He considers incidents from the legendary history of Rome and even purely literary hostage episodes, which, as products of writers from this era, are just as revealing of contemporary attitudes regarding hostages. Moreover, since the ancient definition of a hostage was fluid, he considers not only those so labeled in the literary sources (hostage is an imprecise translation of obses in Latin or homeros in Greek), but any who share the situations of hostages. Not only does Allen handle the traditional historical sources with aplomb, but he also deftly controls literature from diverse genres and some archaeological material as well.

Far from the use of the word today, hostages in Rome were not simply coercive collateral; they could show considerable overlap with other categories of people, including guests, students, and even sons. Al-
Allen identifies “a common set of motifs and metaphors in describing their hostages, which placed the hostages in easily conceptualized and thoroughly justified positions of subordination” (35). These themes provide the structural basis for his work. Thus, a Roman’s expected roles were as creditor, host, conqueror, father, teacher, or male, whereas a hostage was collateral, guest, trophy, son, student, or female. Although this organization, particularly the chapter entitled “Masculine-Feminine,” seems likely to be viewed with skepticism by traditional historians, it is important to remember that Allen is not asserting that hostages were actually the inferiors of Romans in each of these power relations, only that this was the common Roman assurance. Indeed, to cite an infamous example omitted by Allen, the similarity of Caesar’s position to that of a Roman hostage when he found himself seeking favor at the royal court of Bithynia as a young man may explain the persistence of the rumor that he played the queen to King Nicomedes.

Allen is completely convincing both in establishing these roles as literary tropes and arguing that any reversal of roles is used to symbolize resistance on the part of the hostage. The latter point is particularly well shown in a separate chapter on the historian Polybius, arguably the most famous Roman hostage of all. Allen contends that Polybius portrayed himself as the teacher or surrogate father of his Roman host, a reversal used to highlight his independence from Rome for the benefit of his countrymen. This chapter represents a significant reappraisal of Polybius, and seems likely to be influential in succeeding scholarship. So too does Allen’s chapter on Tacitus, who “tells stories where foreign hostages and the Romans who rely on them fail utterly, while those who reject such a device are vastly more effective” (224–225). One theme that might profitably have been pursued is how this change in perception toward hostage taking related to changes in the actual practice during the second century A.D.

Sections of this work, particularly those concerning re-education, have obvious relevance for scholars of any imperial system. Although Allen in the introduction takes note of scholarship outside the realm of classical studies, he does not explicitly suggest how his arguments about ancient Rome might be related to other imperial cultures. Nonetheless, the book’s organization and conclusions serve as excellent templates for those who might wish to do so.

Dylan Bloy
Gettysburg College


Not only historians but also anthropologists and social scientists will find _A Social History of England_ relevant and engaging. Its editors have
brought together the new work of eighteen historians, all writing with a common aim—to represent the experiences, expectations, and ambitions of medieval people in as broad a manner as the extant evidence allows. Individually and as a group, the contributors reflect a holistic approach to the story of England’s past. What results is a vivid narrative about the subtle and complex ways that medieval people—from the thirteenth century until the eve of the Reformation—accommodated change, ordered and re-ordered social relations, clung to old ways of thinking or altered them, created new values, negotiated economic and institutional constraints, and ultimately contributed to broader discussions of religion, nationality, individualism, ritual, civic ceremony, self-identity, and community.

All of these issues have a part in the various sections of *A Social History of England*. The first two sections draw attention to social attitudes and structures, as well as to old and new debates about the rise and fall of medieval populations. Mindful of competing schools of thought, S. H. Rigby addresses long-term changes in social structure and explores overlapping forms of social inequality. No less perceptively, Peter Coss re¬thinks questions of personal and political deference in a society acutely conscious of hierarchy. His argument is thought¬provoking, as are those of Michael Prestwich on the enterprise of war, and of Simon Walter and Philippa Maddern—discussing law and order and considering the reality and ambiguities of social mobility, respectively.

The essays that follow (in sections 3 and 4) touch on social and economic stratification as well. Richard Britnell surveys the medieval urban economy and notes the growth of autonomy and a commercial ethic, all the while reminding us of the clash of interests endemic to town life. Maryanne Kowaleski amplifies this point by deftly calling attention to competitive consumption and the breakdown of social and cultural hier¬archies in the face of new types of consumer culture. Turning to the countryside, Bruce Campbell explains that in the Middle Ages, when agriculture dominated England’s economy, institutional and environmental factors informed and animated patterns of agrarian change. His is a persuasive argument. Added detail comes from Mavis Mate and Wendy Childs as they examine the shifting boundaries of work, leisure, and travel.

Completing the picture of England’s cultural landscape, the final section of *A Social History* explores religious belief and then looks at instances of individualism and a developing sense of Englishness. Eamon Duffy takes the lead, persuasively evaluating the myriad ways that Christian belief reflected and influenced social organization and order. Ritual formulations, along with elements of magic and religious or monastic renunciation, frame the essays of Valerie Flint, Janet Burton, and Charles Pythian-Adams. Raising questions about the construction of identity, Miri Rubin’s essay is both history and anthropology, and a discussion, as well, of image and ceremonial practice. Equally telling issues are raised by Jeremy (P. J. P.) Goldberg, Robin Frame, and Paul Strohm as they
reflect on the hierarchies of age and gender, medieval sensibilities regarding geography and space, the changing use of English, Latin, and Anglo-Norman, and the influence and place of new literary markets. What becomes evident, in the end, is that change, no matter how complex, could generally be absorbed in the world of medieval England.

Elaine Clark
University of Michigan, Dearborn


Despite a title reminiscent of Bossy’s magisterial study of many years ago, Questier’s study is deliberately different.¹ It focuses not, as Bossy’s did, on the internal social relations of the post-Reformation Catholic community as it adapted to a hostile world and took on some of the behaviors of a sect, but on the aristocratic entourage, its internal dynamics and its relationship with the larger community of the realm. As he notes, “Catholics tended to portray themselves as being a ‘gathered’ community of all right-thinking people who had a conscience in matters of true religion and the courage to express it,” but what structured such a gathered community, he argues, was the network of relations based on the aristocratic entourage (9). The entourage that he chose as a case study is that of the two Viscounts Montague of Cowdray in Sussex.

The Brownes of Cowdray were gentry who had tied their fortunes to that of the Tudors and had been richly rewarded with a series of monastic gifts and purchases, mostly in Sussex, including Battle Abbey. Sir Anthony Browne, the father of the first viscount, was one of Henry VIII’s Privy Counselors, and his son, another Anthony, succeeded to his father’s position in Edward’s and Mary’s reign, being dismissed from that post only at the outset of Elizabeth’s reign. He cemented his reputation as a conservative Catholic by his public opposition to the Oath of Supremacy in the House of Lords. Browne, who was elevated to the peerage at the marriage of Philip and Mary, was reputed to have had a landed income in excess of £2,000 p.a. in the 1560s.

What is particularly important for Questier’s purposes is the vast network, mostly but not entirely Catholic, created by the marriages of three generations of Brownes. The first viscount married successively a Ratcliffe, daughter of the Earl of Sussex, and a Dacre, daughter of Baron Dacre of Gisland. His grandson, the second viscount, married a Sackville, daughter of the Earl of Dorset, who gave the viscount a certain degree of political protection until his death in 1608. The kin network included Gages, Dormers, Wriotheselys, Arundells, and on and on—a vast

The two viscounts played different roles in their respective Catholic communities. The first was publicly loyal, declaring that his religion was a private matter, and he conspicuously raised a large force of armed retainers to defend the realm in the Armada year. His chaplains and much of his household staff were Marian clerics until that generation expired. The second favored the seculars and later the Benedictines. Richard Smith, the second Bishop of Chalcedon, who was supposed to bring order out of the chaotic clerical scene, had been a family chaplain. The second viscount attempted to assert leadership by taking an uncompromising stand for his faith, and faced a swinging fine in consequence of his refusal to take the Oath of Allegiance.

The story that Questier tells is well known in outline but appears unfamiliar and fresh not only for its massive detail assembled but also for its viewing through the lens of a single, if important, aristocratic family. Historians frequently tend to ignore the Catholic community, a small minority by the end of the sixteenth century, but Questier’s study provides grounds for reconsidering such an easy dismissal. It reveals a community still bent on the conversion of England, or at least of finding a secure place for itself under a Stuart king. It is a story dense in detail with veritable thickets of footnotes, enlivened by a vigorous style and by a fair-minded consideration of the views of other historians. It makes a convincing case for the argument that to be illuminating, the story must include both the internal relations of the community and its relations with the regime.

Paul S. Seaver
Stanford University


In many ways, footwear provides an ideal, if unexpected, entry point for interdisciplinary scholarship. Riello has chosen a manageable topic that he can connect to specialties ranging from fashion studies to economic history to cultural anthropology, and he commands an impressive diversity of scholarly literature. His major challenge, as anyone who has attempted broad interdisciplinarity can attest, is how to combine the theories and methodologies contained in such disparate literatures successfully. Although the book has room for improvement on this count, A Foot in the Past offers creative and important contributions to the histories of long-eighteenth-century consumer society and industrialization.

By stitching together into one story the usually separate histories of
consumption, retailing, and production, Riello offers a new narrative that questions many older assumptions about supply and demand. He begins by showing the extent to which British consumers demanded both an increasing quantity of shoes and an increasing proliferation of shoe styles. Through careful analysis of how people bought and sold footwear, Riello rebuts Jefferys’ classic argument that little changed in retailing before the middle of the nineteenth century.¹ Many of Riello’s findings reinforce Hoh-cheung Mui and Lorna H. Mui’s paradigmatic claims in Shops and Shopkeeping in Eighteenth-Century England (Kingston, Ontario, 1988). These significant changes in eighteenth-century consumption and retailing patterns form the fulcrum of the work; Riello shows how they forced widespread changes in the complex worlds of artisan production and financing. He successfully reverses the conventional narrative that sees mechanized mass production, with its increased output and supposedly decreased product differentiation, as the catalyst for major changes in retailing and consumption.

Integrating discussions of production, retailing, and consumption trends with questions of meaning, visual culture, and foreign competition presents a different and complex set of challenges. Riello’s use of consumption and the social value, or meaning, of shoes to start his work makes considerable intellectual sense. This unlikely order helps him to assess the standard historical notion that production and supply must have come temporally before demand and social meaning. It remains difficult, however, to explain what people thought shoes meant, beyond basic class differences or military (boot) versus civilian (non-boot) distinctions. If, for example, shoelaces replaced buckles in 1790s France because people thought that they symbolized the ideals of liberty and fraternity, then why did laces become popular at the same time among Britons who roundly condemned and deeply feared the French Revolution? By applying the methodological tools of art and culture historians more systematically, Riello could have made better use of his outstanding images to explore such questions, while also explaining why feet and shoes were often focal points in eighteenth-century paintings and political cartoons.

Finally, Riello engages not just in interdisciplinarity but in transnational history. He shows the importance of grounding British shoemaking and consuming on the landscape of the European, and particularly French, shoe industries and markets. Riello’s transnational approach offers promise for scholars working on a range of industries commonly seen in national frames. Yet, when exploring the competitive language and idiomatic, nationalist arguments of British producers, much like with the images, Riello might have said more than he has.

These concerns simply underscore the exceptional challenges that

ambitious interdisciplinarity places before its practitioners. *A Foot in the Past* reveals the historical relevance of seemingly pedestrian products, while questioning fundamental ideas about the timing and impact of mechanization, the relationship between supply and demand, and the importance of retailing developments in changing both consumption and production habits. Showing the value of overlooked subjects and provoking new questions about old assumptions—are these not the most important measures of interdisciplinary success?

Jonathan Eacott  
University of Michigan


This study of the crews of English slave ships addresses significant gaps in the history of maritime labor and the history of oceanic slave trade. In contrast, the merchants and captains of slaving voyages have received close attention, and an academic industry focuses on the quantitative data about the captives who comprised the cargo. Rediker includes slave ship crews in his analysis of maritime workers in the early days of capitalism; this work develops an original perspective out of the details.¹

Christopher centers her study on the ironies and complexities of these mariners’ work. Often crimped and impressed into service on this least desirable of all types of ship, the sailors also served as the instruments of oppression of their captive charges, transforming them into commodities to be sold—yet again—in the New World. The loyalties and actions of sailors in the slave trade, Christopher argues, “defy any easy classification.” Her task, then, is that of “unraveling some of these complexities” (18–19).

The study, while demonstrably central to the understanding of maritime labor, is not made any easier by the available data. The sources with which the author works center on the testimonies and journals of sailors and of ships’ officers, the notes collected by the redoubtable Thomas Clarkson in his documentation of the evils of slave trade, and records of the High Court of the Admiralty.² The book addresses the years 1730 to 1807, but focuses in practice on the last three decades of that period, both because of the greater density of documents and because the numbers of slave ships and sailors at that time were twice that of the preceding half-century. In addition, the author cites the secondary


2 Thomas Clarkson, *The Substance of the Evidence of Sundry Persons on the Slave-Trade: Collected in the Course of a Tour Made in the Autumn of the Year 1788* (London, 1789).
literature on maritime life broadly, situating her evidence and outlook in the issues and debates.

The book conveys an interpretive tension: Most of it focuses on the processes, repeated from year to year, of the recruitment and labors of the sailors, as well as their struggles with captains and captives. Part of it, however, seeks to elucidate a pattern of historical change. Most centrally, Christopher amplifies Davis’ vision of slavery and freedom.\(^3\) She argues that sailors contributed to the Atlantic call for liberty in the late eighteenth century by emphasizing their difference from slaves (227–228. Thus, the slave trade created ideologies both of blackness and whiteness, in which those identified as white, though demeaned as sailors, gained a badge of their superiority and a demand for their liberty in the accident of their birth. Christopher writes elegantly, but the sparseness of documentation means that these issues of long-term change require more study.

For the repeated travails of each voyage, meanwhile, Christopher pieces together insightful observations about the recruitment of seamen, the multicultural composition of the mariners, the lives of sailors in the months of their service on the African coast, the complex range of sexual relations among sailors and African women (both slave and free), the transatlantic voyage, and the delivery of slaves—followed by the discharging of many sailors in the Caribbean. This monographic study will ensure greater attention to the hundreds of thousands of sailors who served on slave ships.

Patrick Manning
University of Pittsburgh

\textit{The Business of Empire: The East India Company and Imperial Britain, 1756–1833.} By H. V. Bowen (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2006) 304 pp. $90.00

During the period covered by this book, the English East India Company was transformed (not altogether willingly) from a monopoly trading company with relatively few political functions into a governmental agency administering a gigantic empire with only secondary commercial functions and no monopoly at all. Bowen focuses on the structure and operation of the company’s apparatus in Britain, presenting a comprehensive description of the ways in which it changed in order to meet its new tasks. He admits that he is not writing “new” imperial history (that is, he does not attempt to engage concerns embodied in cultural, postcolonial, or women’s studies or similar theoretical perspectives) but rather a “somewhat old-fashioned study of institutional change” (x).

\(^3\) David Brion Davis, \textit{The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770–1823} (New York, 1999).
New or old, his approach is unprecedented and much needed. In the burgeoning field of South Asian history, the East India Company is a central factor in so many interpretive issues that a well-executed institutional study covering its internal workings has great significance. The author signals many connections to these issues, although he pursues only a few—especially ones having to do with relationships between the Company and the British state and economy.

The book has three main sections, each of which approaches the Company from a different perspective. In the first, Bowen traces in some detail the complex relationships of the Company to business structures in London, to national government and imperial policy, and to the politics of reform in the last third of the eighteenth century. He describes the adjustments that occurred as the Company moved from the periphery to the center of political controversy in Britain, acquiring a reputation for inefficiency and corruption that arose partly from its inability to respond quickly to the new pressures under which it labored. After a period of uncertainty, the Company’s central administration reoriented itself effectively around its imperial role and enjoyed a substantial rise in reputation—which, according to Bowen, it generally deserved. Studies of reform in the Company’s system of governance have in the past focused mainly on India. Bowen shifts the emphasis to Britain and to more gradual changes in management that, perhaps because they were not publicly advertised as “reforms,” have attracted less attention from historians.

The second part of the book consists of collective studies of the holders of East India Company stock and of the personnel of the Company, both directors and employees. The process of appointing directors and the Company’s traditional promotion policies made it difficult to create a cadre of officials with direct personal experience of India or expertise in subjects relevant to its governance. But Bowen shows that substantial progress in overcoming these difficulties had been made by the early nineteenth century. In the third section of the book, Bowen presents an extensive analysis of the internal operations of the Company’s bureaucracy in London, the ways in which its policies were formulated, and the management of its trading activities. He ends by assessing the Company’s economic influence. The assessment is judicious but limited in that it focuses on contributions to investment and employment in Britain and to demand for British products. The Company’s place in the restructuring of the global economy and of European finance and commerce—subjects of growing interest among economic historians—is given little attention. Bowen provides, however, an excellent starting point from which others can explore these topics.

Woodruff D. Smith
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Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism. By Christopher Leslie Brown (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2006) 480 pp. $55.00 cloth $22.50 paper

The year 2007 marked the bicentenary of the abolition of the British Atlantic slave trade, sparking a plethora of events and discussion about our contemporary understanding of the meanings of that moment. Which individuals really mattered, what sort of movement precipitated parliamentary legislation, what was the significance of the act, and why does it matter now? Moral Capital makes an important contribution to these debates; it asks why the British antislavery movement happened when it did. Its key argument, one that bypasses the traditional emphases on economic or humanitarian motivations, is that the American Revolution shifted understandings of both nation and empire and made antislavery an appealing issue for key individuals and groups. It became a source of moral capital.

Brown sees contingency as critical to the emergence of a movement in Britain in the 1780s: Antislavery sentiment had been around in both the American colonies and Britain for a long time. In 1783, the coalescence of Anglican evangelical and Quaker concerns made possible a campaign against the slave trade, though success was hardly inevitable. Contrary to Thomas Clarkson, who saw the rise of the movement as an inexorable expression of British notions of liberty, Brown argues that particular people came to believe that they could change something because of the dynamic of transatlantic politics.

This transatlantic history, which moves between Britain and the American colonies, is structured in four parts. The first deals with antislavery sentiment on both sides during a period when there was no prospect of a movement. The second concerns the gradual realization of the salience of slavery to the political struggles of the 1770s. Although some American abolitionists critiqued British complicity, Britons identified colonial slavery as someone else’s problem. Granville Sharp, however, came to see that it was indeed a British problem, at the same time that Edmund Burke was leading a campaign to clean up another part of empire. Part 3 looks at some of the schemes developed in the 1770s to tackle the issue, including the novel concept of an empire without slavery. Meanwhile, one effect of the American Revolution was to enable Africans to make claims as subjects of the empire. By the 1780s, black people in Britain had a public voice. Part 4 sees the conflict “resolved,” as Anglican evangelicals took up the cause of Caribbean slavery and Quakers petitioned Parliament about the slave trade. Clarkson is granted a key role as the individual who was prepared to devote his life to abolitionism. To be against slavery became an identity with deep appeal for varied groups who understood this political aim differently but could be collectively mobilized against the trade.

Brown’s work is rooted in archival sources and conversant with the huge secondary literature on these questions. His starting points are his
argument with Clarkson’s teleology and his insistence on a more contingent understanding of why things happened when and how they did. The loss of the American colonies and the crisis of empire that it engendered inspired new visions of a cleaner, more moral nation. Patriotism and antislavery came to be closely associated in Britain.

Brown makes little reference to interdisciplinary approaches, though at points he draws briefly on contemporary sociological theories; one of his fundamental concerns is the relation between cultural prescription and individual action. The concept missing from the book, to my mind, is the Gramscian notion of conjuncture—the intersection of heterogeneous forces that come together in a distinctive moment. The early 1780s was one such moment.

Catherine Hall
University College London


This is an intriguing book. Though fascinating to read, it is nevertheless unclear in its results. Appropriately, since most English historians of England are not inclined to theory, this book contains little theory. One might start by taking issue with its title. Is it legitimate to talk about the historians of England who wrote in the nineteenth century as modernizers of the English past (nowadays the trend is to find “modernity” as far back as the Garden of Eden)? Although less insistent than their predecessors on the Whig interpretation—liberty broadening out from precedent to precedent—the historians for most of the period covered emphasized the domination of constitutional and political history and the significance of documents. Stubbs and his immediate successors were “modern,” Bentley argues, in their emphasis on the importance of intense examination of documents rather than the earlier concentration on the broader survey. What is particularly impressive is that not only has Bentley carefully read numerous texts but, in many cases, he has also examined private papers, catching his subjects in revealing and unguarded moments. At times, he permits himself to indulge in the irritating tendency of some English historians to make allusions and little jokes that only those in the know can fully comprehend.

Not until the late nineteenth century did history become an officially academic subject in England, and the giants who made it so are reborn in these pages. Biographical footnotes of the major players are pro-


vided. One is delighted, and enlightened, to find out more about such crucial figures as Thomas F. Tout, Frederic William Maitland, Albert Pollard, Richard H. Tawney, Michael M. Postan, and Helen Cam, among others (one wonderful anecdote: When denied entry to a meeting because of her sex, Cam pointed out that she was not a lady but a historian as she swept past the guard at the gate).

The two historians who dominate the text are Herbert Butterfield and Lewis Namier, particularly in their work on the eighteenth century. Butterfield was famous for his attack on earlier historians, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (London, 1931). Yet in some ways he was whiggish himself, holding that ideas and principles were important. Namier, comparatively neglected nowadays, emphasized the irrationality and the self-serving nature of politics, driven by ties to the land (Bentley undervalues Namier’s commitment to the Zionist cause: He felt that his own people should have land, in Palestine, to provide them stability similar to that experienced by the powerful in eighteenth-century England.) Namier’s emphasis on the social aspects of politics oddly led the way for less attention being paid to the political story. He helped to provide a framework for the growth of quantitative history that had a brief period of dominance. He can be seen, too, as a precursor to the longer-lasting influence of social history, most dramatically exemplified by Edward P. Thompson’s *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York, 1963).

Thompson is denied the status of a biographical note, perhaps reflecting Bentley’s misjudgment that the influence of the text mentioned above is over. He is right that the events of the 1960s ended the odd juxtaposition of the importance of politics with the unimportance of ideology—the last gasp of modernist history. Although postmodernism may have been the favored approach by the end of the 1970s, such as in the work of Hayden White and Patrick Joyce, providing the “cutting edge,” many historians in England are still traditional “modernists” in their emphasis on documents and politics.

This study is full of valuable insights and information; it provides a personal view of the strengths and weaknesses of the major English historians of their own country for more than a century. Strangely, however, Bentley never discusses the paradox that though he always uses the term “English,” a significant part of the history that he discusses and a number of his authors are Welsh, Scottish, or Irish.

Peter Stansky
Stanford University

The town of Machecoul is familiar to historians of the French Revolution as the site of one of the most notorious atrocities committed during the war of the Vendée (1793/94). Woell, who acknowledges that the precise number of those killed will never be known, cites a low-end estimate of at least 160 supporters of the First Republic murdered while Machecoul was in the hands of counterrevolutionaries during March and April of 1793. The town of 4,000 almost immediately became a symbol of Catholic fanaticism for the Jacobins, the murders there being used to justify the campaign of terror conducted by the famous “colonnes infernales” sent by the National Convention, which were responsible for the deaths of thousands during the next two years. Woell, in his study of Machecoul, does not break new ground in his account of the basic events of 1793, but by expanding his focus to cover the Old Regime preconditions and the nineteenth-century recollections of the Revolution, he makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of one of its key events.

In his opening chapter, Woell situates Machecoul in the particular geography of western France, and in the social and political context of the late eighteenth century. The pyramidical social structure at Machecoul was common throughout the region, but Woell wavers on the political profile of the town. He first claims it “saw more political unrest than likely was the case in other such communities (48),” but then notes that “such disagreements were not necessarily remarkable” and were, in fact, “ubiquitous, and thus [that] the town’s purely political conflicts seem comparatively mundane” (50). On the whole, however, Woell shows that the social hierarchies and political squabbling over taxes and overlapping jurisdictions were commonplaces for towns like Machecoul, and therefore cannot explain why this particular place exploded with such violence in 1793.

In order to account for the uprising at Machecoul, Woell turns to what he sees as the diverse religious cultures that divided the community. The diocese of Nantes, which included Machecoul, was riven by the same Jansenist-Jesuit quarrels that Van Kley and others have identified as important sources of the Revolution. Many of the elite of Machecoul, such as Etienne Gaschignard, the principal of the secondary school and one of the first to be murdered by the counterrevolutionaries, were apparently shaped by this dispute, looking forward to a reformed Christianity that would reduce the weight of the clergy, both spiritual and material, on their community. But not all of those at the top of Machecoul agreed, and orthodox Catholics were supported by the

mass of peasants. Woell weaves together effectively the local story with
the larger currents of religious dispute, but because religious tensions
similar to those in Machecoul were common throughout the area, the
puzzle of why the counterrevolution erupted with such violence in this
one place remains.

Woell addresses this issue explicitly in Chapter 4, in which he sets
up a contrast between the Republican and Catholic versions of the mas-
cacres that began circulating in the 1790s, both of which saw religion as a
crucial cause. For Republicans, the clergy were responsible for provok-
ing a crowd of fanatic peasants to defend Catholicism against a regime
that was seizing church property and imprisoning priests who refused to
swear an oath of loyalty to it. For Catholics, the Republican narrative
exaggerates the number killed, ignores the legitimate religious concerns
of the peasants about the intrusive and tyrannous regime, and neglects
the larger context, a war against the insurgents that some scholars have
gone so far as to label a genocide. Woell is fair-minded and careful in
sorting out these differences, refusing to take sides in this long-standing
battle in the culture wars of modern France. But he also struggles to
bring into clear focus the interrelated sources of the massacres, and of the
Vendée more generally. At one point, the divided religious culture
“explains why local administrators were so intent on becoming revolu-
tionaries (135),” but, later, it becomes a catalyst rather than a cause, and
“may not have been directly responsible for generating long-standing
animosity within the Machecoul community” (165). Woell seems trap-
ped by his polarizing categories—religious versus social explanations of
Machecoul and the Vendée. His evidence and analysis, however, suggest
the need for subverting the terms of the debate and looking instead at
the complex ways in which society, politics, and religion overlapped and
intersected.

In Chapter 5 and the Epilogue, Woell brings the story of Machec-
coul to the present. He shows how Catholicism in the nineteenth cen-
tury shaped the memory of the people of Machecoul, who viewed the
Vendée as a holy war and themselves as God’s warriors against the impi-
ous Republic. Although he acknowledges the value of this story in
generating a coherent community. Woell also notes how it served to ob-
fuscate the past, “by accentuating the role of the town’s counterrevolu-
tionary martyrs, while neglecting the roles of the counterrevolutionary
murderers and their victims” (229). Battles over the the memory of
Machecoul and the Vendée were central to the debates surrounding the
bicentennial of the Revolution in 1989. In 1994, the departmental Gen-
eral Council created the “Centre Vendéen de recherches historiques” to
defend the insurgent view of the war.

Woell’s book has a few conceptual rough edges, but they are the in-
evitable result of trying (and generally succeeding) to bring a variety of
methods to bear on his rich microhistory of Machecoul.

Thomas Kselman
University of Notre Dame
Ending the French Revolution: Violence, Justice, and Repression from the Terror to Napoleon. By Howard G. Brown (Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 2006) 461 pp. $45.00

This ambitious book is rooted in extensive archival research and an impressive grasp of the scholarly literature dealing with the Directory and the early years of Napoleon’s reign. Brown focuses on “chronic violence, ambivalent forms of justice, and repeated recourse to heavy-handed repression” in an effort to explain the failure of liberal democracy in the French Revolution (1). He argues that the inability of the Directory regime to quell the endemic violence in France between 1795 and 1799 paved the way for the “security state” that Napoleon Bonaparte established after 1800. Brown prefers the term “security state” to “police state” because the former evokes better the willingness of much of the French populace to accept the level of repression to which the Directors and Napoleon resorted in order to restore civic order in France, particularly in rural areas of the west and south.

Brown’s methodology is comparative, in a couple of senses. First, he has chosen four départements in different regions of France (the Sarthe in the northwest, the Haute-Saône in the east, the Hérault in the Mediterranean south, and the Haute-Garonne slightly west of the Hérault), in which to study patterns of violence (both violent crime and violent protest) and its judicial repression between 1795 and 1801. The aggregate data from that regional comparison are discussed both in the text and presented in table form in a series of Appendices.

Second, Brown undertakes a detailed narrative analysis, employing at times an approach that might be compared to the “thick description” of cultural anthropology, in a series of chapters that focus on each of the four départements at pivotal moments over this period of time. All of this analysis is couched within a theoretical framework addressing such issues as the nature of violence, theories of the social contract, and models of social protest and state repression. In Chapter 10, Brown borrows from physics in presenting a schematic figure illustrating the impact of royalism, war, Jacobinism, and Catholicism on the cycles of violence at local, regional, and national levels, suggesting the ways in which they interacted (268). That the interaction of these forces on social violence was complicated is beyond doubt. The degree to which the schematic figure helps to illuminate that complicated interaction is debatable.

Brown’s conclusions, which sometimes overreach his evidence, will stimulate a good deal of debate among scholars in the field of Revolutionary and Napoleonic studies. For example, under the Directory, the west of France was plagued by what has been labeled chouannerie, personal violence generally directed against officials of the revolutionary regime that occasionally coalesced into larger uprisings at times of crisis. In the south, by contrast, the endemic violence of the period was more typically brigandage or highway robbery, a threat to the regime, to be sure, but less overtly political in nature. Though acknowledging that dif-
ference, Brown uses the term “repression” to describe the extra-constitutional response of the state in both instances. Might it be desirable to distinguish “draconian punishment of crime” from “political repression” in this analysis? Furthermore, in arguing that the “end of the French Revolution” occurred in 1802 rather than 1799 (with the coup of Brumaire), Brown seems to define revolution in terms of “civil strife,” which seems to come dangerously close to equating revolution with violence, an equation with which many would disagree.

Paul R. Hanson
Butler University


Recent years have seen an attack on the established historiography of Spain, challenging perceptions, interpretations, and conclusions. The examination of established narratives in Spanish historiography and of empirical data by such scholars as Phillips, Kagan, and Ringrose has shown that Spain has been badly misread and misunderstood.¹ The problem can be attributed to Spain’s own historians, to the “Black Legend” created by the English, and to other non-Spaniards intrigued by Spanish history.

MacKay attacks the negative stereotypes that pervade the dominant view of Spanish attitudes about labor, practical work, noble status, and social exclusion. The book’s focus is on labor, craft skills, and social status, but it encourages a total re-reading of the Spanish history written during the last two centuries and prompts historians of other countries to review their own historiographies. The core of the argument is that the reformers of Spain’s Enlightenment, reinforced by “Enlightened” outsiders, were responsible for faulty assumptions regarding Spanish history: for example, that Spaniards have been obsessed with nobility, defined in part as an exemption from manual labor; that Spaniards regarded mechanical skills and nonagricultural labor as vile and degrading; that early modern Spain was a caste-ridden society that precluded social mobility; and that Spain’s social exclusion combined the denigration of work with such pseudo-racial practices as pureza de sangre.

MacKay does a remarkable job of demolishing these stereotypes. Though never denying that they were part of contemporaneous dis-

course, she shows that they were only one of several strains within the relevant rhetoric. Artisans and guilds emerge, not as excluded and denigrated, but as honorable, integral, and dynamic elements of the “republic,” both at the municipal and the royal levels. Moreover, artisans filtered upward (as nobles often slid downward) in the social and political hierarchies of urban life. The much-discussed *pureza de sangre* was always part of the discourse, but it was honored as much in the breach as in enforcement. MacKay shows that it only became prominent in the discourse about guilds, labor, and status in the seventeenth century, when many institutions were on the defensive against unwanted change.

MacKay sees great irony in the fact that the leaders of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment elevated one element of the old discourse into the sweeping stereotypes about labor that have dominated Spanish history. As they promoted reform, which they saw as a form of moral regeneration that would stimulate an industrious society similar to what they thought they saw elsewhere, they wrote into the historical canon only the negative side of the earlier discourse about labor. In this way, their reforms stood out as new and progressive. As MacKay shows, the very reforms that they touted were filled with positive rhetoric about labor that repeated parts of the earlier discourse. The men of the Enlightenment were thus conservative reformers without admitting it.

At the same time, they imposed a social structure on Spain that pointed to the modern tension between labor and capital. MacKay’s argument in this context is complex but convincing. She follows it with shorter chapters on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As MacKay puts it, historians “took what had been largely a rhetorical and metaphysical concept [the discourse of work, not-work, and anti-work] and transferred it to the physical and economic world” (197), reinforcing it with a rhetoric of national failure derived from imperial disasters. The result was assimilated into accepted stereotypes of “national character,” the content of which can also be traced to the eighteenth century and to the Cuban disaster of 1898.

The upshot was a widely accepted Spanish “exceptionalism,” massively reinforced in the twentieth century by the misguided Américo Castro. Thus did the “Spaniards’ own history of themselves [place] Spain at the margin,” leaving others prone to evaluate Spain’s health “by looking at Spaniards’ capacity and aversion to labor” (260).

This remarkable piece of historiography and intellectual history relies heavily on a combination of detailed archival work and careful reading of texts. No one should be allowed to call herself/himself a historian of Spain unless they have read it.

David R. Ringrose
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The Culture of Cleanliness in Renaissance Italy. By Douglas Biow (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2006) 512 pp. $35.00

In early 2007, Sen. Joseph Biden referred to rival presidential candidate, Sen. Barack Obama as “the first mainstream African American who is articulate and bright and clean and a nice-looking guy.” Most commentators viewed his description as racist, implying that prior African-American contenders were not clean. Furthermore, no political figures of any background were ever subjected to such a “compliment.” Following the argument of Biow’s latest book, Biden was only a few hundred years out of date. The Renaissance sense of “clean” flows from an ideal that sixteenth-century Giovanni della Casa presented in his Galeoto, the “first great etiquette treatise of the modern world” (17). Renaissance clean involved the proper maintenance of social boundaries to insure social status and family honor. Biow begins with the example of Della Casa’s book to open the topos of cleanliness in Italian Renaissance literature. The Galeoto instructed readers how to behave in public (any deviation became a threat to the social order) and how to keep one’s speech free of corrupted language and one’s person unpolluted by vulgar people and dirty things.

Biow focuses on the period from 1300 to 1600, as one long era in which concepts of cleanliness and cleansing became vitally important across all social boundaries. To clean meant to order and to establish or maintain a boundary; it had considerable resonance in literature. To enliven his topic, Della Casa had particularly delighted in describing and identifying what was not clean, and so does Biow. Just as the Galeoto talked filth—better to explain corruptions and polluting things—this book contains hundreds of entertaining stories and examples of boundaries breached. Much of it is either salacious or scatalogical, and a whole chapter is titled “Latrines and Latrine Cleaners.” Biow’s argument is that cleanliness was a highly creative, ubiquitous and distinctive topic in the Italian Renaissance, as well as a substantial departure from classical and medieval usage of the concept.

The frustrating part of this book is Biow’s insistence upon offering an anthropological, as opposed to either historical or traditional literary, framework. Most of the anthropological cast mimics that in Mary Douglas’s Purity and Danger (and in more recent iterations describing dirt as “matter out of place”). Biow is not simplistic: The scholarly infrastructure of the book is extensive and useful. Biow announces, however, at the outset what the book is not about: not about filth and ordure as material presences in Renaissance cities and courts; not about religious purity or cleanliness; not about the classical literary heritage; and not about medical ideas on cleanliness. Yet he mercifully undermines all of this boundary work, by including some background on sanitary plumbing and infrastructure, sixteenth-century public sanitation, the making

and uses of soap, perfuming, medical ideas of bodily hygiene, and the systematic absence of washerwomen from even detailed treatments of daily life and household management.

The synchronic treatment of his material, to serve his “anthropological” objective, makes Biow’s book a little less accessible to those not steeped in traditional Renaissance literature. He ends the book with a comparison featuring Dante (d. 1321) and Boccaccio (d. 1375) on filth, ordure, and latrines; he begins with a chapter meandering from Cellini (d. 1571) to Alberti (d. 1472), to Marco Foscari (d. 1551), then back to Bruni (d. 1444). His point is to celebrate anew the novelty of Bruni’s urban panegyric—praising Florence as “clean,” though in a material sense it certainly was not. The middle chapter on soap and washerwomen highlights women’s invisibility in literature before the late sixteenth century, and soap’s restriction to clothes, not bodies. By the conclusion, Biow has demonstrated that the topic is important and fascinating, but what happened, what changed, and when is not so easy to determine.

Ann Carmichael
Indiana University


Because the historiography of the early modern period has usually been highly sensitive to contemporary debates in European and American societies, such issues as civil rights, women’s rights, the status of the marginal and excluded, and the like have quickly found analog in history writing. The environmental movement, however, has not been so blessed, at least in the English-speaking world. Part of the lag may be inherent in the discipline: Environmental history requires technical training that is not routinely available in graduate programs. Additionally, environmental history builds upon existing subfields—history of technology, economic history, and historical geography—that are often underrepresented in mainstream history departments.

Ciriacono’s Building on Water is a doubly welcome addition to the field, both as an able work in its own right and as an introduction to key themes and concepts in environmental history. The title, however, is somewhat misleading: Ciriacono has far more to say about Veneto than Holland, and much less about the Venetian lagoon proper. Moreover, “landscape” in this book refers to drainage, reclamation, and irrigation rather than, as in more culturally oriented studies, the response to, and conceptualization of, the natural environment. But each of the first three chapters contains an extensive summary and citation of works about agronomy and hydraulics from the whole of Europe (with an occasional nod to Arab authors), as well as constant comparison with other regions,
notably Lombardy and Spain. The fourth chapter directly compares the Venetian and Dutch experiences, and the fifth and final chapter, on technology transfers from Holland to all of northern Europe, expands the inquiry even further. Beyond the immediate argument, the book presents a full intellectual context, with myriad points of comparison, and a robust bibliography.

Although Ciriacono deliberately avoids the more polemically charged debates about Venice and Holland—refeudalization and decadence, most notably—in the end, he is concerned with relative development there and throughout Europe. The overall outline of his account is not surprising: Venetian precocity eventually followed by a “much more conservative and limited” approach and a fondness for “scientific and theoretical problems posed by hydraulics,” more conducive to abstract discussion than the development of practical solutions (7, 12). Venice led the way through the sixteenth century, but the Dutch seized the initiative in the seventeenth and did not relinquish it. Nor does the arc of European economic development that Ciriacono traces attempt radical revision: a strong sixteenth century, a disastrous first half of the seventeenth century, a modest recovery after 1650, and a return to dynamic growth in the eighteenth century.

But Ciriacono brings to this familiar terrain sensitivity to regional variation, to the delicate interplay of many factors (technology, finance, organization and direction, hydrology, geology, and social/political orderings) that led to local successes and failures of reclamation schemes. Furthermore, despite the massive detail, the overall line of his argument is never far below the surface. The book has much to offer students of agriculture, land use, and land exploitation, about every region of Europe where water management was a priority or indeed a necessity.

James S. Grubb
University of Maryland, Baltimore County


The histories written about Fascist Italy tend to depict the Italians as benevolent and humane, at least relative to their government’s radical right ally, Nazi Germany. Stories told by people who lived under Italian occupation, however, are dominated by memories of Italian brutality and repression. Rodogno’s eloquent and comprehensive study attempts to bridge these discrepant narratives by explaining the character of Italian occupation policy and dispelling the myths that surround it. The book, which was originally written in Italian and now appears in Belton’s smooth translation, deserves thorough discussion on both sides of the Atlantic.
Rodogno contends that Fascist Italy was a ruthless and racist regime bent on carving out an Italian empire at the expense of the other Mediterranean peoples. He argues that Benito Mussolini had a grand vision of a “New Mediterranean Order,” in which Italians would forcefully rule over their inferior subjects in a model similar to that of imperial Japan. Although Mussolini did not plan for the elimination of other races and nations, as did his ally Adolf Hitler, his “civilizing mission” was by no means humanitarian or benevolent. Italian bureaucrats and military officers in the occupied territories faithfully worked to fulfill Mussolini’s vision, doing whatever was necessary to emerge victorious in the clash of civilizations. Their methods included a vicious policy of forced Italianization, ruthless economic exploitation, and the relentless repression of the indigenous Slavs, Greeks, French, and Jews, all of whom—according to Rodogno—the Italians treated “as violently as they had treated the African natives in the colonial past” (334).

Rodogno’s detailed discussion of Fascist Italy’s ideological framework and occupation policies culminate in the book’s final chapter on Italy’s Jewish policy. He refutes such well-known scholars as Arendt and Steinberg, who argued that Fascist Italy was incapable of carrying out atrocities on the scale of Hitler’s Germany because of a combination of military incompetence and Italiani brava gente—the notion that good-heartedness or humanitarianism was inherent to the Italian national character. Rodogno claims instead that Italians saved Jews only when it was in their political interest to do so. Calling the notion of an innate Italian humanitarianism “absurd” and “disproved by the documents,” he argues that Jews became “pawns of the game” in the occupied territories (401, 363). The Italians used Jews as leverage to prove their independence of Nazi Germany, to quell domestic unrest among non-Jews, and to assert their influence over the satellites of Vichy France and the Independent State of Croatia. Rodogno raises the interesting question of exactly how the Jews would have fared under Italy if Germany had not tried to dominate its less powerful ally. His discussions of the Italian concentration camps for Slavs, the forced repatriation of Jewish refugees, and Italian racism and antisemitism suggest that the fate awaiting Jews was by no means a charitable one.

Rodogno’s arguments are controversial but convincing in their scholarly thoroughness and wide-angle perspective. The author has mastered the Italian documents, especially those of the Italian military and Foreign Service, skillfully weaving together materials from various occupation zones to create a compelling narrative on the nature of Italian rule. In the process of telling his story, Rodogno also sheds new light on the local dynamics of war in the Balkans, offering provocative insights into Italian–Chetnik collaboration and the brutality of the Albanianization project in Kosovo.

The major shortcoming of this work is Rodogno’s nearly exclusive reliance on Italian sources. Supporting evidence from Croatian, Greek, Albanian, and especially German documents would have enabled him to flesh out his analysis of German–Italian interactions in the field and Fascist Italy’s demise in 1943, the weakness of which he attributes to inadequate Italian documentation. Additional analysis of Mussolini’s war plan and of his personal relationship with his deputies in the occupied territories would be welcome, since a central contention of the book is that Mussolini was the driving force behind all Italian policy.

Despite these issues, Rodogno has succeeded in producing a persuasive and novel analysis of this contentious topic. The book is an eloquent narrative history that will no doubt interest scholars across disciplines as it promises to reinvigorate scholarship on Fascist Italy, the Holocaust, and the wartime experience in Mediterranean Europe.

Emily Greble Balić
Harvard University


One cannot say that this book is unexpected, since Burnett has been publishing prodigiously about Basel since 1998: eight articles in seven different learned journals, including this one, plus four more contributions to various edited collections. The good news is that she manages to do exactly what she promises, and do it convincingly—to examine the more than 250 men who comprised Basel’s Protestant clergy during its first century in terms of their principal mission of indoctrinating the laity, primarily through preaching the Gospel. The bad news is that she tells us disappointingly little about their audience in one of Europe’s liveliest small sixteenth-century cities.

Except for seven parishes west and south of the city, which were recovered by Basel’s Prince-Bishop in the 1580s and re-Catholicized, Basel’s Protestant clergy served the same territory throughout the century after the Reformation—a dozen urban posts (two of them tied to professorships in theology at the university) and twenty-seven rural parishes, which split off in the 1830s to form today’s half-canton of Basel-Land. Burnett has mastered the rich body of locally preserved evidence about Basel’s pastorate in the century following its Reformation. Using more than fifty published sermons, mainly between 1577 and 1610 (412–414, 416); 600 theological disputations printed between 1580 and 1625 (147–154, 282, 289), and records of stipends awarded to locally born

students awaiting pastoral posts, visitations, and synods, she has crafted a convincing portrait of Basel’s theological evolution as it “turned Swiss,” moving from irenical Protestantism to orthodox Reformed by the 1580s. A sympathetic portrait of Simon Sulzer, who guided Basel through its mid-sixteenth-century transitions, and a subtle analysis of Ramism’s effect on Basel’s clergy highlight her account.

Burnett merges prosopography with theology, tracing Basel’s shift from an early reliance on former Catholic priests, drawn from a broad region of upper Germany, to an airtight reliance on its native sons to fill its pastorate. Among Basel’s twenty-seven rural pastors, most of whom served less than ten years, barely 7 percent gained promotion to urban posts (207). Her concluding section confronts Strauss’ venerable polemic about the “failure” of the German Reformation (254–259). Although Burnett comes down persuasively on the side of “success,” her explanations stress Basel’s advantages—a university, printers, and a smaller rural hinterland than many other Protestant churches.

Burnett’s concentration on theology and pastoral training, however, prevents her from engaging with the cultural history of a truly exceptional early modern city-state, wedged between the Holy Roman Empire and the Swiss Confederation. With Erasmian families like the Amerbachs or the Platters, Basel sheltered a remarkable collection of refugees ranging from David Joris to a cluster of Italian radicals. Yet, religious radicals fail to register on Burnett’s radar: Castellio and Joris appear, but neither is in her index (93, 210). At Basel, a blindfolded birthplace of toleration, printing censorship seems to have been surprisingly lax; only long after his death did its ecclesiastical and civic authorities learn Joris’ identity.

Burnett also fails to develop her insights about the marriage policies of Basel’s leading state-supported theologians. In 1541/42, a remarkably distinguished Italian theologian was passed over in favor of a lesser candidate whose new wife was related to two of the magistrates supervising the appointment (81–82). The next key appointee, in 1554, also married a woman with family members in Basel’s Senate (131). Another, in 1575, had married a former ward of Erastus, and his successor married his Doktorvater’s daughter shortly after his appointment (140). Although Burnett asserts that appointments to Basel’s prestigious urban parishes were “also based on merit,” kinship ties seem extremely important among this increasingly hereditary pastorate (265; my emphasis).

William Monter
Northwestern University


From 1996 to 1998, the Leo Baeck Institute published a four-volume work on German-Jewish history, which now serves as the standard account of the period 1648 to 1945. An émigré synthesis, it summed up decades of research conducted mainly by German Jewish scholars of the postwar period, centering on the social and political history of the German Jews. Its social history, however, tended to focus on impersonal structures, and its politics were high politics. Now Kaplan, one of the most distinguished historians of German Jewry and of Jewish relations with Christians in the German lands, has edited a wonderful volume with a different emphasis—the intimate and everyday, highlighting the personal more than the political. The four-volume synthesis took the hard facts of social and political history as its starting point, but Kaplan and her contributing authors offer a history of German Jews out of the complex, contradictory, yet no less instructive sources of memoirs, diaries, letters, and rabbinical responsa. The result is a rich history that supplements the four-volume synthesis and points to important new avenues of research.

The volume consists of an introduction and a conclusion by Kaplan, as well as four substantive parts. The first, by Robert Liberles, covers the latter part of the early modern period, from 1618 to 1780; the second, by Steven M. Lowenstein, treats emancipation and integration from 1780 to 1870; the third, by Kaplan, covers imperial Germany; and the fourth, by Trude Maurer, surveys Jewish life in the Weimar Republic and Nazi Germany. The sections are uniformly well written, and the translation of Maurer’s essay is felicitous. The sections are also structurally uniform; each section addresses, with slight variation, local environment, family, education, work, religious practice, and social life. The strict categories lend the volume the air of an old-fashioned folkloric account, with its catalog of questions, but the writing and the quality of insight gives the volume an altogether different sense. Though the volume is difficult to summarize, central emphases emerge.

The most important point concerns relations between Jews and Christians. Kaplan’s volume interrogates relations between Christians and Jews in a concrete sense, not simply assuming that political arrangements or anti-Jewish violence determined these relations. The sharper contours permit a view of Jews as simultaneously together and apart. Liberles, for example, points out that focus on the Haskalah, the Jewish Enlightenment, has obscured a great deal of everyday life, in which most Jews lived in the countryside, in close proximity to, and even in the same houses as, Christians, even though few could read German. Similarly, Jews typically married in their mid-twenties, and their families often had four or five members—like Christian families—rather than the large number that historians often assume.

According to Lowenstein, Jewish emancipation brought greater
self-confidence and a higher measure of cultural integration. Synagogues, often hidden in back alleys, moved to main streets, and increasingly assumed a “more German” Romanesque style. Jews became more sedentary; men set up store more often than they took to the road with their wares. Lowenstein also emphasizes the persistence of older religious ways and the rhythms of everyday life; teachers might leave schoolrooms to slaughter an ox or remove the veins from a piece of meat. The change in religious life, which made participation in the community voluntary, did not necessarily mean a decline in Jewish religiosity. In general, Lowenstein paints a vibrant Judaism in this period, at variance with anxious accounts about the deleterious effects of emancipation and acculturation on Jewish life but in accord with the religious revivals and redefinitions in the Christian world (though the latter parallel is not drawn explicitly).

The context of Kaplan’s consideration of Jews in the imperial period is the dramatic shift in Jewish residency patterns. In 1871, 70 percent of Jews inhabited rural communities, but by 1910, 70 percent lived in urban environments, making them more bourgeois and more integrated, legally, professionally, and personally. Kaplan documents the increasing rate of intermarriage and close personal ties and affections, but underscores that, for most Jews, the closest friendships were with co-religionists.

Reading patterns also converged more closely with the surrounding community. In the Kaiserreich, outbreaks of antisemitism notwithstanding, German Jews appear to have felt welcome, for the most part, in German society. This development is not news in itself, but its detailed documentation, focusing on the personal rather than the political, is novel.

Against this background of increasingly close ties, the unraveling that Maurer discusses, especially in the Third Reich, assumes added poignancy. World War I may have introduced a new quality to German antisemitism, but it does not seem to have had an appreciative effect on Jewish-Christian relations during the Weimar Republic. Even in the Third Reich, as the government unleashed its antisemitic legislation, the personal signals remained mixed, though there was no gainsaying the quiet cutting of ties, the slow cessation of visits, and the avoiding of encounters. This undoing of personal connections augured the end of the Jewish community in Germany.

This marvelous book enriches our understanding of Jewish and of German history considerably. It is essential reading for German Jewish history.

Helmut W. Smith
Vanderbilt University
Michlic offers a reading of the history of modern Polish antisemitism that is impressive in its scope. Covering roughly 140 years (1864–2005), Michlic’s book provides a new synthesis of the development, nature, and significance of modern anti-Jewish representations in Poland and their impact on Polish society and culture. Specifically, the book focuses on the concept of the Jew as the “threatening other.” She explores the structure and dynamic of this myth, as well as its social and political functions in particular historical moments. By tracing development of the myth throughout a lengthy period, Michlic attempts to “demonstrate [the myth’s] power, persistence, and consequences while detailing their modifications, transformations, and discontinuities” (8).

At the heart of Michlic’s analysis rests an assumption that ethno-nationalism—understood in terms of an ideology and movement according to which national membership lies in genealogy and in a common vernacular culture and history—“gained the upper hand over modern Polish civic nationalism” at the turn of the twentieth century (3). Consequently, the formation and development of modern Polish national identity was primarily based on “the matrix of exclusivist ethnic nationalism” (x). Although this thesis is not new in the literature about Polish nationalism, Michlic successfully expands its conceptual ramifications by bringing attention to the role of the anti-Jewish myth of the “threatening other” in the process of nation building.

Michlic’s discussion suggests that the idea of “the threatening other/harmful alien” was, and still is, one of the most influential forces in a grand project of the “ethno-nationalization of the state” (a term borrowed from Brubaker). Throughout her narrative, Michlic successfully reveals the project’s inner workings by investigating the beliefs and ideas of its agents—intellectuals, politicians, and the clergy. Michlic makes the insightful theoretical claim that an exclusive focus on “historical agent’s beliefs and ideas” can better illuminate “the persistence and coherence of ideas, traditions, social beliefs, and national mythologies and their impact on societies” (8). Such an approach reaches beyond the analysis of modern Polish antisemitism and can be employed in any study of nationalism and nation building, and the role of “the other” in this process.

Overall, Michlic’s book is a successful and erudite attempt to synthesize and contextualize the theme of modern antisemitism in Poland. Michlic is at her best when she places origins and transformation of

antisemitic ideas and representations in particular political and social settings (51). She is also skillful in revealing the political and social functions of antisemitic mythology. One problem that Michlic fails to address sufficiently concerns the mechanisms by which ideas are transferred from elite circles into public circulation. In Michlic’s defense, rarely does intellectual history explain how ideas become “popular” in society at large. Unfortunately, throughout the book, Michlic seldom leaves the circles of intellectuals and politicians, paying little attention to average people (with the exception of Chapter 5, 181–195). This omission, however, is not a genuine shortcoming of the book, since Michlic’s study is not a social-history project. Instead, it is a fine example of interdisciplinary work informed by the intellectual history of ideas and sociology—in her own words, “a holistic sociohistorical analysis” (15).

Anna Cichopek
University of Michigan

_Tear Off the Masks: Identity and Imposture in Twentieth-Century Russia._ By Sheila Fitzpatrick (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2005) 344 pp. $65.00 cloth $24.95 paper

The Soviet Union, argues Fitzpatrick, was particularly impervious to “social historical” analysis because, paradoxically, “class identity” was so important to the Soviet project of transformation: Privilege and mobility were granted to those with the right class credentials and denied to those without. In order to operate within the new Soviet system of class identity, individuals had to learn to mask their incorrect selves, to re-invent themselves, to deceive, and to role-play. Fitzpatrick is explicitly interested in social practice and everyday life rather than discourse and theory. She draws on an extensive trove of archival, memoir, periodical, and published documentary sources. The result is a genuine tour de force—lively, empirical, and analytically stimulating.

Five related sections group distinct essays, most of them published before but reworked for this volume. Some are conceptual, such as discussions of class identity and women’s autobiographies. Others are briefer case studies. All of the essays range widely and connect centrally with comparative approaches to similar historical problems of identity, imposture, denunciation, and distinction.

Part 1 explores “class identities,” updating early articles (published before Soviet archives had become really open) on the importance of class identity in the first two decades of the Soviet Union. The period of the New Economic Policy was critical in setting the standards for the presentation of a class self, as the regime wavered between emphasizing social origin and occupation as the defining feature of social identity. Part 2, “Lives,” offers case studies in identity formation, relying in large part on personal narratives and public presentations of self (such as the
ubiquitous purge hearings of the 1930s, when individuals had to account for their “Sovietness” by referencing the proper social typologies). Part 3 explores identity in action, in the context of appeals and petitions to power. Fitzpatrick presents a classification of petitions by type (including appeals to patrons), and by type of language. In addition to illustrating her general arguments about identity, the chapters in Part 3 offer an unparalleled guide for understanding these sorts of documents.

Part 4 turns to denunciations, another distinctive form of Soviet communication that has rich comparative connections.\(^1\) Most of its chapters concern the 1930s, and, as in the preceding section, offer a classification, as well as an analysis, of this widespread social practice. A new chapter looks at postwar marital relations, based on petitions from aggrieved wives, suggesting that women fought for marital fidelity in the post-1945 period, unlike the era before.

Part 5 looks at the phenomenon of “imposture,” drawing on the trickster tradition as embodied in the Ilf and Petrov’s fictional scamp, Ostap Bender, but this section also includes an extended commentary on the perceived connections between Jews and conmen, and on the role played by antisemitism in the post–1945 Soviet Union.\(^2\) An afterword explores these themes in the post-Soviet context, more suggestively than conclusively, but with Fitzpatrick’s hallmark analytical insight.

Diane P. Koenker
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

*Plantation Enterprise in Colonial South Carolina.* By S. Max Edelson (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2006) 399 pp. $45.00

In this book, Edelson examines the rise and operation of the plantation system in the South Carolina lowcountry, from the beginning of settlement at the end of the seventeenth century until the end of the American Revolution 100 years later. Edelson sets the early modern plantation in its historic context as “a dynamic instrument of colonization and economic development” (4). Rather than magnolia-scented settings of civility and refinement, colonial plantations were “slave labor camps” where masters were intent upon the cultivation of plants convertible into cash in the Atlantic market (165).

The book’s first three chapters, covering the period from the beginning of the colony to the mid-eighteenth century, plows ground similar to that of Peter Wood’s *Black Majority* (New York, 1974). However, Edelson complicates Wood’s emphasis upon “black agency” (59). One chapter, for example, is devoted to refuting the argument, advanced by

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Wood and Daniel Littlefield—*Rice and Slaves* (Baton Rouge, 1981)—that South Carolina rice culture had African roots. In this chapter, and in the entire book, Edelson aims to balance a “revisionist counternarrative” focused on slaves’ contributions by paying closer attention to the role of masters in shaping the lowcountry landscape (60).

The second half of the book, chapters 4 through 6, examines the operation of the colonial lowcountry’s plantation complex during the third quarter of the eighteenth century. In these pages, Edelson breaks new ground and offers a number of new insights.

Chapter 5 investigates how the identity of Carolina masters was constructed in the Atlantic marketplace. Market valuations determined price and profit but also pegged the reputation of individual planters’ and of the entire colony. Carolina rice was considered high quality. But to lowcountry masters’ chagrin, their indigo was constantly judged to be of an inferior grade. Yet, Carolinians used their expertise and local knowledge to ridicule the attraction that British correspondents had for plantation ventures in Georgia or Florida.

This cultural approach is bracketed by the more traditional economic analysis of chapters 4 and 6. Edelson posits a core–periphery model of colonial lowcountry development. Charleston, the metropolis of the region, and its immediate hinterland were the core. An outlying region between the Santee and the Edisto formed a “secondary zone.” Port Royal, to the south, and Winyah Bay, to the north, were “frontier zones.” The expansion of rice and slavery into coastal Georgia after 1750 offered another plantation frontier.

The final chapter of the book scrutinizes the “empire” of one master, Henry Laurens, to illustrate in microcosm how the entire system functioned. From account books and letters, Edelson reveals how Laurens, from his desk in Charleston, managed an extensive enterprise of two “core” genteel plantations and three markedly less genteel outlying ones as a well-integrated machine. The system was extraordinarily lucrative. By the early 1770s, Laurens expected an annual rate of return of 20 percent.

*Plantation Enterprise in Colonial South Carolina* is an insightful, original, and well-written book. Edelson may be right in suggesting that the portrait of Africans’ key role in creating the colonial lowcountry has been overdrawn. Yet, viewing the rise of South Carolina’s plantation regime from the masters’ perspective is not without its own ironies. Seen from Laurens’ desk, what might fairly be described as a human tragedy becomes instead a tale of entrepreneurial ingenuity and economic success. Lowcountry blacks were naturally less inclined to see it that way. Edelson quotes one of Laurens’ slaves in a letter telling his “hounerable master” that “w[e] are all ways in the dreding w[ay]” (251).

Robert Olwell
University of Texas, Austin
This book’s strength lies in the cultural and intellectual history of gender and race through the analysis of texts; the author parses a host of judicial cases and other recorded incidents of rape and sexual assault. In this respect, the book has no equal for the time and places that it considers. The author compellingly discloses the political and social frailty of women and African Americans in early American society that enabled their victimization. Without advocates or mediators for their grievances, they were denied justice at the hands of their communities, courts, and even their families. In the case of African Americans, accused men as well as victimized women suffered.

Block claims to incorporate “multiple methodological approaches” (242), but the book employs little in the way of social-science methodology or sociological and criminological theory. Moreover, her analysis of quantitative data is piecemeal and unsystematic.

Block’s subject is all of Anglo-America to 1820, but in casting so wide a net, she sacrifices precision and conclusiveness. For example, she searched just one Pennsylvania newspaper for mentions of rape; she relied on the public documents of just one or two Pennsylvania counties, but not all such documents. She might have provided more information about rapes in Philadelphia, America’s largest city. The coverage of rape in the courts of Virginia and much of the South appears faint in this book. Block acknowledges her inattention to regional particularities and to secular change. She might have added inattention to ethnic and religious peculiarities: For example, Scots-Irishmen are curiously often among the suspected rapists. Although Native Americans are not entirely absent, no cases of accused Indian men appear in the book. Block’s case for the significance of rape in the American Revolution is not well substantiated.

The greatest problem with the history of rape is the “dark figure” of unreported and unrecorded crimes. Block’s commendable parsing of cases and other records shows that it was vast, as she asserts. Her alternative attempt, ingeniously, to confirm its vastness, by collating court dockets with court papers, yields far less certainty. The ten years of records that she uses are a small sample from a single county, and if every assault on a woman there were a sexual assault, it would still not make rape as vast as she earlier established. Furthermore, she confers on county clerks the liberty to reduce charges of rape to lesser crimes out of consideration for the accused men, but the clerks could not have exercised this privilege without orders from the king’s attorneys or attorneys-general.

Of the few cases that have exceptional significance for the author, none are more noteworthy than those of Rachel Davis, a servant, and Harriet Jacobs, a slave, both raped by their respective masters. Other members of their households and communities knew of the rapes but
did not intervene on their behalf. But the author has not discussed an equally significant, but contrary, case, in 1787/88—that of Alice Clifton, a young black woman, raped by a married, white man, “Fat John” Shaffer. Prominent Philadelphians rallied to her defense and to the spectacular prosecution of Shaffer.

This work is not the last word on rape in early America, but it is the essential latest word for anyone interested in this topic.

Jack D. Marietta
University of Arizona

Sex among the Rabble: An Intimate History of Gender & Power in the Age of Revolution, Philadelphia, 1730–1830. By Clare A. Lyons (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2006) 419 pp. $55.00 cloth $22.50 paper

In this bold, wide-ranging, and deeply researched book, Lyons seeks the origin of “the modern American sexual system” in the lives and imaginations of urban men and women in the decades before, during, and after the War for Independence (4). To date, most work on Early American sexuality has focused either on the regulation of sex and marriage in the colonial period or on the emergence of urban sexual cultures in the antebellum period. Sex Among the Rabble is among the first large-scale studies to tackle the transition between these two eras. Refreshingly, it places at the center of analysis the issues of desire and pleasure. Lyons combines a wide reading in books, broadsides, and images printed on both sides of the Atlantic with the laborious work of the social historian—sifting through large sets of institutional records to flesh out patterns of premarital pregnancy, attitudes toward marriage, and the conflicting perspectives of “fallen women” and moral reformers. The analysis is informed by sympathy for early Philadelphia’s “expansive” sexual culture and suspicion of the constraints of “traditional” marriage and middle-class respectability. The heroes of this book are lusty women shaping their own destinies, satisfying their desires, and pursuing sexual pleasure.

In the almanacs, newspapers, and broadsides that circulated in colonial Philadelphia, Lyons finds evidence of a sexual culture quick to embrace pleasure and slow to moralize. Popular imprints echoed European stereotypes of women as innately lusty and men as more self-controlled. Yet, as Lyons emphasizes, actual men and women often saw themselves differently. Men could see themselves as victims of women’s sexual allure. Consider the author of a sex diary that began with the following New Year’s resolution: “I promise me in the coming year to avoid lewd women—they are the bane of my life.” Only a week later he reported, “Met a certain young woman—danced with her and aroused all my passion—She resisted much holding her limbs together, but my flame
being up I thrust her vigorously and she opened with a scream—” (251). He spent the rest of the year not so much resisting temptation as trying to hide the consequences from his wife.

Women, too, frequently rejected the gender ideologies promoted in print. Those who declined to see themselves as dominated by uncontrollable lusts did not necessarily disavow sex altogether. Indeed, Lyons argues, women embraced the pursuit of sexual happiness as part of an “Enlightenment quest for self-discovery” (175). This argument is developed in an analysis of a long series of newspaper notices published by husbands to disclaim financial responsibility for wives who had left them, often for other men. Characteristically, Lyons views these notices as “self-divorce ads” (177). Around 1770, women began to write back, placing their own advertisements to defend themselves or accuse their husbands of abuse or adultery. Repudiating the patriarchal double standards of the popular press, women “asserted that personal satisfaction and individual choice in intimate relationships were indeed legitimate goals” (175).

Philadelphia’s sexual pleasure culture expanded in the late eighteenth century as “Enlightenment thinking and Revolutionary republican philosophy lent legitimacy to the quest for personal autonomy and fulfillment” (188). Among the book’s most significant contributions are its imaginative readings of institutional records for evidence of attitudes and expectations that defied respectable conventions. For example, Lyons uses the records of the Gloria Dei church to elucidate conflicts between lower-class couples and the minister who guarded the marriage gates. Prospective couples did not always share the minister’s concern about obtaining parental consent, crossing color lines, obtaining legal divorces from previous spouses, or even showing up for the ritual remotely sober (217–223). The themes of class and cultural conflict are developed in a discussion of bastardy, which rose dramatically in the 1790s. Impoverished single mothers “often used the almshouse without adopting the morals advocated by its administrators” (261).

Sex among the Rabble ends with a discussion of how this “expansive” sexual culture developed into the more familiar urban sexual worlds of the nineteenth-century city, fraught with class conflict, gender double-standards, and racism. In the popular press, stereotypes shifted decisively: Men were re-imagined as full of insistent sexual passions, and women were increasingly idealized as passionless (305). Narratives focused not on lusty wenches or ladies awakened to sexual pleasure, but rather on “fallen women”—victims of seduction abandoned to shame, poverty, and prostitution. In this context, Lyons’ analysis supports interpretations suggested in the 1970s and 1980s by Foucault, Cott, and Stansell.1 The

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cultural assault on women’s “sexual autonomy” was part of a broad effort by an emerging urban middle class to establish a single “normative form of sexuality” and to deploy various kinds of deviance in their efforts to control “those whose independence threatened the gender, racial, and class hierarchies of the new Republic” (317, 309). Typically, anti-prostitution reformers set their sights on (female, relatively poor) prostitutes rather than on their (male, relatively affluent) clients. Public officials increasingly relieved the fathers of bastards from the burdens of child support and the shame of public exposure and adopted more punitive policies towards impoverished single mothers (373).

The most important—and most problematic—arguments in Sex Among the Rabble revolve around its view of working-class women’s agency: “When women engaged in relations that resulted in bastardy, established affairs, left their marriages for new men, or participated in sex commerce, they affirmed their sexual independence, that is, created sexual lives independent of marriage” (256). Whether these conclusions are adequately supported is open to question. In the case of bastardy, Lyons is aware that not all women who bore bastards did so as the result of a conscious choice. Some, indeed, were so loath to become single mothers that they concealed their pregnancies and killed their newborns (95). Some, presumably, had been raped. Others, no doubt, were misled by men who promised, and then refused, to marry them. Yet, Lyons makes no sustained effort to differentiate women who chose to bear bastards from those who did not. Similarly, it is not at all clear that prostitution was always about free choice, much less pleasure—at least for the prostitutes. In all of the examples of sexual commerce that Lyons discusses, men paid and women put out. Presumably this pattern reflected structural inequalities in the labor market. But Lyons does not fully consider how these inequalities affected the choices that men and women made, or how people’s options shaped their views of sex and pleasure.

In the late eighteenth century, Philadelphians may indeed have “created an urban pleasure culture in which a broad spectrum of the population . . . devoted their leisure time to recreations and amusements for personal satisfaction” (114). But theirs remained a culture in which the costs, consequences, and meanings of such sexual self-expression could be different for men and women—a culture in which marriage offered women not only patriarchal oppression but also substantial protections. Ultimately, Lyon’s goal in this book was to offer up a “usable past,” a vision of the earthy, open sexual world of the early modern period as an alternative to the prudish, proscriptive, and politicized sexual ideologies of more recent times (395). By showing why a long view of the history of sexuality is salutary and placing provocative interpretations on the table, Sex Among the Rabble succeeds admirably.

John Wood Sweet
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Slavery and Politics in the Early American Republic. By Matthew Mason (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2006) 339 pp. $45.00

Mason’s study provides a straightforward description and analysis of the slavery issue in national politics from the formation of the federal Constitution through the Missouri admission crisis of 1819 to 1821. Drawing heavily on pamphlet polemics, newspaper reports, and Congressional debates, Mason concentrates on the impact of slavery for shaping partisan and sectional alignments between the end of the “first” abolition movement, the 1808 prohibition against further importation of slaves, and the Missouri crisis, which saw the full elaboration and polarization of arguments over slavery. Mason’s wide and careful reading of printed sources from all regions enables him to differentiate changing opinions in New England, the Middle Atlantic States, Virginia and the Upper South, the Deep South, and the Old Northwest. Since African-American voices seldom found their way into print before the late 1820s, they do not figure substantially in his discussion, except in the form of slave conspiracies and revolts.

At the outset of the federal union, few Southerners defended slavery in principle. Many believed, as James Monroe wrote to Thomas Jefferson, that abolition would be desirable if it could be achieved “without expense or inconvenience to ourselves” (19). Such a fantasy, Mason explains, like others whereby slavery and African Americans would painlessly vanish, either “naturally” or through complicated gradual emancipation and colonization schemes, continued to enjoy favor for a generation. But in the contention over whether Missouri would be free or slave, and whether that state would forbid settlement by free people of color, Northerners and Southerners sharpened their arguments. Anti-slavery advocates exposed the contradictions that had long enabled politicians from all regions to temporize. In response, Southerners developed the argument that, so far as Africans, African Americans, and the United States were concerned, slavery was a positive good. The polarization of viewpoints that would eventually divide the United States was clear.

Mason’s particular contribution is to argue, persuasively, that during the decade or so preceding the Missouri crisis, politicians and clergymen from every region developed and refined their views of slavery and public policy—laying the foundation for the incandescent conflicts of 1820 and 1821 and foreshadowing the full-blown sectional polemics of the 1840s and 1850s. Though much of Mason’s account is familiar, grounded in the body of existing scholarship, his analysis of the pervasiveness and complexities of slavery debates is fresh and reveals the nuances of partisan manipulation and belief. Mason’s approach to sources and methods, however, falls within conventional historical boundaries. Neither cultural nor literary analysis shapes this work any more than theories from anthropology or political science. As a result, the impact and audience for Slavery and Politics in the Early Republic will be confined to historians of the subject and period. They will find that this study en-
riches their understanding of the role of slavery in public discourse and division. But it will not challenge them to approach the vexed subject of race and labor in early America in fresh ways.

Richard D. Brown
University of Connecticut


Had this book been a television broadcast, it might well have been one of those backstage documentaries that provides a behind-the-scenes look at the making of another production. Backstage, in this case, turns out to be the great American survey expeditions sponsored by museums and governments during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which, according to Kohler, gathered the data that formed the foundation of twentieth-century natural history.

As Kohler describes them, these survey expeditions differed in several significant ways from the kind of collecting that preceded them. First, they took place in what Kohler calls the “inner frontier” spaces of the United States, rather than in the “unexplored” and now vanishing wilderness. This inner frontier comprised a patchwork landscape of relatively undisturbed natural environments that existed even in close proximity to human activity. Second, they aimed for a synoptic completeness rather than the more scattershot efforts of earlier collectors. Third, they aspired to a methodological uniformity that would give the information collected a greater scientific rigor and value.

What Kohler presents is not so much a survey of these surveys, but an anatomy of them. The book is divided into six thematic chapters and an epilogic “envoi.” These chapters consider, in turn, the landscape in which the surveys occurred, the changing cultural values of being “outdoors,” the sponsoring of the expeditions, the organization necessary to carry them out, the actual fieldwork and the careers built from them, and the knowledge that these survey expeditions produced.

As the lesson unfolds, Kohler provides a number of fascinating and astute observations. Among them is the assertion that these survey expeditions resulted at least as much from a new middle-class culture of “nature-going” shared by “fagged-out professionals and office workers” as by the imperatives internal to natural science (90). Kohler also argues that changes in museum display practices—a switch from the glass case to the diorama—“transformed museums from passive recipients of objects into active sponsors of collecting” (111). While asserting the significance of this survey collecting, Kohler also reminds us that “taxonomic categories arose and fell with changing collecting practices,” not vice versa (230).
Kohler insists at the outset of this study that he is interested in how we find, collect, identify, and order the vast diversity of species on the planet, not in the ethical questions raised by these practices—fair enough, given that his is the first examination of these collecting practices. Still, the ethical questions beg to be considered, and they even intrude on Kohler’s story, as when several of his actors wrestle with the efficacy of killing rather than photographing their quarry. In this sense, All Creatures anticipates its sequel, a behind-the-scenes study of how the science of collecting contributed to the politics of the environment in the twentieth century.

Steven Conn
Ohio State University

Childhood on the Farm: Work, Play, and Coming of Age in the Midwest. By Pamela Riney-Kehrberg (Lawrence, University Press of Kansas, 2005) 300 pp. $34.95

There was a time when children were rarely seen and virtually never heard in current scholarship. No longer. For two generations, historians, sociologists, and, especially, anthropologists have taken children and young people seriously as influences on societies, cultures, and economies. The study of childhood, as perceived and cultivated by adults, has proved a useful means of tracking a society’s understanding of itself. The effort has been particularly vigorous in United States history. Gaps remain, however. Riney-Kehrberg’s new book sets out to close one of them, and she largely succeeds.

By the now-familiar pattern of change between the Civil War and the 1920s, children were steadily withdrawn from the workforce and set with increasing parental supervision along paths of maturity that respected their unique needs at each stage of development growth, including the newly conceived adolescence. That pattern, however, held most true for the expanding middle classes of towns, cities, and suburbs. Other studies have described youthful populations with different experiences—African-American children of freedmen and their descendants, the young urban poor of foreign origin, and children of the frontier. Midwestern farm country was another anomaly—relatively prosperous yet rural, absorbing many new trends yet living by older economic means. As Riney-Kehrberg describes it, growing up Midwestern was a kind of prolonged transition into modern American life.

The author moves through the main three arenas of children’s work, play, and education, one chapter at a time. Children continued to participate critically in the family economy and to fashion their own amusements, even as more modern notions of child nurture intruded in education. In one chapter, Riney-Kehrberg considers the experiences of two young farm children who eventually became teachers themselves. Another draws on the records of Wisconsin’s State Public School to
delve into the darker side of Midwestern childhood among families economically strapped, broken by death or desertion, or otherwise unfortunate.

Poor and deprived children are documented only slightly less than other children. Riney-Kehrberg skillfully draws on firsthand testimony from children who wrote during childhood, but like others facing the task, she relies heavily on after-the-fact reminiscences and memoirs. These sources she mines with perception and common sense, looking for patterns of experience while necessarily correcting for a backward perspective that often spans decades. Surprisingly, she pays relatively little attention to differences in growing up male and female. Her overall perspective is one of cautious nostalgia. For all its later romanticizing, and despite the definite limitations and difficulties, growing up on Midwestern farms largely deserved its popular portrayal of cultivating healthy adults with a good sense of their capabilities.

Elliott West
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville


Given how frequently Americans argue about the costs of military operations, it is surprising that Wilson’s book represents the first substantive investigation of the Union’s Civil War procurement’s institutions and dynamics in several generations. Wilson has undertaken exhaustive research in rarely visited archival collections (mostly public, as few wartime contractors’ records survive), and has consulted contemporary newspapers, journals, and legal case files to build a careful and thorough analysis of the United States’ greatest federal spending spree of the nineteenth century.

Commencing with an appraisal of the antebellum federal supply system, this study demonstrates that the Army Quartermasters Department fostered careers in which officers (and some civilian employees) mastered the complexities and hazards of purchasing, storage, and—most trying—shipping and hauling the thousands of items that military units needed for everyday operations and special expeditions. Following Skowronek and his colleagues in developing a more inclusive framework for political history, Wilson documents the rising competencies of state institutions, in this case a procurement bureaucracy that was sorely tested by the national schism. Moreover, implicitly, and explicitly in its closing “Essay on Sources,” Business of Civil War extends the critique of “courts and parties” approaches to nineteenth-century American poli-

tics, particularly underscoring the significance of experienced military managers in setting out the materiel framework for the North’s victory.

Unlike in other segments of the North’s wartime military and bureaucracy, where lightly experienced and politically connected men vaulted into positions of influence and authority, the quartermasters, under the steady leadership of General Montgomery Meigs, deployed a much-needed professionalism, resisted political appointments, and battled to conserve Union dollars, assure quality, and ship supplies to critical destinations in a timely way. Wilson effectively shows how Union financial troubles, most notably shortages of greenbacks, pressed the Corps to issue promissory notes (vouchers) and one-year bonds (certificates) as payment for large contracts. In general, this practice drove small industrial and agricultural entrepreneurs out of the supply business, because they needed cash for labor, material, or, given the centrality of horses to military maneuver, feed bills. Businessmen and politicians, in what Wilson terms a “producerist” reaction to the wartime “mixed military economy,” charged purchasing officers and leading contractors with corruption; indeed, several show trials were held during the conflict. (72)

What this fascinating book provides is not so much an interdisciplinary methodology as a series of interdisciplinary themes, well articulated and convincingly developed—the political economy of warfare, the dynamics of bureaucracies in crisis, the geography of transport and communication, and the professionalization of the military in a highly politicized environment. The author’s prose is less than sprightly, and his claim for the “unacknowledged militarization of America” is not always compelling. But Wilson’s research and core analyses are solid (191). For reconstituting the complexity, the tensions, and the institutional innovations of massive war supply in a horse-and-wagon economy, Wilson deserves a hearty round of thanks from historians and political scientists.

Philip Scranton
Rutgers University


Douglas’ discouraging account of the long battle for school desegregation in the North and Midwest officially covers the years between the end of the Civil War and Brown vs. Board of Education. But it begins earlier in the nineteenth century, when segregation was essentially universal, if blacks were allowed into tax-supported schools at all. Indeed, the key court-case dates from 1850, when the supreme court of relatively enlightened Massachusetts supported “separate but equal” facilities. The account ends with the reminder that between the NAACP’s “landmark” Brown victory and the present day, proportionately more black children
have gone to all black schools in the bigger northern states than in the South. An alternative book title might well have been *Jim Crow Stays North*.

Thoughtful, well-organized, if somewhat repetitive, this history will fuel the ongoing debate about the relative importance of law, politics, and culture in effecting social change of any kind. Although written as part of the Cambridge Historical Studies in American Law and Society, taking full advantage of Douglas’ legal expertise, it argues, with a host of specific examples, state by state and even town by town, that the law was a basically ineffective weapon in the face of white opposition.

A burst of legislation after the Civil War outlawed school segregation in all northern states except Indiana. But despite some victories in the higher courts, local districts were generally able to evade these statutes. Plaintiffs were hard to find, due to black poverty, lack of lawyers, and cost. Furthermore, the usual remedy, other than trivial fines, was *mandamus*—class action was not available until late in the twentieth century—which was held to admit only the child or siblings specifically named, often years after the suit. Finally, postwar Republican idealism, and competition for votes, dried up by the 1890s, inaugurating one-party rule until the 1930s.

The “Great Migration” of the early twentieth century further wounded the cause. Racism was always strongest in areas with big black populations. In places like New Jersey, African Americans were generally unaware of the ancient statewide law banning segregation; those few districts forced to open, say, high schools continued to provide separate elementary schools, or classrooms, or rows within classrooms, or to deny swimming pools or athletic facilities. A second wave of pro-integration sentiment, in the 1940s, inspired by World War II, increasing black votes, and the Cold War, used the more effective tactic of denying state funds to defiant districts, ushering in the familiar post-*Brown* condition: Without legal support, residential segregation could do the job.

Douglas’ contribution, in addition to his careful case-by-case analysis, is to add black ambivalence, even resistance, to the list of reasons that undermined the drive to integrate. This difficulty was not just a matter of North vs. South, elites vs. masses, W. E. B. DuBois vs. Marcus Garvey, or Thurgood Marshall vs. Malcolm X. Segregated schools were always dismal, but their loss imperiled jobs for the leading professional group; as late as 1910, half of all black college graduates were teachers. Although segregated schools were never close to “equal,” integration exposed children to harassment from white teachers as well as peers. Douglas cites (but unfortunately does not evaluate, since educational achievement is not his subject), studies in Washington, St. Louis, and Cincinnati that showed better results in segregated systems, to match the more familiar ones with opposite conclusions. DuBois famously changed his mind back in 1934; since the Brown case, the NAACP itself has often favored pragmatism over principle. The author believes that
only changes in hearts, minds, and politics will bring true integration, but his history shows no clear path to this end.

Roger Lane
Haverford College

Domesticating the West: The Re-Creation of the Nineteenth-Century American Middle Class. By Brenda K. Jackson (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2005) 1870 pp. $50.00

Domesticating the West unfortunately offers little of use to those interested in interdisciplinary history. The book is in many ways a relentlessly old-fashioned narrative biography of an influential couple in late nineteenth-century eastern Washington, sprinkled with a few problematical fragments of analysis about the era’s middle class.

Jackson’s discovery of the book’s two protagonists holds significant promise. Yet the story of their lives does not come close to fulfilling the promise of the book’s subtitle. Thomas and Elizabeth Tannatt became civic leaders in post-frontier eastern Washington; Thomas even served as mayor of Walla Walla. Using Elizabeth’s informative journal and a substantial cache of letters as her source foundation, Jackson recreates the Tannatts’ lives, from Thomas’ military service in the Civil War and his career as a mid-echelon corporate agent for western railroads to Elizabeth’s involvement in movements for temperance and historical commemoration. Jackson narrates their story well, although with a curious insularity. She clearly cares so much about her primary characters that she rarely pays any attention to issues that do not directly involve them.

Certain parts of the Tannatts’ lives hold general interest, but they can be worthy of sustained attention from scholars only if they are representative of larger social forces or help to rethink important scholarly questions. Jackson claims that the Tannatts “provided the perfect representation of members of the nineteenth-century middle class” (xi). Jackson, however, never tries to sustain such a thesis, largely because it cannot be sustained: No “perfect” icon of any group as large and varied as the nineteenth-century American middle class could possibly have existed. Furthermore, Jackson is dismissive of recent scholarly debates about the definition, composition, and qualities of the middle class. In her prologue, she gestures at engaging some of the scholars who have tried to problematize the imprecise category/concept of “the middle class.” Eventually, however, she waves this issue out of bounds by declaring—without any evidence at all—that “the questions, concerns, and indecisions that continue to plague contemporary historians and researchers did not seem to trouble members of the nineteenth-century middle class at all. These individual knew precisely who they were.” (4) Jackson maintains that the Tannatts themselves “knew they belonged to the middle class,” but she once more fails to provide any evidence that
they ever even thought about, much less articulated, such a self-
identification (4).

Alas, Jackson’s interest in broader analytical issues relating to the
middle class fades away almost completely in the main part of the narra-
tive, apart from occasional statements similar to those quoted above, or
an even more suspect comment that “dignity, modesty, and high moral
character . . . set middle-class post-Civil War immigrants apart from the
mass of the great middle class” (127). In any case, the question arises,
Were these people even “middle class” at all? Although pigeonholing
individuals into class (or other) categories often proves unhelpful in our
postmodern age, it is difficult not to see the Tannatts—whose wealth
and power allowed them substantial access to national business leaders—
as members of a genuine elite, albeit a regional one.

Robert D. Johnston
University of Illinois, Chicago

Whitaker (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2005) 382 pp. $35.00

What comes to mind when we think of racially segregated lunch coun-
ters, schools, workforces, neighborhoods and marches, sit-ins, and pro-
test designed to overthrow such racial oppression? We think not of
Phoenix, Arizona, but the Deep South where the Jim Crow regime
reigned supreme and where a legendary civil-rights movement developed
and triumphed over racial tyranny.

New historical scholarship is changing this narrative about Jim
Crow and the civil-rights movement. Indeed, recent studies make clear
that such race discrimination existed in the American West and was
challenged by local civil-rights movements. Race Work thoroughly doc-
ments and analyzes the racial discrimination that existed in Phoenix,
throughout the first half of the twentieth century and the relatively suc-
cessful civil-rights movements that developed in earnest following
World War II. Although more fluid than in the Deep South, racial seg-
regation and discrimination were well entrenched in Phoenix, produc-
ing serious racial inequality. Blacks lived in racially segregated neighbor-
hoods, attended inferior segregated schools, and were at the bottom of
Phoenix’s economic order. Mexican Americans functioned as a buffer
group, experiencing a milder but serious form of racial discrimination.

Whitaker carefully explores the civil-rights movement that was or-
ganized by the Black community in the 1940s and 1950s to overthrow
Jim Crow in Phoenix. Through the experiences of the husband and wife
team of Lincoln and Eleanor Ragsdale who were central leaders of the
movement, Whitaker tells the larger story of this major movement that
employed many of the confrontational and conventional strategies of the
southern civil-rights movement. He documents the fierce resistance that
white Phoenicians waged to maintain racial inequality. The movement had some white allies, but Mexicans seldom participated because many thought themselves white and feared losing their middleman privileges. Class divisions and gender issues in the Black community also presented a challenge to Black solidarity.

This book is well researched. Whitaker employs social-science methods to develop and document his argument, relying on interviews, archival sources, and secondary literature to demonstrate the rise and fall of segregation in Phoenix and employing the data rigorously to prevent undue bias. The virtues and flaws of major actors are discussed in an even-handed manner. This is not a story of saints and devils but of human beings locked in a struggle for and against change.

Race Works succeeds in portraying Jim Crow and the civil-rights movement as irreducibly national in scope. At times, the book is needlessly repetitious. In some instances, centering the narrative around two major leaders truncates the scope of the movement and the broader analyses. But this is still a major contribution to our understanding of the movement that fought for equality.

Aldon Morris
Northwestern University

Mandate Politics. By Lawrence J. Grossback, David A. M. Peterson, and James A. Stimson (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2006) 208 pp. $70.00

No sooner does an electoral campaign end than a new battle begins—the struggle to define the meaning of the results. This process affects politicians’ subsequent choices in important ways, yet it has received limited attention. This valuable study helps to remedy that unfortunate neglect. The authors propound a clear thesis: Unexpected election results affect the behavior of members of Congress by altering their views of public opinion. Anticipated outcomes, even landslides, provide no new information. Yet unexpected results favorable to one party create perceived “mandates,” encouraging the policy ambitions of legislators from the winning side and tactical retreat by those in the losing camp. The largest shifts in voting patterns following mandate elections are found among moderates and those whose margins of victory changed notably. These changes are short-lived, but can have important policy consequences.

Support for this thesis consists of content analysis of newspapers and statistical studies of Congressional voting. The authors use the former to identify cases in which post-election perceptions of a mandate were common. They deploy the latter to show that, in such cases, legislators adjust their voting behavior in the direction of the perceived shift in
public opinion. The authors find evidence of a “mandate effect” following only three elections within the period that they examine: 1964, 1980, and 1994. The last case is interesting in that mandates are usually associated with presidents, yet the authors contend that only electoral shocks that affect Congress produce mandate perceptions. The authors’ quantitative analyses are well executed and convincing, and their re-counting of episodes in political history is reliable—a rare combination.

This study, however, is not without limitations. It is based on voting scales that do not account for the changes in the agenda on which legislators vote. Showing that Congressional voting patterns following “mandate elections” differ from those in “normal” years would have strengthened the authors’ case.

The authors profess agnosticism as to the accuracy of mandate perceptions. But it is hard to be sanguine about the possibility that misunderstanding drives policy shifts. Hence, they insist that scholars underestimate the extent of “issue voting,” that mandate perceptions only convince legislators to do the public’s bidding and that in other cases “gridlock” prevails. Nonetheless, much evidence suggests that swing voters are driven less by programmatic concerns than judgments about incumbents’ record on such consensual goals as prosperity, peace, and avoiding scandal. The authors’ claims about gridlock’s inevitability in the absence of mandate perceptions are exaggerated as well.

The authors’ exclusive focus on the years from 1960 to 2002 is limiting. A broader study might have answered more questions. For example, despite President Truman’s upset victory in 1948, Congress rejected most of his “Fair Deal” program. Similarly, although the extent of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s and Congressional Democrats’ triumph in 1936 was unexpected, Roosevelt’s legislative successes in 1937 were few. Is surprise necessary but insufficient for a mandate? The absence of scientific election polling before the 1930s may have enhanced the potential for surprise among politicians. Were there more mandates in those days?

David Karol
University of California, Berkeley


In this short book, Menard tackles two substantial problems in Caribbean historiography. His primary objective is to flesh out the experience of Barbados in the 1640s, the decade in which historians have long identified a fundamental transformation from nascent settler society to quintessential plantation economy. In this crucial phase of English colo-
ization, beginning in 1627, the island has been seen as moving from an agrarian economy based on small landholdings and a range of export crops—such as tobacco, cotton, and indigo—to an economy driven by sugar monoculture.

By the 1650s, this world had been turned upside down, the land of Barbados now dominated by large, integrated sugar plantations, and indentured white workers replaced by enslaved Africans. The far-reaching character of this economic and demographic transformation created a model, followed quickly in most of the French, English, and Danish colonies in the Caribbean, more slowly in the Spanish islands, and more reluctantly in the colonies of the Dutch. The metamorphosis for which Barbados is commonly taken to be the archetype has come to be known as the “sugar revolution,” and it is a critique of this key concept of Caribbean historiography that forms Menard’s second objective.

Menard argues that, contrary to the received interpretation, “Barbados was already on its way to becoming a plantation economy and a slave society” even before sugar came to replace the early export crops (4). In his view, sugar merely accelerated and intensified existing tendencies; he prefers the term “sugar boom” to “sugar revolution.” He devotes a chapter to the financing of the boom and argues that the Dutch were not as important in supplying capital as some historians have claimed. Easy as it is to agree with this conclusion, it is a red herring because sources of finance are not fundamental to the sugar revolution concept. Menard’s interpretation of the relationship between sugar production and prices is valuable, as is his account of the evolution of the large-scale integrated plantation. He also analyzes important new data from the deed books at the Barbados National Archives. In the end, however, he describes his task as “more to raise questions than to settle them” (xiii).

Menard views his critique of the “sugar revolution” concept much like he does his account of Barbados, as more provocative than definitive, though he does contend at points that the concept deserves only to be consigned to the “historiographic dustbin” (5). The findings of Sweet Negotiations seem insufficient to justify too hasty a discard. The concept could probably survive even if nothing important happened in Barbados. Certainly Menard’s critique is useful, but the “sugar revolution” retains a good deal of substance and utility and seems likely to persist along with other disputed, so-called social and economic revolutions that historians deploy to make sense of the past.

B. W. Higman
Australian National University
Go-betweens and the Colonization of Brazil, 1500–1600. By Alida C. Metcalf (Austin, University of Texas Press, 2005) 391 pp. $55.00 cloth $22.95 paper

After making his landfall in Brazil in 1500, Pedro Alvares Cabral tried to leave behind two convicts brought to live among the Indians and learn their language. The Indians immediately returned them to the ships. They perhaps understood instinctively that such men were dangerous potential agents of change. Cultural-boundary crossers of this sort are the focus of Metcalf’s provocative and innovative reconsideration of Brazil’s first century.

Cultural brokers, intermediaries, transfrontiersmen, beachcombers, castaways and go-betweens have often played a pivotal role in the process of cross-cultural contact in various parts of the world. The early history of Brazil offers a particularly good example. First reports by French and Portuguese observers and by the Jesuit missionaries, all of whom both needed and feared these freelance competitors to their own cross-cultural activities, provided a firm record of contact between Europeans and Native Americans that allows us to recreate, in some detail, the nature of early cross-cultural contact. Metcalf makes these go-betweens and other intermediaries the protagonists of her study of the early Portuguese and French contact with Brazil between 1500 and 1600, as the colony took shape. Rather than study the settlement and colonization from an imperial perspective, she focuses on informal relations while demonstrating that since the fifteenth century at least, Portuguese official expeditions and policies recognized the utility of such brokers and often used them instrumentally to facilitate imperial expansion.

Metcalf retraces the early history of Brazil as it moved from occasional contacts between dyewood cutters and Native Americans through colonial settlement, Jesuit missionary activity, and eventually the creation of a plantation economy based on slavery, always from the perspective of cultural contact and exchange. This approach provides fresh insights and connections to a well-known story. Her account is innovative in a number of ways. She has, for example, integrated the cartographical representations of Brazil into the story, drawing evidence of contact from the early maps and demonstrating how these maps formed an impression of the new land and its people in Europe. Well-written, this account will be a welcome addition to the small number of studies available on colonial Brazil.

There are, however, some problems. In her attempt to sharpen the definition of “go-between,” Metcalf overtheorizes the concept and makes it too inclusive. The castaways and transfrontiersmen constitute only one category in her typology of physical, transactional, and representational go-betweens. The first are the men and women actually involved in the contact—the bearers of disease and the producers of children. The transactional intermediaries are the translators, negotiators, and cultural brokers, and the representational go-betweens are those
who by words and image “represent” another culture. This typology, which organizes the book, is not particularly helpful. Not much separates the first two categories except circumstance and chronology. The castaway incorporated into an indigenous group as a “physical” go-between often became a “transactional” figure once he learned the language. These are not really distinct types.

Metcalf even suggests that captives who were eaten by the Tupi are another kind of physical, or “culinary,” go-between (133). In effect, anyone who ever came into contact with a native of Brazil or carried a germ there is a go-between. This definition is too inclusive. Metcalf uses the category of representational go-between indiscriminately to describe an inquisitor who mediated between people and God, Indian leaders of a syncretic cult, and authors and cartographers who never left Europe (236, 224). To call anyone who wrote or drew about the new land and its people without ever encountering them a “go-between” stretches the point too far. Usually the role of such people was to serve as brokers of the exotic to their own culture not as intermediates between cultures. Thus is the interpretive strength of Metcalf’s definition weakened.

Nonetheless, Metcalf’s volume makes an important contribution by offering a different vantage point from which to view Brazil’s first century, as is readily apparent in her concluding discussion of a hybrid millennial movement among the coastal Tupi called santidade. This resistance movement, led by Indians who had been in contact with the Jesuits, emerged during the 1560s as disease, warfare, and enslavement decimated the coastal Indian populations. The resulting religious mélange, which Metcalf suggests (on little evidence) may have also included African religious elements, swept through the Indian communities and even attracted some Portuguese, mameluco (mestizo), and African followers. Although others, like Vainfas, have studied santidade in detail, Metcalf, using Inquisition trial records, argues convincingly that the movement was implicitly supported by the sugar planters who used the “go-betweens” as their agents, seeking to attract the Indians away from the control of those other cultural mediators, the Jesuits.1

Finally, the fact that the Inquisition proved to be lenient toward those Portuguese and mamelucos involved in the “Indian heresy” suggests that it doubted the seriousness of their cultural wandering. The closest parallels to the santidade cases are the thousands of individuals tried by the Inquisition as renegados, that is, Christians who having been captured or, in some cases, by choice crossed into the lands of Islam where many often converted. When they returned to Spain, Italy, or Portugal, they knew that the only way to be re-accepted was to say that they had converted only for practical reasons, not for reasons of faith.

Everyone knew the rules of this game. Hence, the trials of renegades provide many details, but on the question of faith, intention, and

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1 Ronaldo Vainfas, A heyesia dos índios: catolicismo e reheldia no Brasil colonial (São Paulo, 1995).
religious conviction, they are formulaic and not to be trusted. The same can be said of the santidade trials, which reveal some aspects of the cultural hybridity taking place on the Brazilian coast but also cannot be fully trusted in matters of motivation and belief. What really was in the minds of the mamelucos and Portuguese who collaborated or accepted the movement or who become brokers between cultures remains obscure, leaving open a portal to conjecture. Metcalf may not win agreement on every point, but she has used that doorway to advantage in this stimulating and innovative book.

Stuart Schwartz
Yale University

_Local Religion in Colonial Mexico._ Edited by Martin Austin Nesvig (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 2006) 289 pp. $24.95

According to Nesvig, among North American historians, the study of popular religion in Mexico has been marked by a tendency to overemphasize either a rapid and effective imposition of Catholicism on the native peoples during the sixteenth century (Ricard’s spiritual conquest), or to pay excessive attention to the official anticlericalism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Nesvig moves beyond these tired themes by examining religious beliefs and practices at the local level in colonial Mexico. The book’s concept of local religion is informed by the earlier work of one of its contributors, William Christian Jr., whose _Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain_ (Princeton, 1981) compared local forms of Catholic practice and belief with dogma and the official policies of the Church. Local variations from the latter were sometimes in conflict with, sometimes tolerated by, and sometimes gradually incorporated by the Church.

One of the strengths of this volume is its contributors’ attempt to take account of each other’s ideas. Chapter 2, “The Concept of Popular Religion,” by Carlos M. N. Eire, further contributes to the internal cohesion of the book by developing an analytical framework for the study of popular religion that facilitates a dialogue among the book’s subsequent chapters; a careful reading of this essay will be well rewarded when reading the rest of the book. Eire’s discussion of past approaches to the study of local religion is anthropologically aware, without excessive jargon or reference to authorities. He proposes a framework for the analysis of local religion that recognizes four categories of dichotomy: social and cultural (“lay/clerical, folk/learned, or suppressed/oppressor”), spatial and dimensional (“local/universal, below/above, or ancient/new”), typological and structural (“religion/doctrine, piety/theology, or riot/order”), and historical and qualitative (“pagan/Christian, superstition/religion, or magic/religion”) (26). He employs this frame-

1 Robert Ricard, _The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico_ (Berkeley, 1966).
work to impose “a greater degree of order and cohesion” on the study of popular religion.

Most of the subsequent chapters present case studies centered around local Spanish, native, and African communities, although in Chapter 2, Antonio Rubial García takes a broader perspective, arguing that just as native peoples applied elements of Christianity to their own traditional pre-conquest practices, many facets of Christianity in Mexico acquired their own adaptations to native culture.

In Chapter 3, Nesvig analyzes an all-but-forgotten defense of the capacity of natives to receive training for the priesthood, written in 1543 by a Franciscan named Alfonso de Castro, who held the unusual opinion that Indians had neither greater nor lesser ability than Spaniards to comprehend and adhere to the Catholic faith. Nesvig argues that this work has fallen into obscurity because it was never translated from Latin, while the works of other defenders of native rights (for example, Las Casas) enjoyed wide circulation because they were translated into the vernacular. Although the theory is plausible, it begs the question as to why other works were so widely translated (they served the geopolitical interests of other European states) and Castro’s not.

Chapter 4, by William B. Taylor, presents an example of a local devotion coming into conflict with the Church hierarchy. David Tavárez, in Chapter 5, analyzes conflict in three Zapotec communities “over native ritual practices” (121). Edward W. Osowski, in Chapter 6, examines the differences between gender roles in the religious practices of Spanish and native communities by focusing on native itinerant alms collectors. He shows that despite Spanish objections, native women often served their communities as alms collectors and that native attitudes toward the practice held it to be important in maintaining the strength of community ties.

Brian Larkin analyzes the appearance of the names of Mexico City’s confraternities in the wills of their (mostly Spanish) members in Chapter 7, tracing an apparently declining confidence that these organizations could help their members achieve salvation. Nicole von Germeten, in chapter 8, illustrates how free African and Afro-Mexican men could enhance their social status through membership in confraternities. Javier Villa-Flores in Chapter 9 shows how Christianity could be used by slaves as a tool to resist the cruel corporal punishments meted out against them by the owners and operators of the obrajes (sweat shops) where many of them labored. Finally, in Chapter 10, Christian considers the large number of variations of Catholic practice around the globe, and the extent to which local custom could become accepted within canon law.

_local Religion in Colonial Mexico_ largely succeeds in its stated intention of challenging the traditional historiographical approaches to the study of religion in Mexico. Noteworthy is the primary research on which the chapters by Taylor, Tavárez, Osowski, Larkin, von Germeten, and Villa-Flores are based, demonstrating that much data remains to be mined from the archives. One minor criticism is that the colonial
periodization is slightly arbitrary when considering local religious beliefs and practices. Future research should move the discussion into the national period.

Michael S. Cole
Florida Gulf Coast University


The significance of a microhistory depends on what it represents. A well-chosen case study can offer a window onto a wider world and broader historical processes. It might be typical or atypical in revealing ways. Or it might be chosen because it played a pivotal role in a larger history or was emblematic of how an important person experienced that history. This book demonstrates the power of a well-chosen case study to illuminate a larger historical canvas and revise our views of major historical issues.

The indigenous Mapuche communities of southern Chile were so diverse in their characteristics and experience that Mallon initially decided to study four of them. The community of Nicolas Aílio, the subject of this book, was famous during Salvador Allende’s “Chilean Revolution” of 1970–1973 as the protagonist of one of its earliest and most contested _tomas_ [land seizures], which became a political cause célèbre for both Left and Right and was viewed by both as a symbol of the革命ary process that they wanted to advance or reverse.

Mallon begins her book with the dramatic 1970 land seizure, but then places it within a much longer and larger history of Mapuche land loss and deprivation. The Mapuches, Chile’s largest indigenous group, resisted conquest for three centuries, but since the 1880s, like the Native Americans of the U.S. West, they have lost land and power to European immigrants, local entrepreneurs, and corrupt or racist politicians. The first half of her book is the prehistory of the land seizure, an account that draws on extensive research in local and national archives, as well as on oral histories, to trace the usurpation of community land and consequent poverty of the “generation without shoes.” For Mallon, Nicholas Aílio offers an extreme case of a more general Mapuche experience, which explains its leading role, pioneering a path that other Mapuches then followed. The second half of her book explores the consequences of this _toma_. It begins with three years of “fleeting prosperity” as an agrarian reform cooperative in the vanguard of Allende’s rural revolution, which the Pinochet dictatorship repressed and dismantled. It ends with the community’s division and acquisition of new state-subsidized land in 1996/97, after the restoration of democracy and passage of a new Indige-
nous People’s law intended to make amends for past wrongs and create a more equitable base for Mapuche integration into Chilean society.

Historians of Latin America will be particularly interested in Mallon’s account of a community whose land seizure catapulted Allende’s “democratic road to socialism” prematurely into a radicalized agrarian reform that initially advanced the “revolutionary process,” but ultimately contributed to the conditions that led to Pinochet’s violent military coup of 1973. Mallon chillingly recounts the severe impact of the coup on the Mapuche, along with the story of the cultural revival of the 1980s that saved the Mapuche as a people, even as neoliberal policies were undermining their communal landholdings. Historians of Chile will also be interested in the way that her microhistory revises the standard history of Chile while confirming the emerging new view of Mapuche history as integral to Chilean history, as well as in her account of the tensions between ethnic and socioeconomic constructions of Mapuche peasant identities.

Readers of this journal will be most intrigued by Mallon’s innovative methodology, in particular what she terms her “dialogical method,” which has two dimensions. It refers to “a dialogue between the archive . . . and human memory” (9): Mallon brought historical documents to the community, and their responses to them helped shape her book. But it also describes her “deepening dialogue” with her Mapuche subjects in all phases of her research, conceptualization, analysis, and writing of this book, which she credits with transforming her study in multiple ways (14).

Moreover, because Mallon’s research took place during the years in which land-poor Nicolas Ailío was debating whether to divide and accept government-subsidized land elsewhere, her account of the past was also in dialogue with this debate in the present, making her a participant as well as an observer and further complicating her authorship. The resonance of anthropology’s participant-observer model is clear, but so are Mallon’s other methodological approaches, including archival research and the tracing of change over time.

Mallon became the community’s unofficial historian, who recorded its stories and wove them together with other versions, written and oral, into a layered text that strikes a balance between “the specifics of the individual case and what each one tells us about reality more generally.” By preserving and articulating the several stories about this past that exist within the community, she tried not to privilege one over the others or exclude “dimensions and perspectives within human history, aspects of the past that resist narration from a position that reproduces the rationality of power” (232). Her goal was to explore “the fissures” that these different versions produce in more conventional historical narratives—“time knots” that “allow us access to other meanings and ways of explaining human reality” (232). Yet, try as she might not to impose her own “omniscient rationalism,” Mallon is the one who did the research, wrote the text, and made the historical judgments that shaped its inter-
pretation and drew its conclusions. Mallon may have undertaken this project in dialogue with the people of Nicolas Ailío and may consider it a “collective effort” (23), but in the end, it is her book. If these subalterns speak, it is through her midwifery.

Nonetheless, Mallon’s dialogical method is an innovative and suggestive strategy for local history that comes close to fulfilling the goals of South Asia’s subaltern school. Mallon was an early advocate of adapting the approaches of the subaltern school to the history of Latin America, a difficult goal for her earlier work on nineteenth-century Peru and Mexico.¹ Her innovative combination of a self-consciously sophisticated oral history from below with community involvement in both her research and writing enables “the subaltern to speak,” to tell a common story of Mapuche poverty, discrimination, and marginalization, as well as to showcase “the importance of divergent forms of human community and solidarity in the formulation of survival strategies and in the struggle against oppression.” It also allows the subalterns to speak, revealing the cross-cutting fault lines of gender, generation, family, class, ethnicity, religion, culture, and politics that divided this emblematic Mapuche community and colored its relationship with the Chilean state and society across the twentieth century. Courage Tastes of Blood is an impressive achievement that deserves a wide audience for its methodological innovation and for its original contribution to the history of Chile and the Mapuche.

Peter Winn
Tufts University

War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895–1898. By John Lawrence Tone (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2006) 353 pp. $35.00

There is no better study of this important war to date than this meticulously researched, cogently argued, and superbly written account. The war signaled the end of the Spanish American empire and the start of the United States of America as a world power. It also gave abortive birth to an independent Cuban state. As such, it has attracted enormous scholarly attention, especially from scholars in the participating countries. Some of the studies are exceptionally good. None however, provides the richly detailed perspective of this volume.

The sources are impeccable. Tone has gleaned important new information from private letters, garrison logbooks, hospital records, battle diaries, newspaper reports, and confidential administrative communica-

tion from the *Archivo General Militar* in Segovia, Spain, that only recently became available. He has also done extensive research in three other Spanish archives, three Cuban archives, as well as the archives of the History of Medicine, the Library of Congress, the Huntington Library, and the National Archives of the United States. The bibliographical base is excellent. Tone has provocatively reviewed the accepted outlines of the war by a large number of scholars impressively refining and contradicting their assertions as he recounts the political and military relations between Spain and Cuba between 1868 and 1898.

The signal achievement of this book lies in the even attention given to the three combative sides in the war. Almost every page bristles with original ideas about the troops and the conditions of warfare and the wider context of the later nineteenth century. The savagely brutal war that began in 1895 was, for different reasons, extremely difficult for both Cubans and Spaniards. Cuban insurgents mobilized about 40,000 soldiers and waged an erratic guerrilla campaign that was effective only for the first two years. They never had sufficient food, clothes, or ammunition to fight consistently or win an outright victory. The Spanish sent nearly 200,000 troops to Cuba, their largest single military overseas engagement. They also had the active support of approximately 60,000 local volunteers. Although better trained and better armed than the Cubans, tropical diseases such as dysentery, yellow fever, typhoid, malaria, and pneumonia ravaged the troops. According to Tone, “disease killed 22 percent of the military personnel sent to Cuba, accounting for 93 percent of Spanish fatalities” (9).

The book, written with engaging humor, offers brilliant, interesting insights about all the principal participants as well as their military technology and strategies. This realistic evaluation of the three contending forces undermines much conventional wisdom about the war. “Cuban independence,” states Tone, “required the intervention of many people, and . . . was not inevitable but the result, at least in part, of historical accidents” (227). Theodore Roosevelt, for one, was fortunate to have encountered Spanish military technology and war strategy in so compromised a condition, or it could have been anything but “a splendid little war” for the invading Americans.

Franklin W. Knight
Johns Hopkins University

*Corruption in Cuba: Castro and Beyond.* By Sergio Díaz-Briquets and Jorge Pérez-López (Austin, University of Texas Press, 2006) 286 pp. $55.00 cloth $21.95 paper

This excellent book covers four broad themes. The first two chapters present a synthetic review of the theoretical and comparative empirical scholarship on corruption. They draw from political science and eco-
nomics and the comparative experiences of former communist Europe. They identify the determinants of corruption, its features, and its effects. They situate Cuba within the comparative political economy of institutions and incentives under socialism, rather than employing Latin America as the reference set.

The third chapter narrates the roots of corruption in Cuba from Spanish colonial times to the eve of revolutionary victory in 1959. This chapter concludes, “republican Cuba was burdened with a deeply ingrained tradition of corruption forged over four centuries of colonial rule” (85). Chapters 4 and 5 assess the nature, level, and determinants of corruption in socialist Cuba, especially since 1990—that is, after the collapse of communist Europe and the introduction of limited market-oriented economic reforms in Cuba. The last two chapters speculate thoughtfully about corruption during a hypothesized Cuban transition toward democratic politics and a market economy, drawing from the comparative empirical political economy of former socialist Europe.

The authors’ review of the scholarly literature draws out a framework pertinent to the development of corruption in Cuba since 1990. The authors emphasize the monopoly power of the state over most of the Cuban economy, the extraordinary official discretion in policy-making, and the lack of means to hold officials accountable. Cuba features a weak civil society, government ownership and operation of nearly all the mass media (church publications excepted), and single-party rule.

Because field research in Cuba is impossible on this topic, the authors draw from many printed sources but cannot specify levels or trends of corruption in Cuba. They convincingly show, however, that corruption practices have become widespread. The government punishes culprits but enacts few institutional changes to address these matters. The authors highlight administrative corruption (drawing on World Bank assessments of corruption) but note that Cuba may be on the brink of “state capture” by the managers that run autonomous state-owned enterprises who could seize these firms, if “insider” privatization were to prevail as it did in Russia.

The authors emphasize the description of the institutions and practices of corruption in Cuba through the location of hard-to-find valuable evidence; their focus is not methodology, however. Because they cannot apply a research design to assess whether cultural or institutional explanations are more effective, they leave unresolved the competing explanations posed by the opening three chapters. One missed opportunity is the inattention to the relative impact of marketization on corruption. An unexplored hypothesis is that monetary corruption, though not abuse of power, declined in Cuba’s revolutionary 1960s, only to reappear as market practices were re-introduced. The authors emphasize the contribution of the state and its practices to corruption but forego consideration of whether the trend toward the market economy was also a cause of the growth in corrupt practices.
Written in accessible prose, this scholarly work helps us to understand the comparative patterns and determinants of corruption and significantly deepens our knowledge of Cuba as power transfers from Fidel to Raúl Castro.

Jorge I. Domínguez
Harvard University


Using a wide variety of contemporary sources—ranging from travel accounts, local gazetteers, collected literati writings, and military handbooks—Shin analyzes the process of identity formation in the southwest Chinese province of Guangxi during the Ming (1368–1644) period. He draws on a large and growing secondary literature in anthropology and history to determine how officials and literati constructed a “Chinese” identity by classifying, in ever-finer detail, the “non-Chinese” groups who inhabited this frontier region.

The primary factor in identity formation was an expansionist Chinese state. In the second half of the fourteenth century, Ming rulers and elites, experiencing policy setbacks on their northern borders, turned their attention instead to the control of south China and the reaffirmation of “the distinctions between ‘Chinese’ and ‘non-Chinese’” (160). The sixteenth-century economic expansion stimulated literati to travel throughout the empire, creating a growing urban audience for their memoirs. Although an older literature fantasizing the exotic persisted, the travelers displayed a new interest in empirical knowledge. The systematic search for accurate information, which is also evident in gazetteers and administrative handbooks, may have pushed the beginnings of ethnography, identified by Hostetler as part of the Qing colonial enterprise in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, forward by a century.  

In Guangxi, efforts to establish administrative units directly under central government control were stymied by high costs and the resistance of local residents. The Ming compromised. Their decision to rule indirectly through native chieftains (tu guan, later tusi) created a system empowering local elites that would persist in some localities until the 1950s. Similarly, Shin argues, the marking of groups outside the category of proper subjects (min, literally “people”) during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was the forerunner of the designation of fifty-five minority nationalities in the People’s Republic of China.

This monograph joins several others focusing on ethnic identity

1 Laura Hostetler, Qing Colonial Enterprise: Ethnography and Cartography in Early Modern China (Chicago, 2000).
formation and state–society interactions in China’s southwest and west, but extends the historical range to an earlier period. Unlike Hostetler, Shin does not cast the state as a colonizing power, nor does he address the extent to which the sixteenth and seventeenth–century Chinese state should be placed within an early modern historical frame. However, his study’s ability to provoke such questions comprises part of its contribution to the field.

Evelyn S. Rawski
University of Pittsburgh


Zheng’s ambitious book seeks answers to some of the most fundamental questions about opium consumption in China, including who smoked the drug and why, and the reasons for its centuries-long popularity. The book’s most notable contributions to the growing literature on opium in China are its lengthy chronological scope, its intriguing and effective interdisciplinary approach, and its wide range of previously untapped sources. By looking at opium as an article of consumption in the context of other Chinese material cultures—specifically those of tea, cuisine, herbs, and utensils—Zheng eschews many of the moralistic assumptions that have biased much of the history of this drug.

Zheng begins her “genealogical method of anthropological inquiry” long before the infamous Opium War (1839–1942), when opium was not yet conceived of as a vice or an emblem of imperialist aggression (2). Instead, the drug was part of China’s rich material life; it became a marker of elite taste and distinction. Zheng’s use of anthropological-commodity theories to frame this “biographical” approach to the social life of opium in China yields new insights into the psychosocial patterns of consumption and the means by which smoking and opium consumption were incorporated into Chinese life. The volume maps out the transformation of meanings and functions attributed to opium, beginning with its evolution from medicine to aphrodisiac, then tracing its growing popularity as a foreign commodity or yanyu, and eventually discussing its transformation in the nineteenth century into a necessity and key component of popular culture in the Qing and Republican eras. Zheng mines an impressive and intriguing array of sources that include literature, pornography, medical tomes, and officials’ journals, among others. They reveal a complex and fascinating process by which the

meanings of opium consumption were altered and redefined as time passed, and the habit filtered down from elite to ordinary Chinese. The volume explores how domestic and internal forces structured Chinese demand for opium, a precondition for the massive smuggling of the drug that generated the political crises of the mid-nineteenth century. Zheng also examines the role of opium in the sex industry and the sex lives of elite Chinese, and in one chapter explores the double-edged impact of the drug on the lives of Chinese women.

The Social Life of Opium in China is a lively and readable volume, although it contains some frustrations for scholars wishing to explore some of its conclusions and interpretations. For example, Zheng frequently interjects that particular scholars have studied an aspect of the history of opium (or briefly summarizes the scholars’ approaches or arguments) without listing the titles of their books in the text or bibliography, and she relies too frequently on rhetorical questions to drive the argument or indulge in speculation. At times, Zheng’s otherwise careful and important observations also include sweeping generalizations, such as the claim that filial piety and opium restrictions exempting those older than sixty helped sustain “the massive consumption [of opium] among the elderly population in the late Qing and beyond” (162–163). The assertion sounds reasonable, but Zheng provides no evidence to support either the reasons for, or the existence of, widespread smoking among the elderly.

In the effort to situate opium within a broader Chinese material culture, Zheng sometimes struggles to reconcile her focus on the incorporation of opium into China’s material culture with the existence of long-standing Chinese legal restrictions on the drug. Zheng tends to deny the existence of genuine anti-opium sentiment, noting, not without justification, that the elites credited with this sentiment were more often than not smokers themselves. However, to say that “Good Christians and anti-opium activists supported prohibition, but only in public and in theory” is unproven and thus incorrect (193). She also neglects to point out that opium prohibition was a pillar of the Taiping agenda and attracted some support among ordinary Chinese. In tracing changes in official and legal attitudes toward opium, Zheng notes that not until large numbers of ordinary Chinese began to smoke did the government view opium as a problem. However, the existence of legal restrictions—albeit ineffectual and ill-enforced—from 1729 onward leaves unanswered the question of why, if opium were so readily and naturally incorporated into Chinese material culture, mid-Qing officials were able to convince the emperor to prohibit it (46). The elite appreciated and enjoyed the drug, particularly in the context of sexual recreation, but often illegally. This seems to indicate that the power of the elite was not just to set trends but also to exist beyond the law.

Zheng’s position in the debate about whether opium was harmful to Chinese society is sometimes unclear. The volume explains that most Chinese who used the drug did so without harm, but refers nonetheless
to “the disaster that was opium” or to opium as a raging wildfire (54, 114). Although Zheng rightfully points out the fallacy of assuming that all opium smokers were inveterate addicts, she then labels 70 percent of a particular troop of Chinese soldiers “invalids” due to their smoking (91). Zheng also frequently and inexplicably refers to opium consumers as an “army,” inadvertently implying that they constituted some sort of organized, militant group.

Despite some inconsistencies, Zheng proposes compelling answers to some of the most intriguing questions concerning Chinese opium consumption, and her use of anthropological commodity theory greatly enhances that analysis. Zheng has done an admirable job of opening up a new avenue of inquiry into a complex topic.

Joyce A. Madancy
Union College

The Sea of Learning: Mobility and Identity in Nineteenth-Century Guangzhou. By Steven B. Miles (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Asia Center, 2006) 450 pp. $49.95

In 1817, a Cantonese scholar named Liang Xuyong, in Beijing to sit for the imperial civil service examination, was chagrined to overhear other students from the ultrarefined Yangzi delta ridiculing the intellectual life of his native place. A century later, however, another Cantonese named Liang (Liang Qichao) could dismiss other provinces as having produced “no scholars of note,” in sharp contrast to the glorious scholarly tradition of his own. The Sea of Learning is the story of how Canton determinedly transformed itself during the nineteenth century from an intellectual backwater into one of the Qing empire’s most important centers of classical learning.

This book is deeply sinological, and not especially interdisciplinary. Long sections are devoted to detailed histories of fairly obscure texts, and of the lineages and careers of relatively minor scholars. It is a history of an institution, the Sea of Learning Academy (Xuehaitang), that every practicing historian of late imperial China has known to be important but that until now has lacked full-length study in English. The book is marvelously researched, drawing upon not only the full gamut of published sources but also, fruitfully, a manuscript diary of one key actor in the story. It is also impressively organized, and sophisticatedly and convincingly argued.

Miles sees the history of the Xuehaitang, above all, as a contest for control of local cultural production. Established in the 1820s by the eminent scholar-official Ruan Yuan (1764–1849), the academy became a renowned center for the sophisticated textual philology (kaozheng) of the ascendant “Han learning” school, for which Ruan and his hyperelite native place, the Lower Yangzi city of Yangzhou, were already nationally
famous. Like its imported scholarly curriculum, the new academy’s constituency comprised mostly new arrivals, highly urbanized sojourners whose financial base lay in commerce, official service, and urban landlordism. The area’s more long-established rural elite, whose wealth came from exploitation of the rich rice and fish-farming of the Canton delta, and whose scholarly tastes adhered to “Song learning” neo-Confucianism—emphasizing moral indoctrination, ritual correctness, and the pursuit of personal sagehood—had little use for the novel evidential research of the Xuehaitang. Ironically, however, because “Han learning” took as one of its central tasks the conscientious study of local history through archival investigation and fieldwork, the arrivistes of the urban academy, rather than the pedigreed local elite, eventually defined for contemporaries and posterity what being a “Cantonese scholar” meant. In effect, Ruan’s followers expropriated Cantonese identity from those who had exemplified it for centuries.

Despite all of this detailed analysis, however, a remarkable amount seems to be missing from this book. Miles shows, for example, that Canton’s “maritime” merchants were major patrons of the Xuehaitang and participants in its debates, but he has little to say about the specific trade in which they were engaged—with Southeast Asia? With the West? and how this experience shaped their intellectual outlook.

More importantly, the era of the 1820s and 1830s, that of the Xuehaitang’s rise to prominence, was one of intense crisis for the Qing Empire, administratively, diplomatically, and economically. Most of the leading literati of this generation, including Ruan Yuan, were intensely conscious of the problems, offering compelling ideas about how to address them. Nonetheless, Miles offers virtually no hint of what those at Xuehaitang thought about the empire’s increasingly desperate plight. Even in his chapter on “Crisis and Reconstruction, 1830–1870,” covering the era in which the Canton delta lay at the epicenter of two foreign wars and a major domestic rebellion, Miles concentrates narrowly on how the academy staff reconstituted its local cultural leadership and rebuilt its premises. The book, in fact, reveals little of the intellectual content of the Xuehaitang’s debates. Can it really be that the academy stood simply for “learning” without “thought”?

William T. Rowe
Johns Hopkins University


Given the growing integration of economies and societies around the world, many scholars have turned their attention to the meaning and implications of globalization. What are the driving forces? Who are the
agents? What are the consequences? According to Cochran, a key question that emerges in the debate is whether Western-based transnational corporations have been homogenizing the world’s cultures or whether individual consumers in local cultures have been diversifying the world’s cultures (2). Despite their differences, scholars on all sides of the debate have assumed that “Western-based corporations have been the sole initiators of the spread of consumer culture and that they have invariably introduced it from the West into non-Western markets” (3–4).

Adopting the case-study method, Cochran makes extensive use of Chinese-language archival materials concerning five Chinese medicine firms that developed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He contributes significantly to this debate by demonstrating that the widely held assumption of Western-based corporations and consumers residing in non-Western local cultures as the exclusive agents of consumer culture is invalid. Instead, Chinese-owned businesses in China and Southeast Asia also served as agents of consumer culture. In the case of Tongren Tang, China’s most famous traditional medicine store, the owners widely distributed traditional Chinese medicines in the nineteenth century and introduced a nationwide network of new branch stores in the twentieth century. In the cases of Huang Chujiu (known as the “King of Advertising” in early twentieth-century China) and the Great Five Continents Drugstores, the Chinese owners made use of new print media to advertise nationwide and to control nationwide distribution through locally owned franchises as well as their own branch stores.

Even during the decade of the Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945), when Japan occupied parts of China and Southeast Asia, Chinese owners of Western-style drugstores built up businesses that not only survived but grew spectacularly both in China and Southeast Asia by integrating research and development and by using a variety of print media, such as popular magazines and newspapers, for advertising. In all of these cases, Cochran shows, “Chinese-owned businesses . . . also imposed capitalist institutions and reached from the top down in ways somewhat different from those employed by Western-owned businesses” (156). Moreover, Chinese-owned businesses played key roles in mediating the spread of consumer culture. They appropriated “Western” ideas, images, forms, and discourses from other Chinese and aggressively popularized them at all levels of China’s urban hierarchy.

Cochran’s fine study also sheds light on how Chinese entrepreneurs transformed their businesses into large national and transnational corporations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although confined to firms engaged in the manufacturing and marketing of medicine, the cases show that Chinese entrepreneurs not only relied on social networks; they also undertook organizational innovations that contributed to the expansion of their businesses. These innovations included the introduction of chain stores, the creation of advertising departments, the construction of laboratories for research and development, and the founding of newspapers for advertising purposes.
In short, Cochran’s book points to the necessity of critically examining our assumptions, which could potentially determine the fate of our intellectual journey even before we embark on it. It is essential reading for scholars of consumer culture, globalization, as well as Chinese business history.

Morris L. Bian
Auburn University

*Clan Politics and Regime Transition in Central Asia.* By Kathleen Collins (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2006) 376 pp. $90.00

The content of this work justifies its ambitious title. Collins analyzes both clan politics and regime transition in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, asserting that clans have become significant political forces in these newly independent states. A “clan pact” provided initial legitimacy and stability in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan after independence (1991), and the absence of such a pact led to instability and civil war in Tajikistan. In detailing the political changes of the 1990s, Collins argues that multiple factors led to authoritarian regimes, rather than democratization. But due to clan activities, such as domination of sectors of the economy and asset stripping, none of these regimes is strongly consolidated. Collins situates her argument that clan politics can be empirically analyzed, and must be evaluated as causal elements in regime trajectories, within broader literature on democratization. The chapters discussing the post-1990 period should be welcomed by all scholars of contemporary Central Asia for their detailed and comparative description of the politics of independence in these three republics.

Research methods combine questions raised by political science with what Collins calls “ethnographic methods,” meaning hundreds of interviews with people on the village and elite levels. She bases her approach to “clan” on a thorough reading of the Russian and Soviet ethnographic scholarship on Central Asia. Several historical chapters address the Soviet-period role of clans—providing access to scarce goods—and also the official suppression of clans.

Collins makes the case for the political significance of clan most convincingly regarding Kyrgyzstan, in part because the more open political climate there permitted much better access to information at all levels than in Uzbekistan or Tajikistan. In addition, Kyrgyz clans are large networks that claim a particular shared ancestry in a long tradition of nomadism; they were settled under the Soviets. Collins can name Kyrgyz clans and describe their actions.

Collins’ definition of “clan” in Uzbek and Tajik politics is less cohesive, ranging from regional network to village kinship network, though Collins argues, rather unpersuasively, that local lineage groups and regional power blocs can both be assumed under the word “clan.”
The question arises whether a regional relationship of patronage and reciprocity might mobilize different resources and have different social consequences than relationships based on patronage tied to kinship—a point raised by Schatz in his study of clan politics in Kazakhstan.¹ In particular, Collins uses the term “trust” to describe network solidarity, but she does not interrogate what “trust” means in kinship networks as opposed to local or regional networks. However, for both Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, Collins makes clear that networks of patronage undermine institutional consolidation and create weak autocracy.

Avoiding Orientalist essentialism about clan-based societies, Collins presents the instability of clans, their tendencies to divide, and their changing roles vis-à-vis the state. Collins’ systematic comparisons among the three republics, with brief references to Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and other states, demonstrate that although clans shape politics in Central Asia, analysis of clan roles allows no simple prediction of political trajectories.

Marianne Kamp
University of Wyoming

A Hundred Horizons: The Indian Ocean in the Age of Global Empire. By Sugata Bose (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2006) 333 pp. $27.95

This book of unusual breadth and ambition provides a panoramic view of a diverse range of connections (economic, political, and cultural) that tied together various societies around the Indian Ocean littoral, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Bose correctly points out that much of the pre-existing scholarship about the Indian Ocean focused on the pre-nineteenth-century period, gave exclusive emphasis to networks of maritime trade, and suggested that the advent of European dominance spelled the ultimate termination of these connections. Bose convincingly dispels these notions by demonstrating that the networks connecting Indian Ocean societies were re-ordered and re-adjusted during the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, flourishing both within and without the attention of the colonial empires entrenched in South Asia, Southeast Asia, East Africa, and the Middle East at the time.

The introductory chapter sets out the principal conceptual and historiographical parameters of the book, and Chapters 2 through 7 describe the kaleidoscope of activities that linked together various parts of the Indian Ocean world: the trading and banking activities of Indian entrepreneurs in Burma, Malaya, East Africa, and the Persian Gulf; flows of Indian indentured labor and Indian soldiers to various destinations across

¹ Edward Schatz, Modern Clan Politics: The Power of “Blood” in Kazakhstan and Beyond (Seattle, 2004).
the Indian Ocean and beyond; travels of “expatriate patriots,” such as Mohandas K. Gandhi and Subhas Chandra Bose; and pilgrimages, religious as well as cultural, to various destinations.

The core ideas in this work involve, first, drawing attention to the Indian Ocean world as an example of what Bose describes as an “interregional arena”—a sphere positioned between the local and the global. The author argues that this interregional arena retained its validity as a unit of study even in an era of globalization. The second core idea, and the most powerful, draws attention to the fact that the territorially delimited nation-state may not necessarily be the most relevant or appropriate entity for a better and more comprehensive understanding of nationalist identity and imagination. Bose seeks to show how Indian soldiers serving overseas, or Indian labor serving in the mines and plantations outside India, imagined and perceived an Indian homeland. Particularly interesting is the discussion of how the two iconic figures of Indian nationalism, Gandhi and Bose, during their stays in South Africa and Southeast Asia, respectively, derived valuable lessons about how to accommodate “internal” differences of caste, religion, class, etc. within anticolonial, nationalist movements.

The author thus challenges the primacy given to the territorial nation-state in existing literature on nationalism, arguing strongly for “forms of patriotism that celebrated memorialized homelands [and] were expendable and transportable by migrant communities” (51). The ultimate point of the book, however, is its celebration of “universalism.” The travels of Khwaja Hasan Nizami, an Indian Muslim, to the Hajj and other Muslim holy places illustrates his affiliation to an Islamic universalism. The description of the travel experiences of the Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore to Bali and Iran illuminate a universalism based on shared historical connections and a common cultural heritage.

Although the breadth of this study constitutes its strength, it also is unable to give every issue its due. A preeminent example is this concept of universalism, which deserves a more substantive and critical discussion.

Kumkum Chatterjee
Pennsylvania State University
the British annexation of their Punjabi homeland in 1849, contending and shifting historical narratives created by both Sikhs and British colonial officials have shaped and defined various Sikh identities. The British Empire deployed Sikh soldiers, police, and laborers in other parts of Asia and Africa, where many established new homes. After the 1947 partition of west and east Punjab into Pakistan and India, respectively, many more Sikhs settled abroad, mainly in Britain and North America. These new communities have used innovative historical narratives, as well as musical and other art forms, in shifting ways to express their reconstituted identities for both themselves and their host societies. Ballantyne insightfully “reads” these diverse representations to explain convincingly the changing dynamics of these various contending assertions of Sikh identity during the past 150 years.

In a valuable survey, Ballantyne characterizes five dominant approaches to Sikh historiography. Scholars and reformers have often used a range of “internalist” approaches to envision and reshape the Sikh tradition in its own terms. A “Khalsacentric” approach rejects both allegedly Western scholarly disciplines and also dialogue with other religious traditions, drawing much support from Sikh communities in North America. In contrast, “regional approaches” consider the Punjab as the context in which Sikhism developed over time via contact with other groups and movements there. Postcolonial and other scholars have adopted “externalist” approaches that stress colonial discourses about the colonized Sikhs and the construction of masculine Sikhs as a premier “martial race.” Finally, “diasporic approaches” (including Brian Axel, *The Nation’s Tortured Body: Violence, Representation, and the Formation of a Sikh ‘Diaspora’* [Durham, N.C., 2001]) contend that the transnational Sikh community has created powerful representations of martyrdom as constituting the Sikh past. Ballantyne reflects thoughtfully on each of these approaches and advances his own argument for the “recognition of the cultural exchanges and hybridized social patterns borne out of the inequalities of colonialism and the upheavals of migration” (33).

Demonstrating the analytic power of his own methodology, Ballantyne draws upon many kinds of sources through three case studies. First, he reconsiders the larger history of the Sikhs in both the Punjab and the British Empire, showing the simultaneous consequences of imperialism and mobility. Next, he deconstructs the crucial example of the memories and images about deposed Maharaja Dalip Singh (1838–1893) found among Sikh and other British people in Britain. He ends with a fascinating history of the performance and meaning of bhangra music and dance over the past fifty years.

Combining mastery over the range of scholarly and activist writing about Sikh history and culture with creative incorporation of nontextual sources, Ballantyne shows the power of his interdisciplinary approach. He models how the understanding of identity gradually emerges as part of the “webs of empire” not only for Sikhs but for other communities as
well (30). Scholars of immigration and diaspora, of Sikh communities in India and abroad, and of the ways in which written and artistic sources can collaborate to elucidate social and cultural history will all find this book significant.

Michael H. Fisher
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