

## Reviews

*History and the Testimony of Language.* By Christopher Ehret (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2010) 274 pp. \$65.00 cloth \$29.95 paper

Ehret's book summarizes a method for the comparative analysis of language—primarily vocabulary and semantics but also phonology and morphology—as a source for writing the early history of Africa. With the exception of the opening chapter, the book rests in key ways on the author's earlier publications. Yet, each of the chapters has received a thorough revision and often a major expansion.

In addition to glossing Ehret's method, the book also offers several major historical conclusions. First, the Afrasian language family (to which the Semitic languages belong) took shape in Africa and has deep roots there. Second, in the last millennium B.C.E., Ethiosemitic languages spread into the Horn of Africa because their speakers held an advantage in production and exchange relations over their Eastern Cushitic hosts. Third, a now-extinct branch of Southern Cushitic was spoken in the highlands of southeastern Kenya until sometime within the last few centuries. Finally, American crops spread into East Africa much more slowly than they spread into West Africa, largely because ecological zones in East Africa run north to south, impeding spread, and not west to east, as they do in West Africa.

These findings represent a tiny slice of Ehret's massive oeuvre. He has done more than any other historian of Africa to classify Africa's current languages: detailing and documenting the history of phonological and morphological changes that support those classifications, locating the earlier communities of speakers from whom they descended, tracking the residue of lexical transfers that mark contact between entirely different and fairly similar groups, presenting hypotheses about the earlier phonological shapes and semantic loads of transferred and inherited lexical material, dating sequences of the formation and dissolution of those groups, and setting those sequences alongside others generated from archaeological and, occasionally, oral evidence. Historians might find the logic of the method irresistible but wonder about the particular kinds of narratives that it sustains.

Ehret's method delivers powerful results by generating chains of historical inferences about the timing, location, and material practices of food production that complement other such chains developed by archaeologists and environmental historians. Because the same rigor of analysis cannot be applied to oral tradition or ethnographic evidence, the sorts of issues central to those sources—ideology of all stripes, translational politics, etc.—evade his methodology. Yet, material culture and agriculture—even though their contents have enormous political moment—have fields of meaning amenable to Ehret's methodology largely because their material contents are familiar to us. We recognize a hoe when we see one. The translation of that meaning into another language as a third term of equivalence between the two realities (the Eng-

lish term *hoe* and the material object that the term signifies) seems clear. That clear equivalence does not include other meanings that the people who used the (reconstructed) translated term gave to hoes.

Ehret views the arbitrary relationship between sign and referent as constituting a tight bond: “Transformative change in a particular area of economy, customs, cultural knowledge, or material circumstances of life inevitably leads to fundamental changes in the vocabulary of those areas of life and livelihood” (51). The inevitability that Ehret finds stands in marked contrast to a lament by Feierman when writing about East Africa’s precolonial past: “It was difficult, however, to explain the fact that the forms of political action had changed drastically, while the words in which they were explained remained static.”<sup>1</sup> Competent speakers, in “following the rules yet creating new forms at the same time,” introduce incremental change in language just as interested historical actors do for their domain of creative tradition. Ethnographers and many historians find these figures in their sources. Because historian-linguists working with Ehret’s method cannot find such figures, they fall back on an ethereal capacity for change and continuity residing in the relationship between a “speech community” and the various forces that emanate from sociological categories like “the economy” or “material culture.”

This tendency, more than anything else, accounts for the difficulty of integrating the results of Ehret’s practice: The energies applied to techniques of phonological, tonal, morphological, and semantic analysis overpower the thinly sketched details and politics of translation that produce the meanings, and historians tend to value meaning more than method. Ehret wisely leaves aside the minutiae of linguistic analysis (see Chapter 8, however, for examples of seriating sound changes). But many skeptical historians, curious about the production of the meanings at the center of the historical knowledge being reconstructed, will find their efforts to pry open that black box frustrating.

These problems of translation can grow perilous in the attempt to reconstruct vocabulary for highly ideological semantic domains (which may include tangible and intangible contents) without close attention to the contexts in which the sources of those meanings were generated. The politics of producing the earliest dictionaries of African languages almost always involved the politics of mission Christianity, colonial anthropology, and state efforts at control or, later, uplift. It also involved what MacGaffey has called “dialogues of the deaf”—ethnographic conversations in which each party thinks it has understood the other, but neither has raised serious questions about the credibility of glossed material in certain sources.<sup>2</sup> Discovering what Africans meant by *religion* or

1 Steven Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals: Anthropology and History in Tanzania* (Madison, 1990), 10.

2 Wyatt MacGaffey, *Kongo Political Culture: The Conceptual Challenge of the Particular* (Bloomington, 2000), 30.

what aspirations *matrilineality* or *patrilineality* served, before a set of vocabulary became translations of those English terms, requires painstaking work in the earliest documentary material available for a given region. Ehret's valuable book does not take up such matters of source criticism.

The ideological (rather than the positivist) purposes of a semantics of kinship contained in the reconstructed "kinship systems" producible by this method are not discussed.<sup>3</sup> Kinship *organization* may be *out there*—*patrilineality* or *matrilineality* may be inferred from particular patterns of kin terms—but the extent to which it can actually take shape depends on the nature of the strategy employed to create matrilineages or patrilineages.<sup>4</sup> The reality of kinship does not flow from the coherence that a scholar discovers in the logic of paired and opposed categories of kin identification. Interested action, contingent choice, reversal of fortune, and polysemous language games that generate semantic pluralisms, these domains attract the average guild historian far more than the elegance of mutually constitutive language categories, such as those expressed in "kinship systems" (66–68). It may be true that "different terminological systems go with different kinds of social histories and social relations among peoples" (66), but the language evidence available to test that claim does not seem up to the task. A strategic approach other than simply counting an attestation as a document is necessary given the historical power relations—involving African statecraft, forms of social inequality, imperial conquest, etc.—in the field of meaning that a historian studies.

Despite these strengths and weaknesses, the sort of evidence that the book treats is likely to remain a dominant source for writing about times and places without documentary sources (even if much of the evidence supporting inferences about earlier forms comes from documentary sources). It will be irresistible to those of us who want to write that history.<sup>5</sup> But scholars will need to look elsewhere for a guide to the politics of making meaning in particular historical settings. As a guide to a principled analysis of atomized words and meanings, capable of assembling them into taxonomies, in the service of exploring historical change and continuity within the realms of meaning signified by words alone, the book is the most important treatise to appear since Edward Sapir published *Time Perspective in Aboriginal American Culture History: A Study in Method* (Ottawa, 1916).

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3 *Idem*, "Changing Representations in Central African History," *Journal of African History*, XLVI (2005), 189–207.

4 Isidore Dyen and David F. Aberle, *Lexical Reconstruction: The Case of the Proto-Athapaskan Kinship System* (New York, 1974), 71–73.

5 Ehret was this reviewer's supervisor at the University of California, Los Angeles.

*Heaven on Earth: The Varieties of the Millennial Experience.* By Richard Landes (New York, Oxford University Press, 2011) 499 pp. \$35.00

Landes contends that “secular” historians have often failed to account for millennial prophecies and millennialist movements, mainly because they are ill at ease with religious movements. That is, they have often walked away from such movements or failed to understand them, thus undervaluing the drama of their ordinarily turbulent, if not catastrophic, consequences.

Methodologically he supports his thesis with a conventional narrative history comprising ten movements or episodes. He is at heart a storyteller who cannot resist breaking up his larger narrative with brief asides that are usually humorous or satirical. Yet he cannot be content merely to rely on narratives, since he has a grand interpretive scheme in mind that involves many different kinds of evidence. He has to be at home with “intellectual” history, because the millennial prophets on whom he focuses are given to extravagant—many would say “weird”—ideas that he must probe and then connect to form a coherent plot. Call what he does “cultural” history, because he deals with assemblages of behavior fused with ideas, the proper subject of cultural studies. He also needs and favors the methods of “theological” history, which resemble the “philosophical” ones, except in subject matter.

To be precise, one would have to say this book is a multi-methodological history, or, in exasperated moments of reading, that it is a study devoid of method, just a set of engrossing ideas culled from Landes’ reading in idiosyncratic stories. Landes leaps from one subject to another with a style that a cynical reviewer might expect from someone with attention deficit disorder. Nonetheless, it would not be fair to damn the book with faint praise, because the research is vast and deep, discovering meanings that one might have overlooked, had one not the impulse to upset convention.

Landes puts many academic historians in their place—his chosen place for them!—in the early pages of the book. He has an irritating habit of labeling; trying to remember all of the linguistic cubby-holes into which he slots phenomena can be exhausting. His labels are often privately devised and applied, catalogued with terms that can be distracting. Get used to “semiotic” this and “demotic” that. Sometimes he even produces charts to help readers through the thicket.

All is forgiven, however, when Landes connects perceptive and revelatory stories that otherwise might seem impossible to connect: for example, Xhosa cattle slaying in modern Africa and Pharaoh Akhenaten’s monotheistic culture or the French Revolution, Marxism, Bolshevism, Nazism, UFO cults, and, strangely, though not implausibly, today’s global Jihadism. On balance, *Heaven* is a work of enormous erudition and an impartor of knowledge and insight, capable of arousing curiosity, if not much of anything semiotic among those of us who are more staid and prosaic readers.

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*The Arc of War: Origins, Escalation, and Transformation.* By Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2011) 280 pp. \$27.00

*The Arc of War* is a provocative effort to determine how warfare has evolved through history. Levy and Thompson postulate six variables or “spheres”—military events, the organization of the armed forces, political economy, weapons technology, and the threat environment—within which changes have altered the conduct of warfare. Rejecting the monocausal interpretations of earlier scholars, they provide a valuable analysis of “coevolution,” in which even a slight change in one sphere elicits radical changes in others.

This ambitious book spans several millennia and several continents, beginning with Sargon of Akkad and ending with a discussion about the implications of the information revolution. The authors provide numerous tables and graphs that condense their arguments and data into an easily readable format. Both in the bibliography and the text they demonstrate familiarity with much of the current literature about the evolution of warfare, clearly distinguishing the points at which they agree or disagree with other authors. The book attempts to accomplish a great deal, and it largely succeeds.

Given the wide breadth of Levy and Thompson’s project and the precision of their writing, any critique may appear little more than quibbling. The following comments are intended less as a challenge to the authors’ thesis than to promote further discussion. The authors have a bias toward scientific and rational explanations for warfare’s evolution, whereas much recent military history emphasizes the impact of military culture and doctrinal concepts. The authors also tend to accept that revolutions in military affairs (RMAs) completely replace previous military systems, though to their great credit they have clearly read more skeptical analyses. But they cannot escape the basic methodological problem that most students of RMAs are not only predisposed to find them but also to interpret the impact of past RMAs largely through the prism of their supposed relevance to current military policy.

Nor is this tendency toward applicatory scholarship restricted to the past. For example, the authors appear to accept the claim that an “information revolution” is transforming warfare today, maintaining that the revolution’s effect was “proven beyond doubt in the performance of the American military in Iraq in spring 2003” (135). But central to the justification of the information revolution apart from the war in Iraq were the doctrinal concepts—network-centric warfare, effects-based operations, and full-spectrum dominance—that purportedly allowed a transformed army to win quickly, cheaply, and decisively. Only the most extreme apologists would claim that events in Iraq since 2004 have proven the worth of either the technology or the concepts of the information revolution.

Levy and Thompson’s provocative and stimulating study of the

evolution of warfare deserves wide reading by both the scholarly and policymaking community. Their theoretical model is clearly articulated, well researched, and certainly useful to scholars in a variety of disciplines. In particular, the authors' analysis of the evolutionary and co-evolutionary processes will inform future investigation into both the nature of RMA and their impact on military policy.

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*The Unintended Reformation: How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society.*  
By Brad S. Gregory (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2012)  
574 pp. \$39.95

Well-known to early modernists for his brilliant cross-confessional exploration of sixteenth-century martyrdom in *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, Mass., 1999), Gregory paints on an even larger canvas in the book under review, attempting to write a *longue-durée* account of the intellectual and social effects of Protestantism from Luther to present-day America. His title reflects his conviction that the most profound effects of the Reformation have been completely unintended. Gregory reminds his readers that Protestantism has persisted in multiple forms for almost five centuries, overwhelmingly under close state supervision, without ever coming close to achieving its original mission of supplanting papal Christianity with Biblical Christianity. He instead sees Protestantism as complicit in the relentless advance of secularism among modern Western intellectuals.

With eloquence and vehemence, Gregory champions the “seven percenters,” the share of registered American scientists in the 1990s who professed belief in a personal God (26–28), against what he considers the philosophical and ethical vacuity of the other 93 percent. Replete with italics, heavily ironic phrases, multiple quotation marks, and unconventional capitalizations (one wonders if the publisher vetoed exclamation points), he ultimately targets the current American-centered “Kingdom of Whatever,” in which discussion about essential Life Questions reduces to a lowest-common-denominator consensus that the author calls the “goods life”—autonomous individuals endlessly acquiring ever-better stuff through free-market capitalism (378, 379).

No less polemical in its own way than Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet's *Histoire des variations des églises protestantes* (Paris, 1688), this book seems equally unlikely to persuade the uncommitted. Some major difference makers (for example, Voltaire, Charles Darwin, or Karl Marx) in the conventional “triumph-of-secularism-over-religion” narrative that Gregory calls “supercessionism” seem grotesquely shrunken. Moreover, Gregory's so-called “genealogical” arrangement requires him to

describe both the original intentions and then the long-term inadvertent effects of the sixteenth-century Reformation in multiple contexts, making both key arguments and prominent targets reappear in different chapters (Chapters 3 to 5). The net effect on readers resembles that from viewing the Akira Kurosawa film *Rashomon* (1950), telling a story from multiple, if not contradictory, perspectives.

Interdisciplinary history is one thing; polydisciplinary history is another. This unusually ambitious enterprise fits the latter category; it “endeavours to analyze across half a millennium human realities that at first sight seem to have nothing to do with one another, such as conceptions of God, practices of consumption, and the character of universities” (21). Which disciplines does it privilege? At the outset, Gregory acknowledges his principal debts to an economist, a philosopher, and a historian of science (5). But the index provides five references to one of them and another gets only three, whereas Alasdair MacIntyre, his emeritus Notre Dame colleague whose endorsement appears on the book’s dust jacket, fills nine lines. Gregory admits that “to seek comprehensiveness would militate against comprehension” (123), and the most important disciplinary intersection truly plumbed in this book is where academic philosophy (MacIntyre’s department) encounters the history of Christianity (a subdivision of Gregory’s department). The scholarship is eclectic; for example, Chapter 5 offers a curious mixture of the now-antique “Weber thesis,” originating in the *Kulturkampf* of Wilhelmine Germany, with a recent wave of retrospective studies of the pre- and proto-history of contemporary consumerism.<sup>1</sup>

Gregory’s first chapter outlines his basic thesis that the Reformation era produced “the unintended self-marginalization of theology through doctrinal controversy” (28). Despite the wide spread of unbelief over the last 160 years, Gregory insists that its intellectual bases remain what they were long before Luther: “Nothing *conceptually* original, including Darwinian evolution, has been added for many centuries” (64, his italics). Metaphysical univocity—the assumption that all things are ultimately commensurate with our human experience—plus Ockham’s razor—the argument that entities must not be created without sufficient cause—still undergird present-day denials of a wholly transcendent Christian (or Jewish, or Muslim) deity. “If real, a transcendent God is by definition not subject to empirical discovery or disproof” (33, 458, n. 152).

On his long march, Gregory takes no prisoners, either among the rationally defenseless or the intellectually pretentious. Among the former, he memorably asserts, “Christianity in the United States remains superficially strong by comparison with western Europe, but it is a mile wide and an inch deep” (175). He updates Bossuet with a rogues’ gallery of charismatic Protestant sectarian leaders that leaps across the Enlighten-

1 See Max Weber (trans. Talcott Parsons), *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York, 2001; orig. pub. in German, 1904–1905).

ment from George Fox's Quakers to Joseph Smith's Latter-Day Saints before spiraling down to such recent epiphenomena as Jim Jones and David Koresh (103–104). A twist of the knife is reserved for the mantra of America's current Protestant President: "Modern Christians have in effect been engaged in a centuries-long attempt to prove Jesus wrong. 'You cannot serve God and Mammon.' *Yes we can*" (288, his italics). A discussion of present-day ethics generates another memorable tirade: "Whatever the particular country in which they happen to live, all Westerners now live in the Kingdom of Whatever" (112). I lost count of how many times "whatever" appears in his text, including once as an entire sentence,

The arrogant fare no better. Gregory sees Michel Foucault's recent multidisciplinary popularity in academia as a consequence of the end of the Soviet Union (127, 175), and he dismisses the postmodernist "linguistic turn": "Discourse is one thing and concrete human realities are another" (198). He skewers Jonathan Israel for his "triumphalist, Spinoza-centric histories of the Enlightenment" and (after quoting him approvingly) because "there was and is no logical connection between historicism and naturalism" (53, 227, 413, n. 116).

Gregory's most impressive chapter, "Subjectivizing Morality," connects a politically subordinated Christianity to a secularized morality, the "displacement of a substantive ethics of the good by a formal ethics of rights" (211, repeating an argument on 179). Noting that men representing ten different religious groups (including deists) attended the Continental Congress, he observes that they "were *not* divided among themselves—nor, for that matter, with Jews—about the belief that human beings were created by God in his image and likeness" (213–214). However, "*What they could not have foreseen was what would happen to an ethics of rights when large numbers of people came to reject the shared beliefs that made it intellectually viable and socially workable*" (218, his italics).

Gregory's Achilles' heel appears in a final chapter on secularization in research universities, where the mote in Protestant eyes appears more clearly than the beam in Catholic eyes. He cannot omit glancing at Galileo's fate in 1633 and regretting its "centuries-long fallout" (46), but his most important acknowledgments of Galileo's importance lie deeply buried in two footnotes (402, n. 34, 406, n. 54). Ironically, Wikipedia tells us that Belgium's famous Catholic University of Louvain, where Gregory earned two degrees in the 1980s, has dropped the word "Catholic" from its official title, although stipulating that "in an international context, the name may also be complemented when necessary or desired with the appended name 'Catholic University of Leuven,' depending on the context or target group." Given his philosophical stance, Gregory might now want to rename his alma mater the Univocity of Leuven.

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*HISCLASS: A Historical International Social Class Scheme*. By Marco H. D. Van Leeuwen and Ineke Maas (Leuven, Leuven University Press, 2011) 184 pp. \$49.00

“For the sake of comparability, it is advisable not to develop new class schemes but to use existing ones” (11). Such is the opening of this technical book, which, contrary to the authors’ stated preference, presents, of all things, a newly developed class scheme called HISCLASS. Why do Van Leeuwen and Maas appear to contradict themselves so blatantly? They felt the need to develop a class scheme that facilitates comparative historical study of social stratification and mobility across both space and time in the Western world. Existing historical class schemes are local, national, or *sui generis*. Whereas the local/national ones do not allow comparative studies, the third option is a black box of intuitions often difficult to understand. The strength of this book lies in presenting the empirical and theoretical challenges faced by the authors in developing a systematic procedure to translate occupational titles found in historical sources into a universal historical class scheme.

Following the pioneering work of Bouchard and others, Van Leeuwen and Maas considered occupations the building blocks for a social-class scheme, employing the common core of four underlying dimensions—manual/nonmanual work, skill level, supervision, and economic sector.<sup>1</sup> These dimensions allow for a quantifiable construction of a social scheme applicable to many countries and to long periods. In a previous book, Van Leeuwen, Maas, and Miles presented a classification of occupations—HISCO—that accommodates the organization of historical job descriptions into 1,675 occupational groups.<sup>2</sup> HISCO is one of the pillars and the *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* (DOT), which provides detailed job information, is the other on which HISCLASS stands.<sup>3</sup> The creation of HISCLASS required two further elements, which the authors describe in detail—(1) a crosswalk from DOT to HISCO to link employment information to occupational groups and (2) a ranking of these occupational groups into a class scheme according to the four underlying dimensions using information from DOT.

The bridging between HISCO and DOT proved to be unproblematical for nearly half of the occupational groups; the remaining groups needed rules to enable the bridging (45). One weakness in HISCLASS concerns the information used from the 1965 DOT, which is based primarily on information collected after World War II. Since HISCO was especially

1 Gérard Bouchard, *Tous les métiers du monde: Le traitement des données professionnelles en histoire sociale* (Saint-Nicolas, 1996).

2 Van Leeuwen, Maas, and Andrew Miles, *HISCO: Historical International Standard Classification of Occupations* (Leuven, 2002).

3 U.S. Department of Labor, *The Dictionary of Occupational Titles* (Washington, D.C., 1965), 2 v.

developed to classify job titles in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the use of these employment characteristics could result in blurred historical ranking. But (collected) historical information about occupations is scarce or selective, anyway; DOT was not initiated until 1934. This bridging may well make HISCLASS invaluable to contemporary historical research.

Finally, the categorization of HISCO groups according to the four dimensions and their ranking into HISCLASS has been subjected to a validity test by a small group of historians with a “working knowledge of the world of work” in different countries (61). These experts were given a selection of occupational groups to evaluate—“difficult cases” or those deemed particularly significant because of how often they were reported (62). Validation of these selected cases might have removed the worst flaws (76), but a random selection of occupational groups might have been a better overall test of HISCLASS by revealing “hidden” difficulties. Whereas a majority of the experts supported 90 percent or more of the scoring on supervision, manual/nonmanual labor, and economic sector, just two-third of the scores for skill level were supported by the experts (62–72). This disappointing outcome for skill level might be due to inevitable limitations in this dimension, as the authors suggest, but it might also be caused by use of post–World War II occupational information.

When asked to place the occupational groups directly into social classes by intuition, the majority of the experts agreed on the class that the authors proposed using DOT in 57 percent of the cases (72). To some, this outcome might support the use of systematic construction over classifications made by intuition, but others might argue that following systematic procedures does not result in a convincing class scheme. The authors chose to change their classification for occupational groups when a majority of the experts favored another class; in total, fifty-nine occupational groups were changed (74). The exposition of the changes proposed by the experts in the appendix is especially helpful with regard to minorities or other groups that appear to be over-represented in a particular occupational category.

Notwithstanding these observations, HISCLASS is an important tool that will make a significant contribution to historical stratification and mobility research in the fields of social and economic history, historical sociology, and historical demography. The book’s documentation of HISCLASS’ construction, which permits identification of the scheme’s weaknesses and strengths, together with the actual experiences of HISCLASS users, may well lead to the improvement of this research tool in the future.

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*Miss Cutler and the Case of the Resurrected Horse: Social Work and the Story of Poverty in America, Australia, and Britain.* By Mark Peel (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2012) 44 pp. \$49.00

Investigate, diagnose, advise, and monitor—these activities formed the core of one of the most effective social technologies of modern states, the casework method that developed out of charity organization work. A rich literature in social history has documented the consistent tendency of social work to presume and reinforce distinctions of class, gender, race, and religion, thereby strengthening lines of inequality at the same time that social workers sought to rescue and rehabilitate the poor. In his comparative study of social work with the poor in Australia, Britain, and America, however, Peel looks beyond this robust pattern in order to document telling differences in the stories that social workers have told about the poor. *Miss Cutler and the Case of the Resurrected Horse* traces variations across countries, between male and female social workers, and throughout the eventful time of the early twentieth century, Great Depression, and World War II.

Peel's distinctive contribution is to engage social work case files as literary texts, as both objects of critical analysis and evidence of the everyday narratives by which the social workers who wrote them organized their practice. The book's title underscores the central insight. The files in Melbourne reveal case workers who understood themselves as doing a kind of detective work, looking for clues that would distinguish those who deserved and would benefit from assistance from the dissemblers, frauds, and incorrigibles. Reading deeply in selected files from five cities, Peel identifies characteristic ways of "dramatizing" poverty and its possible remedies: a distanced sense of the poor as categorically different in London, a potentially hopeful focus on Americanization as transformative in Boston, an emphasis on "wise planning" as the path to prosperity in Minneapolis, and fears of racial decline and decay in Portland, Oregon.

Each of these characteristic narratives was subject to modification with the flow of events. Across different locales, the experience of the Great Depression led social workers to express a greater emphasis on events and environment rather than individual character as sources of poverty. In London, where the economic effects of the Depression were relatively muted, this shift in emphasis was produced later, as prosperous and poor alike experienced sudden devastation during the Blitz and the rocket bombing of the city. Ironically, this greater openness to structural or environmental causes of poverty was often accompanied by a loss of faith in the transformative power of case work itself. If the poor were no longer held consistently responsible for their own poverty, they were also less likely to be approached with a diagnosis linked to economic recovery and social uplift.

*Miss Cutler and the Case of the Resurrected Horse* also advances its own textual innovations. Ever attentive to the places where the voices and

strategies of the poor emerge within the files, Peel creatively reconstructs a handful of cases, grounding his reconstruction of the extended interactions of clients and social workers in a deep reading of this sample from the archive. Carefully set off from the analytical chapter and richly supported by case materials, these “docu-dramatic” interludes effectively open a conversation about that which is “read into” versus “read in” the archived files. Most importantly, they remind readers about the importance, and the proper methods, of recovering evidence about those who were disadvantaged in files compiled by those with greater authority.

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*The Poverty of Clio: Resurrecting Economic History.* By Francesco Boldizzoni (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2011) 216 pp. \$39.50

The explicit use of modern economic theory, combined with the application of relatively sophisticated statistical techniques, to large, quantitative historical datasets dates to the late 1950s and, arguably, came into its own with the slavery debates of the 1970s. Cliometrics, as the approach is now known, is currently the predominant approach to economic history. It is not without its critics. Redlich criticized cliometrics for, among other features, inferring modern motives from historical data.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Cippola, while a proponent of the use of economic theory, was skeptical of econometrics. He believed little could be learned from regressions and considered the enterprise epistemologically empty.<sup>2</sup> Boldizzoni’s critique extends these two criticisms and offers an alternative vision of economic history.

Boldizzoni identifies three distinct approaches to economic history (138). The first follows from the vision of history as part of the humanities and provides narrative descriptions of economic actors and their acts. The second is the modern cliometric approach, which, the author contends, is more concerned with demonstrating the universality of neo-liberal economic theory than in understanding the peculiarities of historical epochs and distant places. The third, and the one favored by Boldizzoni, is built on the French *Annales* tradition. Instead of using economics to inform our knowledge of history, economic historians should be using history to construct a more meaningful economics that recognizes and embraces specific issues and avoids unwarranted over-generalizations. Economic history’s task is to identify and account for differences as well as uniformities across time and space. Historical economics, he contends, would be well served if it better recognized social phenomena—namely, institutions, cultures, and norms (but not in

1 Fritz Redlich, “‘New’ and Traditional Approaches to Economic History and Their Interdependence,” *Journal of Economic History*, XXV (1965), 480–495.

2 Carlo Cippola, *Between Two Cultures: An Introduction to Economic History* (New York, 1991).

North's conception, which is deemed too deeply infused with neoclassical economic theory to be useful).<sup>3</sup>

Cliometrics is certainly not above criticism; some of Boldizzoni's objections are well taken. But his critiques and his suggestions for a better economic history are often off the mark. His notion that modern economic theory consists of little more than figments of the "free imagination" of economists is odd, given his proposal that economic theory should emerge spontaneously from careful readings of unique historical narratives (139), which would seem to lead to more figments. Moreover, his belief that historians can look at raw data and offer meaningful interpretations without having a pre-existing worldview brings to mind Keynes' oft-repeated quote that "practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influence, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist."<sup>4</sup> At least cliometricians are honest. They put their theories on paper and hold them up to the harsh light of criticism. They do not bury them in postmodern prose.

Finally, it is hard to accept that Boldizzoni's sociologically based economic history would not fall prey to the same disciplinary sins that he levels at economists. In discussing money and coinage, for instance, he notes that the minted coin was a talisman that had "totemic" significance and "sacred" features (122). Moreover, what is one to make of an approach that would feature the idea of *habitus*, defined as "structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures" or "the systems of structural, structuring structures" (43)?

At the end of the day, cliometrics' greatest sin, at least in Boldizzoni's telling, is that it is not a sociological history of economic actors. But what prevents the two disciplines from coexisting and, in a better world, informing one another? That would constitute real progress.

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*States of Credit: Size, Power, and the Development of European Polities.* By David Stasavage (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2011) 192 pp. \$39.95

The growth of public debt in Latin Europe from 1250 to 1750 would have been impossible without double-entry bookkeeping—bifurcated journals that allowed merchants to unknot their welter of revenues and loans. Readers of Stasavage's book may, at times, find themselves empathizing with medieval bean counters; theoretical and empirical debts accumulate, numbers bedevil, and a few liabilities must be marked down. Yet the returns on Stasavage's central claim—that a polity's survival de-

3 Douglass C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (New York, 1990).

4 John Maynard Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (New York, 1935), 383.

pending not on the ferocity of its fighters but on the commitment of its creditors—make the readers' investment more than worthwhile. Unraveling familiar ties between state size and military success, Stasavage successfully places sovereign credit, and the representative bodies ensuring its smooth circulation, at the nexus of warfare, institution formation, and economic growth in early modern Europe. Although Stasavage concedes that war still made the state, he also shows that the state made war in hock.

Borrowing from the literature about corporate finance, Stasavage casts sovereigns in the role of cash-strapped executives. Premodern mergers and acquisitions (warfare/conflict) required decision makers (single monarchs or town oligarchies) to petition the holders of liquid capital (urban merchants). But canny lenders refused to part with their coin without guarantees of repayment. Stasavage convincingly argues that representative assemblies, by controlling taxation as well as spending decisions, allayed lenders' fears and kept specie flowing. Once established, however, spending and monitoring bodies suffered from ongoing costs; long-distance transportation to assemblies and the hiring of trustworthy provincial taxmen took their toll.

The central insight of Stasavage's study is that territorial expansion (often envisioned as the engine of state growth) invited a set of exogenous costs to the very institutions necessary for funding warfare. Bigger states, it would seem, did not make better ones. Instead, Stasavage shows how the myriad of independent cities and city-states in premodern Europe, "where assemblies could be convened by devices as simple as the ringing of the town bell and where the same merchants who purchased public debt also served as magistrates on town councils" (2), persisted in spite of their larger territorial neighbors' increased economies of scale.

Stasavage defends these findings through a mixed-methods approach. The first two-thirds of the book trace the credit rates and representative bodies of thirty-one European polities for five centuries. Stasavage uses this dataset to explore the early growth of city-state credit; to differentiate among representative bodies' various tasks; to isolate from potential competing variables the link between debt and representation; and, finally, to propose a political rather than economic explanation of city-state emergence, centered on the collapse of post-Carolingian Lotharingia. Telescoping these quantitative conclusions into two chapters of case studies split between city-states (Cologne, Genoa, and Siena) and their territorial opponents (France, Castile, and Holland) adds much-needed qualitative depth.

Specialists should set aside the typical criticism of Stasavage's sundry statistics or the choice of particular cases over others in favor of the overall picture. But two weaknesses in the book warrant some attention. The rigid division of territorial state from autonomous city makes coding cities with extensive landed (Florence) or overseas (Venice, Barcelona, and Genoa) acquisitions problematical. Did the institutions of territorial entities born from an urban past differ from those of their rural counter-

parts? In addition, this book can leave readers with something like the feeling of a tragedy lacking a third, closing act; most of the city-states, for all their grandeur, eventually fell under the direct or indirect control of their larger neighbors. Stasavage's claim of a shift from liquid to more secure wealth driving city-state failure should prove fruitful ground for future study. These minor reservations aside, Stasavage deserves credit. At a time when cultural studies are surging, this book injects materialist accounts of state formation with long-overdue intellectual capital.

Michael Martoccio  
Northwestern University

*Threads and Traces: True False Fictive*. By Carlo Ginzburg (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2012) 328 pp. \$29.95

The collected essays of a famous author are normally awkward to review; the essays are likely to be uneven in quality and length, either repetitious or unconnected. There is no such weakness in this case, even though Ginzburg's title, *Threads and Traces*, like his introduction, makes only the most modest of claims as to how well these fifteen chapters fit together. Yet in fact they do, from the first, in which the problem of *truth* and *reality* in historical writing is raised by noting that those two words are crowned with finger-wiggling quotation marks in American academic presentations. From that gentle provocation, the essay moves quickly to Polybius' remarks about truthfulness in Homer and then onward, in one short chapter, to the opinions of other Roman authors and to an account of seventeenth-century reflections on the difference between annals and histories. This surprising pace, intellectual range, and learned discourse is typical throughout the book.

Different as they are, subsequent chapters follow a similar pattern: Citation from a text leads to commentaries on that text, and then to consideration of other texts somehow related. With acrobatic erudition, Ginzburg leaps across centuries and languages, exploring hidden ties (threads or traces) across texts, ties that he uncovers by tracking shared references, similar concerns, personal friendships, or mere coincidence. The effect is like watching a skilled magician, although this one works with texts and is attentive to the precise meaning of individual words and is a stickler for exact dates.

The topics that launch these excursions do not (at least at first) appear related: The second chapter, about the conversion of Jews in fifth-century Minorca, is followed by one focused on Montaigne and then an introduction to Natalie Zemon Davis' *Return of Martin Guerre* (Cambridge, Mass., 1983). A chapter called "Tolerance and Commerce" starts with Voltaire's description of the London stock exchange and Voltaire's use of estrangement as a rhetorical device, which leads to criticism of Erich Auerbach's assessment of that passage in *Mimesis* (trans. Willard R.

Trask) (Princeton, 1953; orig. pub., in German, 1946). Then (after a reference to Spinoza) comes a rejection of the argument that Voltaire's is a technique comparable to Nazi propaganda, which was made in Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno (trans. Edmond Jephcott), *Dialectic of the Enlightenment* (Stanford, 2002; orig. pub., in German, Amsterdam, 1947).

The following chapter uses Eric Hobsbawm, Stendhal (Marie-Henri Beyle), and Lord Byron to lead into some historical detective work on fourteenth-century Venice. There follow a chapter about Stendhal's conception of history (built from a brilliant analysis of his novel, *The Red and the Black* [Paris, 1830]), then a chapter on the literary model for the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, and another about Holocaust denial that becomes a criticism of Hayden White. The chapter on microhistory (with a skeptical treatment of the *Annales* school) leads to the final one, a rather autobiographical essay about witches and shamans, in which Ginzburg records his surprise when it was pointed out to him that a Jew in the twentieth century might find resonance in the lives of distrusted outsiders during the Middle Ages (a reader will have noticed that the social lot of Jews is a recurring theme in these chapters).

Chapter headings, however, only begin to convey the richness of these essays, which playfully plumb cultural associations to serve a serious purpose. Perhaps Ginzburg's intellectual sparkle can be better demonstrated with a closer look at a single chapter. Typically, the title hints without revealing much: "Details, Early Plans, Microanalysis: Thoughts on a Book by Siegfried Kracauer." Renowned for his important work on film, Kracauer in this instance wrote about history, and Ginzburg is so delighted by the book's enigmatic title, *History: The Last Things before the Last*, that he cites it multiple times. The book, which Oxford University Press first published in 1969, came out in a revised edition in 1995 (dates are always important in these essays); and Paul Oskar Kristeller, the great Renaissance historian, who was involved on both occasions, wrote the preface to the new edition. From that fact, Ginzburg is off: After praising Kristeller as a scholar, he criticizes Kristeller's interpretation of the difference between the two versions of the book. That in turn becomes the basis for a discussion of the parallel importance of process and of narration in both history and photography. Reflections on historical processes and literary narration unfold with references to Marcel Proust, the memoirs of the Duke de Saint-Simon, Walter Benjamin, Theodor Adorno, Immanuel Kant, Erwin Panofsky (with the passing comment that great historians are often outsiders), Alfred Stieglitz, T. S. Eliot, Sergei Eisenstein, D. W. Griffith, Gustave Flaubert, and Jules Michelet—among others. And none of the references seems forced! Some are brief; those slightly more extended support additional provocative insights.

Illustrating, case by case, the complicated place of truth and reality in historical research, these artfully constructed essays demonstrate in ad-



dition the historian's delight at the discoveries that probing scholarship uncovers.

Raymond Grew  
University of Michigan

*A History of Violence: From the End of the Middle Ages to the Present.* By Robert Muchembled (trans. Jean Birrell) (Malden, Mass., Polity Press, 2012) 388 pp. \$79.95 cloth 29.95 paper

In November 2005, France witnessed widespread, violent protest in its urban peripheries (*banlieues*) when police excess resulted in the death of two youths. Young men, many from marginalized poor and ethnically diverse neighborhoods around France, responded by burning cars, destroying property, and occasionally attacking people. Muchembled provocatively and contentiously situates this episode in the history of the pacification of violent behavior that began in the late Middle Ages. He argues for comparing this and other recent episodes of violent protest in Europe and beyond to early modern “cultures of violence based on the need to defend masculine honor against rivals” (8). He specifically links this culture to unmarried males in late adolescence or early adulthood.

Muchembled limits his consideration of violence to “crimes against persons, including homicide, assault, and rape” (9), argues that human violence has both a biological and cultural foundation, and, although he draws upon examples from histories outside Europe, mostly derives his evidence from French history. He claims that young males have manifested propensities to aggressive violence throughout history, but that different cultures enable or restrain them based on their priorities and capacities. In medieval Europe, adult males tacitly, if not openly, accepted young male violence of “knife and sword” (the phallic tools of male honor and power) as the price of delayed marriage and prolonged liminal status.

Muchembled credits the emergence of a “new sensibility” in the sixteenth century for the decline in deadly violence in Western Europe over the next three centuries. That sensibility “invented” homicide and infanticide as “inexpiable crimes” and redefined male and female roles (120). Two interlinked developments encouraged this trend. First, the social and commercial interactions associated with urban living increasingly urged self-control and civility. “Town air softened” (93, 101). Second, the emerging early modern centralized state determined to define and monopolize legitimate violence and a developed a growing capacity to repress. Adult men collaborated because they found adolescents (themselves a newly invented category) increasingly difficult to control. Thus, the civilizing process and judicial revolution combined to dampen violence.

However, as violence declined in the public space, nobles invented the duel, and men from all classes moved it into the household. Muchembled argues that by the nineteenth century, domestic violence (assault and rape) became more frequent and more visible. Women thus found themselves relegated to subordinate positions, as victims denied rights to violent expression. Muchembled's description and explanation of women's experiences, however, feel incomplete. Likewise, his argument that the great peasant revolts of the seventeenth century largely represented a backward-looking protest against efforts to pacify youthful males seems overplayed. Overall, Muchembled largely dismisses the political import of public violence, individual and collective.

Eruptions of bloody violence may still occur, but their shock value stems from their location in a Western culture that has mostly limited "legitimate" expressions of violence to police action or to "just" was determined by the state and displaced the "taste for blood" to the imaginary realm of literature (6). Thus, ironically, a "dual model" of masculine behavior has emerged—an "imperial man" who acts brutally when enlisted by his government, and a "peaceable citizen" who functions as "good husband and father" (197).

Muchembled develops and challenges some earlier explanations of the history of violence. He argues that urbanization and industrialization lessened rather than aggravated propensities to violent bloodletting while partially redirecting it toward property (200). He qualifies both Elias' notion of the civilizing process by emphasizing that it had multiple sources and Foucault's focus on the Enlightenment contribution to the disciplinary tactics of subjection by arguing that the origins lie several centuries earlier.<sup>1</sup> Although he draws most of his evidence from France, Muchembled gestures toward a specifically British path to male pacification, a delayed trajectory of pacification in eastern and southern Europe, and a relocation of much European manly violence to the colonies.

Cynthia A. Bouton  
Texas A&M University

*Transregional and Transnational Families in Europe and Beyond: Experiences since the Middle Ages*. Edited by Christopher H. Johnson, David Warren Sabean, Simon Teuscher, and Francesca Trivellato (New York, Berghahn Books, 2011) 372 pp. \$120.00

*Transregional and Transnational Families in Europe and Beyond* is an ambitious collection that aims to take "the idea of 'kinship' seriously for the

1 Norbert Elias (trans. Edmund Jephcott), *The Civilizing Process* (New York, 1982; orig. pub. Gräfenhainichen, 1939), 2 v.; Michel Foucault (trans. Alan Sheridan), *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York, 1977; orig. pub. Paris, 1975).

history of European societies,” as Sabeian and Teuscher write in their introduction (2). Scholars have long recognized the importance of family networks for diasporas of people, ideas, and goods alike, but they have not always acknowledged how much family structures, and even definitions of family, have varied over time and space. This volume’s most important contribution is to provide a sense of the extent to which the elasticity of family structures has affected migration, the growth and support of group identities, and the process of modern state formation.

Using a variety of methodologies—from analyzing the statistics within demographic databases to contemporary fieldwork among refugees and immigrants—this book is broadly interdisciplinary by nature. It will be useful not only to scholars of family history but also to those interested in transnational history, migration, gender, and religion. Despite the book’s geographical and temporal span, the recurring themes of migration, endogamy, honor, and marriage give it coherence. Indeed, in many ways this is a book about marriage, which is a central topic in most of the essays. Most elements of kinship networks are socially constructed, as Sabeian stresses, but marriage remains the most obvious opportunity for individual and familial choice; marriage patterns shed light throughout the chapters on the different values, goals, taboos, and strategies applied to expanding or consolidating families over time.

A few of the chapters stand out from the rest. In his thoughtful chapter about patrician families in early modern Western Europe, Teuscher argues that the mobility of individual family members—particularly younger sons, who could not have been supported adequately by limited family resources had they stayed—made possible the vaunted rootedness of patrician families in general. Johnson’s chapter about kinship and nation-building in France from 1750 to 1885 focuses on families in one region of Brittany as they moved across the nation; it provides a useful reminder that since many administrative apparatuses were “nations” in name only, families that expanded across the regions of a state helped to make “the nation in human terms” (201). Stéphanie Latte Abdallah’s chapter about Palestinian families since 1948 reveals how hard men worked after the exodus to create a notion of family that was unchanging and rigidly hierarchical by gender, as well as how women used a variety of tactics, including voluntary celibacy, to resist efforts to make their subordination within the family a defining feature of Palestinian identity.

Partly because of its heavy focus on the early modern period and resulting source limitations, the book gives disproportionate attention to elites. As Jose C. Moya points out in his chapter about transregional families in the *longue durée*, “peasants and proletarians” could be—and often were—part of transnational families, too (32). Yet, although many of the book’s chapters have a wealth of interesting information about a microscopic minority of aristocratic families, too few of them have much to say about anyone else. This limitation aside, however, the book is an

impressive accomplishment that will be useful to scholars in a variety of fields.

Helen Zoe Veit  
Michigan State University

*In the Watches of the Night: Life in the Nocturnal City, 1820–1930.* By Peter C. Baldwin (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2012) 296 pp. \$40.00

*Evening's Empire: A History of Night in Early Modern Europe.* By Craig Koslofsky (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011) 447 pp. \$90.00 cloth, \$29.99 paper

As strange as it might seem, historians have not paid much attention to time. Dates, yes, and eras certainly, but for all the emphasis on studying change over time, most histories seem set in an ever-present noon. Two new books—Baldwin's *In the Watches of the Night* and Koslofsky's *Evening's Empire*—suggest that this trend may be changing. By drawing attention to night as a space made in time, rather than time itself, these books show how the contested struggle to divide, reinvent, and control night spaces for more than four centuries radically changed the sunlit world as well.

Koslofsky organizes his study around a shift in representation and practice during the early modern (northern) European night that he calls “nocturnalization,” whereby respectable European elites in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries sought to extend their authority and activities into and against a night previously claimed by the young, the criminal, and the poor. Chapter 6, the best, most thoroughly researched section of *Evening's Empire*, seeks to explain how this elite attempted to “coloniz[e] the urban night” and how its native inhabitants of servants, young people, and thieves attempted to resist. Yet it was a new class of respectable citizens, the bourgeoisie, who most forcefully began to create and identify themselves in these newly colonized night streets. Koslofsky persuasively reveals the centrality of the coffee houses that proliferated in this new urban night for both bourgeois class formation and the creation of a public sphere in the manner of Habermas’ “public of private individuals who join in debate on questions of politics and letters” (174).<sup>1</sup> The absolutist states that made this public sphere possible in an attempt to combat crime, drunkenness, and religious heresy had never intended that the new night would give rise to an increasingly antagonistic bourgeois politics; they often found themselves fighting radical coffee-house ideas as fiercely as they did crime.

Koslofsky's argument is convincing, but it also seems incomplete. Although he explicitly denies trying to write a comprehensive history of

1 See Jürgen Habermas (trans. Thomas Burger), *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into the Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Mass., 1989).

the night, a study that seeks to explain the rise of the bourgeois public sphere in the early modern night should provide at least some analysis of night work and working-class formation. That this analysis is almost entirely absent reinforces the simple idea that a primitive and unchanging night was conquered and settled by a new unhappy marriage of bourgeoisie and absolutist state. A more comprehensive treatment of how and why growing numbers of the working poor were migrating to European cities and how they changed the urban night, as active participants rather than merely victims of “nocturnalization,” would have been welcome. Scholarship on this subject must address the dynamic social relations of work and class.

Baldwin’s book is an example of just how rich and revealing an exploration of night in terms of work, practice, and power can be. Extensively researched, *In the Watches of the Night* weaves diaries, newspapers, government documents, travel guides, and more into a complex new picture of life and labor during the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American urban night. As bourgeois efforts to divide the times and spaces of the city into work and play took an increasingly rigid shape during the nineteenth century, most workers encountered night as a concentrated and contested terrain of leisure. Employers squeezed leisure out of the day, and police, gaslights, and moralizing middle classes attempted to preserve the energy of labor for the workshops by regulating such nighttime working-class “dissipations” as drinking, gambling, and whoring. Bourgeois anxieties notwithstanding, Baldwin shows that young working men (and, to a lesser degree, women) continued to make the night their own in taverns, theaters, brothels, and public spaces.

Some of the most striking changes in nineteenth-century night spaces were driven by a reorganization in the ways that certain groups worked and moved through time. Baldwin carefully explores two such processes—counter-cyclical night labor and incessant factory operations. Anyone interested in the gritty and often invisible labor that went into provisioning and cleaning cities should read Baldwin’s chapter about “nightmen”—the scavengers, privy cleaners, street sweepers, farmers, bakers, and newspaper workers whose nightly labors allowed people in cities to eat, excrete, and read each day. Of equal importance were the new spaces of continuous production—docks, depots, and factories—with which the lives and social relations of workers could scarcely keep pace. As capital and labor chased each other through day and night, workers’ social relations were strained, and the night shift became hotly contested. Most of the people who worked at night did so out of vulnerability and desperation, but some industrial laborers alternated between night and day (a physically and mentally taxing sacrifice) to ensure that families and social life anchored in daylight would suffer a minimum of disruption.

Both of these books show how any attempt to understand the history of day must also consider the night. Baldwin’s work is the more

promising model because of its emphasis on practice, experience, and power. The gap of nearly a century (not to mention the geographical divide) between these books, moreover, remains to be explored. That the modern imperialist and industrialist order of the nineteenth century emerged through the creation of an Atlantic world of European migration, conquest, and African enslavement has become well accepted. What is less understood is how the nocturnal struggles and practices of sailors, slaves, colonists, and indigenous peoples contributed to that transformation. Hopefully, future research will also pay more attention to the rural, plantation, and imperial geographies of labor and energy that helped to sustain the urban night spaces explored by these authors.

Jeremy Zallen  
Harvard University

*Casualties of Credit: The English Financial Revolution, 1620–1720.* By Carl Wennerlind (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2011) 348 pp. \$39.95

The last few years have seen a global “credit crunch” turn into a full-blown financial crisis, the total effects of which are only gradually becoming clear. Recent history thus makes Wennerlind’s new intellectual history of England’s long “financial revolution” of the seventeenth century of more than ordinary interest. The book describes the rise of credit as a concept that enabled financial innovation on a heretofore unprecedented scale in seventeenth-century England, criticizing some of the assumptions that lay behind this new orientation and thereby exposing the “casualties” of credit that give the book its name. Wennerlind links the history of credit with such diverse phenomena as alchemy, capital punishment, and slavery that have rarely been associated with it by previous historians.

Wennerlind’s book is both methodologically and chronologically innovative. He uses intellectual history to illuminate a topic more often explored by social and economic historians. Although John Greville Agard Pocock gave the idea of credit a key place in *The Machiavellian Moment* (Princeton, 1975), and literary historians have explored the place of credit in the early modern imagination, the financial revolution has been studied mainly as the product of social, political, and, above all, economic changes during the late seventeenth century. Wennerlind does not simply use the work of financial historians to illuminate the idea of credit; he uses the intellectual history of credit to rethink the concept of the financial revolution itself. In so doing, he demonstrates that the expansion of credit, and the financial revolution engendered by that expansion, had a much more complicated history than previous accounts have realized.

The payoff to this approach is a new chronological perspective on the financial revolution. Although some historians have posited the ori-

gins of the dramatic expansion of English finance capital during the 1690s to the Restoration or the mid-century civil-war era, few have been so bold as to trace them back to the 1620s, as Wennerlind does. The outbreak of the Thirty Years' War in 1618, and the disastrous effects of William Cockayne's ill-conceived project of banning English exports of unfinished cloth, created an economic crisis that stimulated a series of debates about how to solve the liquidity problems that stifled English trade. These debates led first to renewed interest in alchemy, since transforming base metals into gold would have alleviated the scarcity of money. Alchemy has received renewed prominence in the history of early modern science, but Wennerlind shows it to have played a key role in stimulating early modern financial innovation as well. The key figures were the thinkers and projectors associated with Samuel Hartlib in the middle of the seventeenth century. The Hartlib circle should now be recognized as a crucible for original economic thought, as well as for its social and political reform projects.

The financial revolution has traditionally been located firmly within the decades following the Glorious Revolution of 1688, and often understood as a product of that revolution. This book devotes most of its attention to the years between the revolution and the collapse of the South Sea bubble during the early 1720s. Wennerlind outlines the expansion of government finance that the stability provided by regular parliaments after 1689 enabled, devoting much of the rest of his account to exploring the additional ideological work required to make the growth of credit acceptable. This work included attempts to ensure that forgery would be punished as a felonious capital offense, and a curious silence with regard to the condition of enslaved people in the debates about the expansion of the South Sea Company into the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

*Casualties of Credit* does not offer a complete history of the seventeenth-century financial revolution; its broad purview prevents Wennerlind from exploring his topics in minute detail. Hence, the reader is often left wanting further discussion of the many themes addressed in passing. Nevertheless, the book manages to offer insights into several key, and often unexplored, conceptual connections that can help us begin to understand the intellectual origins of the financial revolution.

Brian Cowan  
McGill University

*The Early English Censuses.* By E. A. Wrigley (New York, Oxford University Press, 2011) 322 pp. \$99.00 cloth (with CD ROM)

Ever since England began collecting decennial census data in 1801, the results have been used as a source for historians and demographers. But, as with other early national census undertakings, the results of the early censuses have errors, methodological inconsistencies, and conceptual

incomparabilities that have impeded systematic use, particularly for sophisticated demographic and times-series analysis. *The Early English Censuses*, initially conceived as a secondary by-product of other research projects on English social and economic history, solves these problems by reconciling geographical boundaries, correcting errors, estimating census omissions, and reporting consistent local-area-population tabulations by sex for the English censuses from 1801 to 1851. In so doing, the volume is a major contribution to English social and demographic history.

The book and accompanying CD ROM include both technical descriptions of the procedures used to create the local-area-population tabulations, and the tabulations themselves. The most detailed tabulations—for example, by parish—are on the CD ROM. The book also includes explanations of the census procedures used for the six censuses, description of the local geographical classifications for England during the period, a chapter and technical discussion extending the population totals by county back to 1600, as well as for hundreds (county subdivisions) back to 1761, and a chapter describing the procedures for reconciling changes in tabulation geography between 1801 and 1851.

The censuses from 1801 to 1831 were household counts, based upon then existing local geographical divisions—namely, the parish (and sometimes its subdivisions), hundred (or equivalent), and county. The 1841 census introduced the household schedule listing each person by name. In 1851, the census revamped local area geography. The parish remained, but larger units became the registration county, registration district, and registration subdistrict. The early censuses also under-reported infants and men in the military or merchant marine. The project has reconciled the geography for both systems of local areas, and it reports tables for all six censuses in both systems (ancient and modern). There are two sets of tables for each system. The first set of tables for each system of geography reports the original results of the census, including measures of area, only corrected for arithmetic and printing errors. The second set for each system corrects under-reporting as well.

These data provide the raw material that will benefit from analysis using geographical information systems (GIS). The final chapter of the book, written with Max Satchel, provides technical discussion of the GIS issues, and four gorgeous color maps in the volume indicate the possibilities for further research and analysis. The relevant digitized base maps and metadata are in the UK Data Archive.

The volume also contains dense and highly informative discussions of the work and perspectives of the original census officials, particularly John Rickman. This book will be an essential reference resource for historical demographers and geographers, English local historians, and anyone interested in the technical history of census taking and population change.

Margo Anderson  
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee



*The Ascent of the Detective: Police Sleuths in Victorian and Edwardian England.* By Haia Shpayer-Makov (New York, Oxford University Press, 2011) 429 pp. \$55.00

Despite considerable research in the history of policing in recent years, detectives have attracted little academic scrutiny. *The Ascent of the Detective* helps to remedy this neglect, situating the study of the police institution alongside its representation in print culture and exploring the sources of both subjects in detail. As such, this is an innovative piece of police history, which reveals the opportunities as well as the perils involved in such an exercise.

In the first half of the book, Shpayer-Makov cements her reputation as a leading historian of police organization and labor. A substantial opening chapter sets the scene, offering a wide-ranging account of police reform and the institutionalization of detectives in the nineteenth century. Further chapters deal successively with recruitment and the experience of detective work. A thorough analysis of the policy of internal recruitment highlights the overlapping duties of beat constables and detectives, and senior officers' concerns to forge good relations between these groups. Although the position of detective had its moments—meeting celebrities and receiving gratuities—Shpayer-Makov strips away the glamor to display an occupation that was often frustrating and boring.

The second half of this study turns from the working lives of detectives to their representation in print. Detailed research from autobiographies supports a fascinating discussion of the often symbiotic relationship between policemen and journalists, after which Shpayer-Makov charts the gradual amelioration of press attitudes toward detectives. Her analysis of fictional portrayals suggests that contemporaries sometimes failed to distinguish between real and imaginary crime fighters. She also demonstrates that middle-class private detectives were featured in various forms of print, as they were thought better to embody the English national character than working-class policemen. The book ends with a thorough examination of detective memoirs, before concluding that the police detective became an increasingly accepted and professional part of law enforcement during the nineteenth century.

There is much to commend in this book. It is both scholarly and readable, providing much valuable information on criminal investigation. Shpayer-Makov's main achievement lies in explicating how representations of detectives—especially in newspapers and memoirs—were constructed. Journalists feature almost as prominently as policemen. One figure who rarely receives attention, however, is the reader; this book does not lay out a suitable framework for understanding how detective narratives were *consumed* as well as produced. Although Shpayer-Makov deftly exposes the potential confusion of fiction for fact, her assertion that Victorians considered that “events were what they seemed” precludes any sustained exploration of how and by whom the various texts

were interpreted, and how the varied messages that her book ably documents were navigated by readers in light of their social experience (224). Hopefully, *The Ascent of the Detective* will spur others to consider these and other issues, and to take more seriously the connections between policing and print culture.

David Churchill  
The Open University

*Gender, Honor and Charity in Late Renaissance Florence.* By Philip Gavitt (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011) 280 pp. \$90.00

Charity involved many of Renaissance society's central concerns. Gavitt presents a comprehensive overview of the historiography of the still-understudied sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Florence and applies a variety of interdisciplinary approaches to charitable institutions and conventual refuges, drawn from anthropological, demographic, economic, fiscal, legal, lineage, gender, and confraternal studies. He thereby touches on many vital and contested issues of the late Renaissance, including the ideology of the lineage and the gap between inheritance law and practice, the role of patronage in the formation of the ducal state, and the effect of changing educational theories and religious reform on the relationship between the individual and the virtuous community, which he relates to charity in fresh and illuminating ways.

Gavitt's argument is complex: In a period of crisis due to wars, social unrest, and growing economic inequality, the patrilineal lineage, striving to maintain its patrimony and conform to a new aristocratic culture of consumption and civility while threatened by the inflation of dowries, sacrificed family solidarity by abandoning its most vulnerable members, women and children. To save them from the streets and preserve patriarchal ideals of honor and shame, they were consigned to the care of ill-run institutions increasingly subject to a monastic discipline enforced by both family and state in accordance with post-Tridentine reforms that wove together "discipline, state-building and confessionalization" (8). The reforms focused on the need to confine and rationalize in the interests of public order.

The grand dukes subsumed charitable institutions and convents under their patronage and control and assumed the patriarchal duties of care and judgment. Under their authority, the hospitals that replaced the ailing Monte delle Doti as deposit banks became convenient treasuries for military and diplomatic adventures and the enormous sums that the grand dukes spent on artistic patronage. "The city's major charitable and financial institutions [were] undermined by a grand ducal administration that pursued all-encompassing personal rule while confusing the hoarding of cash with bureaucratic centralization" (65).

Although this process had its greatest effect on females, many of whom spent their entire lives under institutional care as foundlings,

nuns, widows, repentant prostitutes, and recalcitrant wives, Gavitt emphasizes that it was driven not by gender ideology but by lineage ideology. His account rests on a firm statistical base drawn from extensive research in the archives of Florence's most important charitable institutions, especially that of the Innocenti, the Foundling Hospital. The statistics are surprising and shocking. Between 1338 and 1552, the proportion of nuns in the Florentine population grew from 1:220 to 1:19; of the 359 girls who arrived at the Pietà between 1555 and 1560, almost half died before their twenty-first birthday, having been worked or starved to death.

Particularly vivid and poignant in Gavitt's account are the personal records revealing individual women's unhappiness, and the letters and notes of Vincenzo Borghini, who despite the disastrous consequences of his administration of the Innocenti under ducal direction, was committed to the welfare of his charges, expressing concern and regret in his very last writings for the problems of those he called "the little crazy girls" (226).

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*Hitler, Mussolini, and the Vatican.* By Emma Fattorini (trans. Carl Ipsen) (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2011) 260 pp. \$25.00

After years of anticipation, the Vatican archives for the papacy of Pius XI (1922–1939) were opened to scholars in September 2006. Given the dramatic events in Europe during those inter-war years, and especially the advent of both the Fascist regime in Italy and the Nazi regime in Germany, as well as controversies about the Vatican's role in dealing with the rise of modern totalitarianism and racism, the archives attracted great interest. Fattorini was one of the first scholars to publish findings from those archives (the portion of which dealing with German relations was opened earlier, in 2003). The book under review is the clear, English translation of the book that Fattorini originally published in Italy—*Pio XI, Hitler e Mussolini: la solitudine di un papa* (Turin, 2007)—with the addition of a new introduction.

The title given to the English edition is a bit misleading. The book focuses almost entirely on Pius XI, a complex figure both in human and political terms. Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini make little more than a passing appearance until the second half of the book. The first 30 percent of the book provides an insightful examination of the worldview of Pius XI, a former Vatican librarian unexpectedly catapulted, after a brief period as papal nuncio to Poland and only months after being made the archbishop of Milan, to the papacy. The following 20 percent focuses on the pope's reaction to the victory of the French Popular Front in 1936 and the Spanish civil war, which began that same year. The second half

of the book details the pope's anger at the persecution of the church in Germany and at Mussolini's increasing embrace of the Nazi ally.

The picture that Fattorini paints is of a pope who sprang from the antiliberal, antipluralist, and highly conservative ambience of the Italian church of those decades, but who gradually realized that his instinctual preference for authoritarian regimes was coming at a high cost in light of the new form of political religion that was evolving in modern totalitarianism. Fattorini clearly sketches the pope's growing distaste for Hitler and anger at the pagan nature of the Nazi worship of race and blood. Throughout, she shows how Eugenio Pacelli, Vatican secretary of state beginning in 1930, who later succeeded Pius XI as the controversial Pope Pius XII, tried to restrain the pope's growing tendency to lash out publicly at Hitler and the Nazis and at Mussolini insofar as he seemed to be imitating Hitler. The acme of these attempts came on the heels of the pope's death, when Pacelli ordered the copies of the pope's intended major address on the tenth anniversary of the Lateran accords destroyed, fearful that his criticisms of the Fascist and Nazi regimes would create tensions with those powers. He also concealed the existence of the draft encyclical denouncing racism and antisemitism that Pius XI had secretly prepared.

This book provides an extremely useful look into Pius XI's last years, offering for many readers the first benefit of the archives opened in 2006. Other recent works offer a fuller examination of the pope's relationships with Nazi Germany.<sup>1</sup> For this reviewer, Fattorini's emphasis on the pope's anger with Mussolini during the last year of the pope's life may leave some readers with the mistaken impression that the pope was not engaged in highly productive relations with Mussolini throughout the great majority of his years as pope. Indeed, the pope continued to benefit from the police-state aspects of the Fascist regime virtually until the last months of his life. But future work, by Fattorini and others, that can benefit from more time with the mass of newly available archival material in the Vatican, and with the equally large amount of archival material in various state archives—especially Italian, French, German, British, and American—will undoubtedly continue to fill out this dramatic and extremely important history.

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*Foundational Pasts: The Holocaust as Historical Understanding.* By Alon Confino (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2012) 191 pp. \$85.00 cloth \$24.99 paper

In this hastily written and, at times, imprecisely argued book, Confino makes important points about the interpretive issues involved in ap-

1 See, most notably, Hubert Wolf, *Pope and Devil: The Vatican Archives and the Third Reich* (Cambridge, Mass., 2012).

proaching the Holocaust. Remarking on the highly detailed historiography of the last thirty years, Confino notes that this productivity has been accompanied by self-conscious reflection about the difficulties of representing the Holocaust. But Confino makes an incisive qualification: “It is not that one encounters special problems of representation with the Holocaust, but rather that the Holocaust makes problems of historical representation especially clear” (60). The “limits of representation” do not arise because of the extreme nature of the “final solution”; they are made more plain, more urgent.

Confino’s star witness is Friedländer, who in his recent work on the Holocaust struggles against the domestication of disbelief in which terrible matters are explained and explained away.<sup>1</sup> According to Confino, Friedländer “uses a narrative form that intimates that this history cannot quite be captured. It is a historical narrative against itself” (57). In particular, Confino is impressed with Friedländer’s technique of interrupting analysis with the voices of victims. “Descriptions are themselves interpretive,” Confino adds (92). Yet the standard practice of the writers’ workshop—“show, don’t tell”—has limits in history; Friedländer frequently refrains from analyzing the shapes of the accumulating but broken knowledge of Jewish victims, leaving readers disturbed but not necessarily more enlightened. Telling is important. What is more, Confino does not initiate a broader discussion of narration in the shadow of the Holocaust or explore the links between Holocaust historiography and postmodern historical reflection.

In an illuminating comparison, Confino examines the development of Holocaust historiography alongside the new cultural history of the French Revolution. The old structural explanations about 1789 involving class and capitalism have given way to cultural interpretations in which political practice is regarded not as a function of social or economic developments but as a kind of imaginative practice. This influential historiography, spearheaded by Furet and Hunt, comes with new patterns of logic and contingency.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, historians in the last generation have come to approach National Socialism in new ways—not least by taking ideology seriously. Confino is rightly incredulous when he notes that only a few decades ago, many scholars “regarded the Nazi regime as a movement without ideas and denied the very existence of Nazi ideology” (120). Moreover, just as the French Revolution confounded contemporaries who struggled to hone new explanatory tools, so did the racial assumptions of the Nazis bewilder and terrify contemporaries in the middle of the twentieth century. Once Nazi ideology is taken seriously, the older historiographical traditions that saw the Nazis as anti-modernists or the Holocaust as a problem of structural dynamics

1 Saul Friedländer, *The Years of Extermination: Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939–1945* (New York, 2008).

2 François Furet (trans. Elborg Forster), *Interpreting the French Revolution* (New York, 1981); Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley, 1984).

in a highly contentious imperial regime frequently appear exculpatory. In this context, too, readers would want more evidence.

Confino also recommends making a distinction between the Holocaust and its underlying premise—the attempt by the Nazis, as he suggests, to create a world without Jews. To fully comprehend this radical dream means looking at the fears and fantasies that drove German politics long before 1941 and looking beyond the context of war and the radicalization of policy that it facilitated. It would be difficult to disagree.

Confino urges scholars to acknowledge radical discontinuity but also to consider the heritage of continuity. For Confino, the Jews are the central key to understanding the Nazis—the ways in which National Socialists used familiar religious motifs and the Third Reich transgressed upon German and European history. But what exactly the Nazis sought to create—Confino refers to it as a “work in progress” (64)—aside from securing the absence of Jews is not entirely clear. “It was the Jews,” Confino writes, “who represented the overall meaning of the Nazi revolution, the crushing of one modernity and the making of another.” Thus, for Germans, “the Jews were at the center of this transformation as the originators of (these or those) pernicious elements that had to be eliminated to redeem Germany” (107–108). But redeem how? Sometimes it seems that Germans killed Jews to uproot their own heritage and sometimes that they uprooted their heritage in order to kill Jews.

Confino is full of ideas, but in this study, his line of argument is too imprecise and his historiographical discussions too abbreviated to convince readers. Without sufficient detail, illustration, and example, and the “tell” side of “show,” *Foundational Pasts* makes an unfortunate trade-off, achieving brevity at the expense of precision.

Peter Fritzsche  
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*The Agrarian History of Sweden: 4000 BC to AD 2000*. Edited by Janken Myrdal and Mats Morell (Lund, Nordic Academic Press, 2011) 336 pp. \$54.95

This edited book is a condensed and revised version in English of a five-volume work about the agrarian history of Sweden that was published between 1999 and 2003 with Janken Myrdal as principal editor.<sup>1</sup> The overarching questions that guide the authors—alas, not explicitly mentioned in the present book—were presented in the foreword to the first of the Swedish volumes: What is agriculture? Who were the farmers?

1 Myrdal (ed.), *Det svenska jordbrukets historia* (Stockholm, 1998–2003), 5 v.: Stig Welinder, Ellen Anne Pedersen, and Mats Widgren, *Jordbrukets första femtusen år 4000 f. Kr.–1000 e. Kr.* (1998); Myrdal, *Jordbruket under feodalismen 1000–1700* (1999); Carl-Johan Gadd, *Den agrara revolutionen 1700–1870* (2000); Mats Morell, *Jordbruket i industrisamhället 1870–1945* (2001); Iréne A. Flygare and Maths Isacson, *Jordbruket i välfärdssamhället 1945–2000* (2003).

Which tools did they use, and how did they cultivate the land? What were their crops and the livestock? The contributors also consider the ideologies and the everyday life of peasants/farmers, as well as social structures and regional differences.<sup>2</sup>

*The Agrarian History of Sweden* comprises an introduction and seven chapters. The introduction and Chapter 7 are newly written pieces that aptly frame the rest of the book, which presents the salient points of Sweden's agricultural development since 4000 B.C. The introduction relates the book to the historiography of agriculture in Sweden, identifying three waves in the twentieth-century scholarship. The first wave, in the early twentieth century, featured ethnology and human geography; the second, in the 1970s, featured economic history and social history; and the third accompanied the institutionalization of agrarian history in the 1990s. In addition, recent methodological advances in archaeology have led to several detailed studies of Sweden's early agrarian history.

That agrarian history has grown into a truly interdisciplinary field is cogently demonstrated by the subsequent empirical chapters. The authors concentrate on structures and the *longue durée* (at the expense of individuals and events) and on how structural continuities and changes shape everyday life. They identify phases of expansion punctuated by stagnation or crisis, maintaining that the long periods of change were "governed by the inner dynamic of technological development" (267). For instance, the introduction of plowing implements, spades, harrows, watermills, and windmills was decisive for the expansion between 1000 and 1300. Although the authors attach great importance to the role of technology, they do not fall into the trap of determinism. By considering the interplay between cultural, economic, environmental, political, social, and technological factors, they avoid the danger of the simple, monocausal explanation. The final chapter places Swedish agrarian history in the wider context of European agriculture, arguing that the Swedish case can be seen as an example—albeit an extreme one because of its climate, its social structures, and its wealth of iron—of the development of a technology-oriented "European-style agriculture" that had a combination of arable and livestock farming as its fundamental characteristic.

The empirical and theoretical focus shifts from chapter to chapter, depending on the disciplinary background and interest of the authors. Thus, mentalities, rites, and myths are salient themes in the first chapter (3900–800 B.C.); landscape and tools in the second (800 B.C.–A.D. 1000), as well as the third chapter (1000–1700); production and expansion through the taming of nature in the fourth chapter (1700–1870); production against the background of the agricultural industrialization in the fifth chapter (1870–1945); and the official policies of the strong post-war state, as well as attitudes and ideologies, in the sixth chapter (1945–

2 Welinder, Pedersen, and Widgren, *Jordbrukets första femtusen år*, 9.

2010). The result is a surprisingly coherent narrative, in which terms and concepts are critically discussed and consistently used throughout the book. Moreover, the authors deal with the challenge of translating Swedish terminology in an exemplary way. The Swedish term *bonde*, to take one example, does not always equate with *peasant*. The authors have solved this problem by variously translating the term into *peasant*, *peasant-farmer*, or *farmer*, in accord with the temporal context.

By critically scrutinizing the existing sources and by presenting new evidence, the authors manage to debunk several widely held beliefs or popular myths, such as the role of monasticism in the High Middle Ages (overestimated) or the notion of peasant conservatism during the last three centuries (not always credible). Moreover, new archaeological evidence in the form of construction details, phosphate mapping, and the distribution of finds and ecofacts, as well as pollen analysis and the age distribution of slaughtered animals, allow the authors to question the prevailing view that the introduction of winter stalling was primarily the result of the harsher climate in the first millennium B.C., the so-called *fimbul* winter (literally, the great winter). Rather than being environmentally driven, winter stalling was a new technological and social complex that spread from central parts of Europe to Scandinavia. By mobilizing a wide array of methods such as archaeozoology, climate research, palaeoecology, plowing experiments, and the interpretation of rune stones, apart from the standard historical methods, the authors have managed to produce a synthesis of cutting-edge research.

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*Petersburg Fin de Siècle*. By Mark D. Steinberg (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2011) 399 pp. \$45.00

The inhabitants of St. Petersburg in the decade before World War I were an anxious and pessimistic bunch. Confronting an array of social malaises—from suicide to violent crime and from child prostitution to imposture—the denizens of the imperial capital created in their copious writings “a picture of modern disarray: moral transgression and disorder, illusoriness and deception, sickness and death, excess and extravagance, and moods of disorientation, uncertainty and incomprehension, if not outright disgust and fear” (8–9). Arranging his chapters to cover such broad themes as “city,” “streets,” “death,” and “decadence,” Steinberg’s *Petersburg Fin de Siècle* presents a wealth of material drawn from the popular press—from boulevard dailies to the more high-brow “thick journals”—as well as popular literature to explore the pervasive sense of dislocation, disillusionment, and morbid fascination with the darker sides of life in the city. Steinberg’s declared goal is to “read what could also be read by a contemporary consumer of the Petersburg press” (6), and he



undoubtedly succeeds in weaving his numerous examples into a set of coherent thematic explorations. The range and density of the evidence is compelling. Steinberg presents an object lesson in how the “social life of emotions” can be studied in order to unlock discursive components of social consciousness.

Yet much of the territory over which Steinberg moves has been extensively covered by other scholars, such as Engelstein, Neuberger, Morrissey, and Match.<sup>1</sup> Steinberg acknowledges these studies, but it remains unclear what exactly he is adding to them and in what ways he seeks distance from them. Some, though by no means all, of these scholars concentrated on more scholarly or high-brow treatments of suicide, sexuality, decadence, degeneration, etc. Although Steinberg succeeds in showing the diffusion of such cultural anxieties down to the level of the popular press, the preoccupations remain eminently recognizable, much of it already familiar to historians of the period.

Another problem with the book is periodization (or rather the lack of it). By concentrating on the decade *after* 1905, Steinberg neglects much of what happened earlier, thus skewing his own interpretation. He argues that Russia experienced a particularly acute cultural crisis in that decade. But a view of the city as a site of moral perdition, sexual corruption, and subterfuge permeates the Russian imagination throughout the nineteenth century in works by Nikolai Gogol, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Anton Chekhov, Vsevolod Garshin, and a host of less-celebrated writers. Although there is no denying the potency of the discourse of collapse and decay in the last decade of Imperial Russia, its appearance during the preceding half century or more is surely significant, raising important questions about what precisely (beyond a rapidly expanding popular press) was particular to the period from 1905 to 1914.

The social and political history of the period remains much in the shadows of Steinberg’s study. If, as Engelstein declared in her own study of fin-de-siècle sexuality, “sex was a political subject,” in Steinberg’s study, the politics are sidelined. The ferocious levels of political violence that rocked the capital in 1905, forming part of a continuum of assassinations, violent demonstrations, and state repression that shaped the culture of the Russian capital at the beginning of the twentieth century, and their undoubted impact on the popular imagination are barely mentioned. Steinberg’s observation that “faced with the great difficulties of the post-1905 years in Russia, political radicals would insist on wilful heroism” raises fascinating questions about the relationship between cultural pessimism and political militancy that he does not explore (210).

Given this lack of context, comparative pessimism would appear to

1 Laura Engelstein, *The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-Siècle Russia* (Ithaca, 1992); Joan Neuberger, *Hooliganism: Crime, Culture, and Power in St. Petersburg, 1900–1914* (Berkeley, 1993); Susan Morrissey, *Suicide and the Body Politic in Imperial Russia* (New York, 2006); Olga Match, *Erotic Utopia: The Decadent Imagination in Russia’s Fin de Siècle* (Madison, 2005).

be an inconclusive affair. Were the Russians really more gripped by fin-de-siècle anomie and anxiety than their counterparts in Paris, Vienna, Budapest, or Milan? Steinberg maintains that “Russia’s fin-de-siècle was more pessimistic than in the west” (1), but the work of such scholars as Nye, Pick, and others has shown that writers in these urban centers had much to say that was almost indistinguishable from what Steinberg explores.<sup>2</sup> If society was more intensely pessimistic in St. Petersburg from 1905 to 1914, surely the stillborn revolution of 1905 must loom large in any explanatory framework.

Steinberg’s relative neglect of the revolutionary crisis is strange given the insistence with which many contemporaries explicitly cited the upheavals as the primary source of urban disorders from suicide to degeneration and violent crime. Steinberg acknowledges that “many blamed . . . the fateful conjuncture of war, revolution and state violence that came with the 1905 Revolution and its aftermath” (181), but he leaves this explanation hanging. He is constrained by the discursive horizon of the texts that he studies, making little effort to scrutinize what issues, in displaced form, anguished discussions of hooliganism or suicide might have also intimated. Steinberg alludes to “the politically unmentionable elephant in the room: the ineffective, archaic, and oppressive persistence of autocracy” (269). In the wake of 1905, however, the autocracy *was* politically mentionable; many commentators roundly denounced its direct culpability in a range of “social diseases.” The inhabitants of St. Petersburg might have felt a *cultural* crisis of urban modernity, but in the decade from 1905 to 1914, that crisis was overlaid with a powerful and ultimately irresolvable *political* crisis of power, sovereignty, and law and order.

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*Land of the Tejas: Native American Identity and Interaction in Texas, A.D. 1300–1700.* By John Wesley Arnn III (Austin, University of Texas Press, 2012) 300 pp. \$55.00

This book is primarily concerned with identifying and understanding the cultural interactions between Native American groups in much of what is now Texas during the late prehistoric and early historic periods. In particular, the author is intent on establishing the existence and character of the Tejas alliance, “a large political, economic, and social alliance” of many Native American groups in Central, South, and East

2 Robert A. Nye, *Crime, Madness & Politics in Modern France: The Medical Concept of National Decline* (Princeton, 1984); Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder c. 1848–c. 1918* (New York, 1989).

Texas (3), and correlating its existence with the archaeological phenomenon labeled the Toyah phase. The Tejas alliance is distinguished from the Tejas nation, one of the names for the Nabedache Caddo, who were part of the Hasinai confederacy in East Texas.

The majority of the Native American groups in the Tejas alliance were relatively mobile hunter-gatherers in a geographically and culturally diverse world. In Chapter 1, Arnn examines their social identity and cultural variation at multiple scales, from marriage/linguistic groups and residential bases to broad and integrative social fields (that is, long-distance social networks), cross-cutting individuals, communities, and groups. In Chapters 2 and 3, he discusses how to identify socio-cultural identities among hunter-gatherers in the archeological record through the actions and practices of individuals living in residential base camps, alongside relevant ethnographic and historical data about hunter-gatherers around the world.

In Chapters 4, 6, 7, and 8, Arnn provides the archaeological contexts in which the identity of, and the interactions among, Native American groups in Texas are presented, as well as a detailed consideration of the character (material culture, subsistence pursuits, and settlement patterns) of Toyah-phase archaeological sites in Central and South Texas. These sites resulted from the occupation of “dozens of indigenous culture groups in the Toyah region” (60). Arnn views Toyah peoples as mobile broad-spectrum foragers that were opportunistic bison hunters. These different peoples and communities—multiple marriage/linguistic/culture groups—were integrated through long-distance social fields. He also reconstructs hypothetical marriage groups and community territories among the Toyah, although the evidence adduced from artifacts and features in different site clusters is equivocal.

Chapter 5 is an insightful investigation of the historical sources responsible for framing the discourse about the existence of the Tejas alliance and listing the groups that comprised the alliance. Arnn makes the case that this alliance likely came into existence prior to the appearance of Europeans in Texas. His suggestion that the alliance “is represented archaeologically as Toyah” does not comport with the argument that the Caddo tribes of East Texas were an important part of the alliance (137). The material-culture assemblage of the Caddo peoples is a far cry from that of the Toyah.

The last chapter in the book summarizes the main findings, namely, that there were prehistoric (the Toyah social field) and early historic (Tejas alliance) social fields that integrated diverse groups of Native Americans in Texas. These social fields arose from “a long in situ cultural development in Central Texas, combined with extensive and intensive regional interaction” (248).

*Land of the Tejas* is an outstanding book. It represents an effective melding of archaeological, ethnohistorical, ethnographic, archival, and historical information to develop an intriguing picture of the varied rela-

tionships between many Native American groups in a wide swath of Texas both before and after European contact. Arnin's central focus is on the archaeological and historical character of the groups that comprise what archeologists call the Toyah phase, situating them within the Tejas alliance.

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*Indians and British Outposts in Eighteenth-Century America.* By Daniel Ingram (Gainesville, University Press of Florida, 2012) 256 pp. \$69.95

It is astonishing that no one has ever thought of writing this book before. Forts on the frontier where Native Americans, colonial settlers and traders, and European forces mingled were important outposts in the eighteenth century. Yet before Ingram, they had been discussed for their military role but only occasionally—as in Colin Calloway's treatment of Fort Niagara in *The American Revolution in Indian Country* (New York, 1995)—for their equally important function as locations where Indians met whites for a variety of purposes.

Ingram looks at five British forts during the French and Indian War—Fort Loudoun in South Carolina, Fort Allen in Pennsylvania, Fort Michilimackinac in what is now the upper peninsula of Michigan, Fort Niagara in New York, and Fort Chartres in Illinois. Admitting the impossibility of obtaining the Indians' point of view from their own sources, he nevertheless uses Euro-American documents and archaeological artifacts to show that forts served a variety of functions depending on their particular circumstances. For instance, the presence of Indian or European goods or the bones of specific animals in a particular fort indicated whether the Europeans were dependent on the Indians, or vice versa.

The construction of Fort Loudoun, named after one of several British commanders in North America during the French and Indian War, was requested by Cherokee leaders Old Hop and Little Carpenter from the government of South Carolina. They wanted to use their contacts with the British to increase trade, as well as their own wealth and influence among their people, primarily at the expense of a pro-French faction that warned them that the British presence would threaten their way of life. The Francophiles turned out to be correct; the British used this fort and others during the Cherokee War of 1758 to 1761 to drive the Cherokees further west.

Fort Allen, located north of Bethlehem on the Lehigh River, was one of many forts hastily constructed by Pennsylvania beginning in 1756 to serve as a refuge from attacks by the Indians dispossessed by crooked treaties (beginning with the Walking Purchase of 1737), following Brad-

dock's defeat in 1755. Pennsylvania and the British negotiated the Treaty of Easton in 1758 with the Indians, promising to restore Indian land (a promise broken once the French were defeated). As a result, Fort Allen became a center of trade and gift giving, where Pennsylvania essentially bribed the Delawares, their former enemies, to keep the peace until the British eventually moved them out.

Forts Michilimackinac and Chartres, isolated from other major forts, had to depend heavily on the Indians just to survive. Ingram takes the history of the Michilimackinac into the mid-nineteenth century, revealing that the dependence on Indians lasted long after the American Revolution. Fort Chartres became a financial drain on the British, who had to keep doling out presents to the Indians to ensure that they would not destroy the fort. Fort Niagara, however, the location of which on the Great Lakes made it easily supplied, first by the French and then by the British, reversed the situation. Local Indians, especially the Iroquois, turned to the British garrison during the French and Indian War for supplies and later served as workers in the fur trade.

Showing the diversity of these forts, and tracing in detail the history of white-Indian interactions at these locations, Ingram demonstrates the importance of forts not only for military and imperial history but also for shaping the history and culture of the societies in their regions. His well-written, thoroughly researched book adds considerably to our knowledge of the North American frontier.

William Pencak  
Editor, *Pennsylvania History*

*Slavery in the American Republic: Developing the Federal Government, 1791–1861.* By David F. Ericson (Lawrence, University Press of Kansas, 2011) 344 pp. \$37.50

The institution of slavery demanded the development of a national state stronger than most scholars have assumed to have been feasible before the Civil War. Warfare, border patrol, and colonization—hallmarks of European fiscal-military states and twentieth-century America—characterized the U.S. federal government's efforts to manage a slaveholding society in its first seventy years of existence. Yet rather than compare it to other times and places, Ericson takes the pre-Civil War federal government on its own terms because of the early United States' unique position as a nation seemingly divided between freedom and slavery. This "house divided," it turns out, was built largely of slave materials. Rather than stunt its growth, Ericson argues, slavery positively affected state development. It spurred the state's military buildup and its creation of law-enforcement mechanisms, determined its capacities to legislate, and increased its legitimacy. Ericson uses counterfactual scenarios to make the convincing case that many of the structures of the federal government

that were in place until the Civil War, and to some degree still are, would not have been possible without efforts to manage slavery both within and beyond U.S. borders.

To make this argument, Ericson contends with a diverse range of political and historical scholarship that characterizes the United States as a weak state either as a result of American exceptionalism or as a result of government-fearing slaveholders. The United States was not uniquely underdeveloped. Nor did slaveholders prohibit federal growth; many, in fact, were among the biggest proponents and beneficiaries of a strong central power. Fugitive-slave law, for example, required federal marshaling of legal, diplomatic, and military resources, especially in border regions and territories. It also required the federal employment of private agents. Using a structural “society-centered model of state development” in lieu of the state-centered models used for heavily bureaucratized European states, Ericson argues that the strongest state development occurred at the periphery through “covert policy-making” by members of the executive branch (6, 172). The Second Seminole War, more than any other events in Ericson’s account, exemplified slave-related state-building on the frontier, as the U.S. army fought Native Americans to protect slaveholding and stabilize slave markets. Previous studies of slavery and the federal government have shortchanged what Ericson sees as state effectiveness on the margins.

Data about federal expenditures from the first to the last fiscal year before the Civil War informs Ericson’s conclusions about the government’s role in military engagements, slave-trade regulation, colonization, fugitive-slave renditions, and slave-labor markets. These data, though incomplete for certain years, allow Ericson to identify spending and hiring patterns that illuminate periods of slave-related government growth, especially when this growth was not marked by official policy. For example, even after Andrew Jackson’s administration cut off federal funding to the American Colonization Society, Liberia continued to receive protection, arms, and other in-kind subsidies from the U.S. Navy. Although rarely cited as precedents for later state developments, slavery-related federal interventions laid some of the political and constitutional groundwork for twentieth-century military interventions, the coercive management of military employees, and the federal enforcement of civil rights.

Ericson’s successful integration of political and sociological theories about state-building, historical sensitivities to change and specificity, and the economic utilization of fiscal data provides a fresh perspective to old debates about the relationship between slavery and American politics. His work offers new ways to explore beyond official policy debates to understand the precise ways in which slavery shaped early governance and left its mark on the American political system.

Lindsay Schakenbach  
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*Southern Civil Religions: Imagining the Good Society in the Post-Reconstruction Era.* By Arthur Remillard (Athens, University of Georgia Press, 2011) 234 pp. \$69.95 \$24.95

Recently, the notion of civil religion has been resurgent in the social sciences, and following in the footsteps of Wilson, this book attempts to bring the concept back to history as well.<sup>1</sup> Although the definition of the term has always been problematical, it refers to the way in which visions of the civic order can form into social narratives akin to religions—with their own civic saints, legitimizing myths, and moral arguments for society.

Remillard uses the concept to make sense of the complex and competing visions of the “good society” that developed in the post-Reconstruction South, specifically the wire-grass region of Georgia, Florida, and Alabama. The chapters trace a range of competing narratives of the good society—by the “New South” proponents of development and those advocating a return to tradition, by blacks and whites, by males and females, by Jews and gentiles, and by Catholics and nativists. Remillard uses letters, newspapers, and other archival documents, as well as secondary sources, to build a series of close-focus accounts of events and individuals to illustrate each of these narratives.

This attention to the competing visions of civil religion is the most important contribution of the book. The poles of each of these visions will be familiar to anyone who studies this era, even if the particular figures and events are new to them. What makes *Southern Civil Religions* worth a broader consideration is Remillard’s attention to how these competing visions were each tied to different claims about the placement of civic boundaries—about inclusion and exclusion. Civic-religious claims became a language that allowed many competing segments of society to make their own assertions about such boundaries.

The chapter about competing white and black visions is particularly interesting for its portrayal of the race problem as a “place problem”—that is, about who could control physical spaces and social hierarchies. In this context, the concept of civil religion does the important work of pointing to how these “religious” conceptions saw racial struggles as struggles about caste as much as they were about control of political or economic resources. The most surprising use of the perspective comes in the chapter about Catholics and anti-Catholic mobilization, which states that civic exclusion and social exclusion went hand in hand; religious prejudice was understood through the various languages of patriotism, race, social order, and politics.

The book suffers from a deficiency that is common to work using the concept of civil religion—ambiguity concerning whether the con-

1 Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865–1920* (Athens, 2009; orig. pub. 1980).

cept refers to a civic language using the metaphor of religion as an analytical tool or whether it refers to a civic language that actually rests on religious understandings. Remillard sidesteps the issue by pointing out (rightly) that even Bellah, the author who coined the term “civil religion,” grew fed up with the definitional debates about the term.<sup>2</sup> But the book makes a kind of backdoor case for the concept nevertheless. What broader concepts like “good society” might not do, and what “civil religion” potentially can do, is to point to divisions and exclusions as well as to unifying myths.

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*The Bible, the School, and the Constitution: The Clash that Shaped Modern Church-State Doctrine.* By Steven K. Green (New York, Oxford University Press, 2012) 294 pp. \$29.95

How does a diverse society transmit its moral values to future generations without relying on controversial religious doctrines? What interest does government have, and what role should it play, in the moral education of the young and impressionable? Green’s ambitious interdisciplinary endeavor chronicles the national debate that raged over religion’s relationship with public education during the seminal period of 1869 through 1876. The breadth of the debate routinely exceeded the actual discussions—“[t]he School Question bec[oming] a proxy for a debate over America’s cultural and religious identity” (8). For many, the outcome of the School Question would ultimately determine America’s fate, based on citizens’ “belief that the future of the Republic depended on the nation’s ability to transmit skills of democratic governance to current and future generations” (14).

The religio-political tensions that catalyzed America’s founding still persist, but the modern discussion of religion’s place in public education germinated during this post-bellum period. Although the School Question bifurcates into public funding of religious education and religious instruction in public schools, Green repeatedly illustrates how it defies simplistic categorization into two polarized camps inhabited by Catholics and Protestants, religious and nonreligious people, or conservatives and liberals. This exhaustively researched volume teases apart such basic binaries to expose the web of cultural, religious, historical, political, ethnic, and economic considerations and prejudices in which these discussions fermented.

The book is divided into six chapters, addressing “The Rise of Nonsectarian Public Education” (11–44), “The Development of the

2 Robert Bellah, *The Broken Covenant: American Civil Religion in a Time of Trial* (Chicago, 1992; orig. pub. 1975).



‘No-Funding Principle’” (45–91), “The Cincinnati ‘Bible War’ of 1869–1873” (93–135), “‘The Amendmentists’” (137–177), “The Blaine Amendment” (179–223), and “The Legacy of the School Question” (225–257). The chapter titles’ discrete topics belie the breadth of issues covered. Green’s roughly chronological analysis of this post–Civil War period comprises various civic and clerical leaders, all three branches of government from the municipal to federal levels, and many voluntary groups that formed to defend their positions regarding the School Question when it hit close to home. By examining a mere slice of history, Green brings the entire historical loaf into view. His scrutiny of argumentative leaders, laws, legislatures, and leagues helps the reader to appreciate the nuances and contextual contingencies surrounding the School Question in discrete communities at particular times. Diverse religious adherents participating in this ongoing conversation had assorted views of the best way to respect or renounce governmentally recognized religion, whether by funding faith-affiliated political organizations, attempting to pass constitutional amendments, banning biblical readings or instruction in public schools, or sometimes resorting to outright violence.

In Green’s words, the School Question “remain[s] unresolved to this day. Even so, the period between 1869 and 1876 became the fulcrum of the controversy” (226). Green deftly demonstrates how this “period . . . would serve as the crucible of future church–state doctrine” (223).

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*Philanthropy in America: A History.* By Olivier Zunz (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2012) 396 pp. \$29.95

In this inspiring, captivating, and thought-provoking book, Zunz presents a comprehensive history of twentieth-century philanthropy in the United States. Following the development of the two constituent streams of American philanthropy—big foundations, such as the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation, and mass philanthropy—Zunz shows how the two of them converged. Together, they shaped twentieth-century philanthropy and formed the backbone of American civil society. Thus, the book is not just about philanthropy; it is also a story about the transformative power of such giving. Zunz describes the role of philanthropy in social and political change, from the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission’s initiative in fighting the hook worm in the American South to the civil rights struggle of the 1960s, and from the role of Conservative think tanks in the neoliberal revolution of the 1980s

to the support of American philanthropy for the development of civil society in post-Communist countries. In the process, Zunz challenges many of the stereotypical assumptions about the uniqueness of American philanthropy and about the context that allowed American philanthropy to emerge.

Zunz repeatedly emphasizes that tax policy had nothing to do with the initial surge of philanthropy in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Only after World War I did the federal government use tax policy to shape philanthropy and what later came to be called the non-profit sector. In this context, court cases, laws, and taxation became a tool in confining philanthropy to the social, cultural, and educational sphere, excluding it from participating in or influencing political life.

Comparative scholars will appreciate how Zunz succinctly analyzes American philanthropy as a major ingredient in civil society without having political ties. Foundations created to further the cause of women's rights and to exercise pressure on politics to provide gender equality were an accepted part of, say, the German philanthropic landscape but were outlawed in the American system. In countries like Germany, philanthropy was not as regulated as it was in the United States; nor was it prevented from entering the political process. The fear that philanthropic institutions could cause social and/or political change is unique to the United States, helping to confirm a view of American society as extremely rigid.

Contrary to the portrayal of American philanthropy as *sui generis*, Zunz points out that many of the practices of American philanthropy were imported from Europe; the collection drive for the fight against tuberculosis is his case in point. When it became clear that no large donor would take the initiative in this campaign, Jacob Riis introduced the idea of the collection drive for social projects through the sale of special seals from Copenhagen to an American audience. The Red Cross adopted this idea, arranging for seals to be sold at Christmas time to benefit the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis. American philanthropy—at least the nineteenth-century version—was neither an American invention nor uniquely American; it derived largely from European ideas and concepts.

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*Nixon's Court: His Challenge to Judicial Liberalism and Its Political Consequences.* By Kevin J. McMahon (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2011) 360 pp. \$29.00

A common narrative about the Nixon presidency is that President Nixon failed to produce a conservative counter-revolution reversing the

liberalism of the Warren Court. McMahon's new book challenges this narrative by questioning its premise. Conceding that the conservative transformation of the Supreme Court under the Nixon presidency was limited, McMahon takes issue with the claim that the primary goal of Nixon's policy toward the judiciary was to wage a counter-revolution. McMahon's alternative and unconventional reading argues that Nixon's judicial policy—that is, his approach to judicial appointments and to key constitutional issues—focused largely on generating electoral success, not conservative counter-revolution. Politics and pragmatism, rather than ideology, were the defining forces behind Nixon's judicial policy, and Nixon's so-called “failure” to dismantle the constitutional doctrine of the Warren era must be judged and re-evaluated in light of his actual goals.

Nixon's approach to the Supreme Court, McMahon submits, has been “misunderstood and misjudged” because scholars and commentators emphasize Nixon as staunchly conservative while downplaying Nixon as moderate (5). These observers typically focus on Nixon's strong conservative rhetoric, his campaign strategy to reverse the Warren Court's liberal activism, and his conservative selections for the bench, including Clement Haynsworth, G. Harrold Carswell, and William H. Rehnquist. At first glance, these observers seem to be correct in assessing Nixon's judicial strategy as ultimately failing to produce a revolution. A different picture emerges, however, once account is taken of Nixon's moderate actions with respect to constitutional policy and litigation; his nominations of Warren Burger, Harry Blackmun, and Lewis Powell; his retention of Erwin Griswold as solicitor general; and the political context in which his choices and actions were made.

Presenting this detailed and compelling account, McMahon portrays a president whose words espoused conservative ideology but whose actions were guided largely by caution, pragmatism, and moderation. In addition, by comparing Nixon's conservative judicial nominations with his more moderate choices, McMahon exposes the political and electoral drivers behind all of the selections. Throughout, McMahon emphasizes Nixon's ambition to bring new voters into the Republican party, highlighting not only the commonly noted “southern strategy” of building a Republican base among southern conservatives but also Nixon's often-downplayed efforts to appeal to white, working-class, ethnic social conservatives in the North—that is, to future “Reagan Democrats.” Assessing the electoral accomplishments of Nixon's judicial policy, McMahon concludes that Nixon deserves far more credit than he receives, at least in terms of his goal of constructing a new and enduring Republican coalition.

*Nixon's Court* offers a rich and nuanced chronicle. McMahon is at his best when analyzing the politics of Nixon's judicial nominations. He makes a strong case—especially in the context of these nominations—that Nixon's political and electoral interests carried more weight than his

ideological commitments. McMahon is less convincing in challenging those scholars who characterize Nixon's presidency as "erratic," "vacillating," and "consumed by his paranoia" (66). Though McMahon reveals ideological cleavages and illuminates electoral imperatives, he does not displace the lingering impression of a president whose policies were at times "defined more by their incoherence and chaotic nature than by anything else" (66–67).

Also less convincing is McMahon's analysis of Nixon's response to *Roe v. Wade*. According to McMahon, the administration's inaction on abortion and the president's indifference to limiting or reversing *Roe* provide support for the argument that Nixon did not strive for conservative counter-revolution: "[A] more ideologically committed president might have tried [to challenge *Roe*] in order to make a point to the public or to his electoral base if not to win before the high Court. After all, even though it knew the justices were unlikely to comply, the Reagan administration nevertheless repeatedly asked the Court to overturn *Roe*. During Nixon's time in the Oval Office, his administration pursued no such strategy (178)." This analysis would be persuasive if, indeed, there had been a deep-seated Republican ideological commitment at the time to reversing *Roe*. But the ideological opposition to abortion and the emergence of the pro-life movement that eventually helped propel President Reagan into office and into his steadfast pro-life position emerged later than McMahon acknowledges. The broad-based conservative revolt against *Roe* did not take off until Nixon was mired in the Watergate scandal. Thus, to interpret Nixon's inaction about *Roe* as evidence for his lack of ideological commitment is to read the abortion issue anachronistically.

Other aspects of Nixon's selective social agenda support McMahon's thesis. The author does well in documenting them, and, overall, *Nixon's Court* succeeds in presenting a balanced, provocative, and engaging book. McMahon's valuable effort to correct the record on the Nixon presidency should not go unnoticed.

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*Climate and Catastrophe in Cuba and the Atlantic World in the Age of Revolution*. By Sherry Johnson (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2011) 306 pp. \$39.95

Most of what passes for history with respect to natural disasters has tended to focus on individual events. This kind of study seems to do well in the publishing world, but at a price. Telling the story of a single natural disaster tends to reinforce the understanding of these phenomena as chance, freak occurrences removed from the social and environmental

context of “normal” life. Hewitt made precisely this point a generation ago, but despite his call for a form of analysis that tries to place natural disasters in their proper sociopolitical context, most of the work in history that emerges still concentrates on discrete, individual disasters.<sup>1</sup>

Given this background, it is refreshing to read a book about natural disasters in which the author has a keen sense for the big picture. Most historians are well aware of the revolutionary ferment that spilled across the Atlantic world during the half-century after 1750. What they are likely unaware of is the fact that this was a period of tremendous environmental dislocation. The source of this disruption was climate-based. Although the period under study in this book is normally considered part of the Little Ice Age, the years from 1750 to 1800 were, in fact, known for their droughts and hurricanes. The source of this climate stress was the severe weather caused by the El Niño and La Niña cycles. Recently, climatologists using proxy data—ice and sediment cores—have traced the history of the El Niño/Southern Oscillation cycle from the sixteenth through the early twenty-first century. Johnson has made excellent use of this science to supplement her historical study. In the process, she offers a fuller version of the contingency of past events.

Johnson points out, to take one example, that the British occupation of Havana beginning in 1762 was made possible by Spanish military unpreparedness. Although recent literature disagrees with this interpretation, Johnson establishes that the events in Havana unfolded after more than a decade of drought and hurricanes that compromised the food supply and led to disease. The strained social structure, in other words, figured in the city’s fall.

One of the most interesting sections of the book discusses the hurricane of Santa Teresa of 1768. Two years prior to the storm, the Caribbean basin experienced an especially active hurricane season. Drawing on post-disaster theory, Johnson shows how the unstable climate opened up opportunities for insurrection to take place. In Jamaica, slaves rebelled, killing a number of whites; social conditions were tumultuous, to say the least, during the years leading up to the 1768 disaster. The storm was ferocious, particularly in the western part of Cuba. But what is most intriguing about it was its aftermath. Those working for Charles III responded in a novel way to the disaster. To this point, there was no formal, deliberate structure in place to deal with such disasters. But the reaction to this hurricane represented a break with the past; the government carved out a role for itself in helping the populace recover from the calamity. For example, in those areas unaffected by the storm, governors were put on notice to contribute food for the recovery. Price gouging and speculation were censured, and prices controls were implemented. As Johnson writes, “The mitigation efforts after the hurricane

1 Kenneth Hewitt, “The Idea of Calamity in a Technocratic Age,” in *idem* (ed.), *Interpretations of Calamity from the Viewpoint of Human Ecology* (London, 1983), 3–32.

of 1768 are almost a textbook model of the way to respond to a potential catastrophe” (89).

This book is exemplary of the best in interdisciplinary scholarship and an important contribution to the field of natural-disaster history.

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*Everyday Reading: Print Culture and Collective Identity in the Río de la Plata, 1780–1910.* By William Garrett Acree, Jr. (Nashville, Vanderbilt University Press, 2011) 304 pp. \$55.00

Argentina and Uruguay, on either side of the Río de la Plata estuary, have the highest literacy rates and most vibrant literary cultures in Latin America. Acree argues that this exceptional intimacy with the printed word began even before the advent of mass literacy at the end of the nineteenth century. From the installation of the first printing press in Buenos Aires in 1780, everyday forms of writing and reading shaped the public sphere in the region like nowhere else in Latin America. Acree roams widely but nimbly over a variety of quotidian reading material, from newspapers and patriotic verse to textbooks and postage stamps. He balances a deep analysis of print media with vivid sketches of the printers, writers, and readers who participated in this unique print culture. Inevitably, however, in a monograph of fewer than 200 pages of text, covering two countries over a long and tumultuous period, historical contextualization is thin, and several important questions remain unaddressed.

Acree examines three key moments in the relationship between print and the public sphere in the Río de la Plata region. First, he looks at the explosion of print that accompanied the rebellion against Spanish colonial rule starting in 1810. Newspapers and patriotic pamphlets stoked the political revolution, introducing new symbols for the fledgling republics of Argentina and Uruguay. Second, Acree focuses on the popular literature celebrating gaucho life that emerged as cattle raising came to dominate the regional economy during the 1830s. This prose and verse, often read aloud at social gatherings, validated the authoritarian rule of the *caudillos* Juan Manuel de Rosas in Buenos Aires and Manuel Oribe in Montevideo and demonized their liberal enemies. It assumed a more elegiac tone during the 1860s, as modern agriculture began to make the free-ranging gauchos obsolete.

Acree’s concern with popular modes of print means that he does not discuss the most celebrated piece of gauchesque literature—Domingo Sarmiento, *Facundo* (Buenos Aires, 1845). A stinging indictment of caudillos and rural culture, written by a liberal exile for an urban elite audience, *Facundo* would not have been read aloud in the taverns of the Río de la Plata.

Finally, Acree examines the role of public primary education in creating a mass reading public by the turn of the twentieth century. His analysis of how children's textbooks instilled patriotic and republican values, including gender identities, is particularly effective in showing the relationship between print and group identities.

Historians will note a few shortcomings in Acree's work. He may exaggerate the exceptionalism of *rioplatense* print culture prior to mass literacy. Mexico, for instance, had printing presses since the sixteenth century and a sophisticated reading public when Buenos Aires and Montevideo were still raw contraband ports. Acree also does not fully explain why Argentina and Uruguay succeeded in promoting mass literacy through public education when the rest of Latin America came up short. Moreover, he concludes on a weak note, discussing stamps, currency, and cigarette cards; a treatment of the popular print media of Buenos Aires and Montevideo in 1910, such as the illustrated magazine *Caras y Caretas*, would have been a better complement to his examination of the revolutionary press of 1810. It could have shown how print facilitated the process by which European immigrants pouring into Buenos Aires became good citizens (and consumers).

These caveats aside, this elegant volume makes a significant contribution to our understanding of how print culture shaped collective identities during the era of nation-building in Latin America. Its brevity, sparkling prose, and well-selected illustrations recommend it for all scholars interested in print, literacy, and education in Argentina and Uruguay.

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*Damascus after the Muslim Conquest: Text and Image in Early Islam.* By Nancy Khalek (New York, Oxford University Press, 2011) 224 pp. \$74.00.

Today, the Umayyads make a more appealing subject to Western historians than to historians from the Islamic world because this first Islamic dynasty, though proudly Arab and vigorously involved in the spreading of Islam, has been increasingly acknowledged for its continuation of the practices and structures of Late Antiquity. Having chosen Bilad al-Sham (the Roman Oriens or the Holy Land), a thoroughly Christianized country, as their seat, the Umayyads both appropriated and were influenced by the composite religious, cultural, and material and artistic features in this former Byzantine land. Many scholars have argued this point so compellingly that the currently accepted end date for Late Antiquity is the early Abbasid period.

In *Damascus after the Muslim Conquest*, Khalek wants to problematize the continuity discourse by insisting that the Umayyads' identity itself was molded within the confines of Byzantine culture in Syria. The

place, its history, religious traditions, myths, and material culture, as well as the competition between the Muslim ruling minority and the Christian majority over the narratives that transmitted that heritage, are all fundamental in the formation of the Umayyad Islamic identity. In fact, Khalek pushes her argument in time to show that even centuries after the passing of the Umayyads, their memory in Syria, and the place of Syria itself in the Islamic sacred cosmology, were being refashioned against ideological and military threats using the same images and narrative techniques originally adopted from the local, Christian and Byzantine, milieu. Her main source for that contention is Ibn 'Asakir's *Tārīkh Dimashq* (the History of Damascus), the most famous compendium on Damascus composed in the twelfth century. But she also judiciously uses earlier, fragmented, and lesser-known "narratives," some of which have never been questioned, for their portrayal of Syrian-Islamic culture in its earliest manifestations.

Unlike many of her predecessors among social historians, Khalek uses both textual and pictorial/architectural evidence to build her thesis, although her handling of the latter material is less effective than her handling of the former. For her visual and architectural analyses, she depends on secondary sources, which come with their agendas and shortcomings, whereas her dealing with primary texts is direct, probing, and masterfully innovative. Narrative and iconography are the two main theoretical framers of her evidence. She deftly, though in a manner suggestive of a dissertation, constructs the semantic domains of both terms as they have evolved in recent critical thinking. She then foregrounds those theoretical constructs as a way to organize her analysis. She uses this strategy to examine texts, images, and buildings for what they can tell us about the multifarious processes by which the Umayyads, and the early Muslims in general, made sense of their cultural and ideological place in Syria, and at the same time appropriated that place to build their visions of themselves, their identity, and their religion.

Along the way, late Antique and Byzantine patterns were not only appropriated; they were transformed and, in a profound way, "Islamified," though not beyond recognition. The traces of their Late Antique roots remained discernible throughout the centuries between the Umayyads and the Crusades. They were then firmly incorporated in the official narratives of Islamic Damascus and its position within the constellation of Islamic sacred cities. Thus, Khalek wants us to remember that within the familiar representations of medieval Damascus as a sanctified city, proud of its material and discursive connections with early Islamic history and its makers, and resplendent with its contributions to Islamic learning and asceticism, lies a kernel of images and texts formed through both a conscious and spontaneous dialogue with the city's Late Antique legacy.

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*Pious Citizens: Reforming Zoroastrianism in India and Iran.* By Monica M. Ringer (New York, New York University Press, 2011) 280 pp. \$39.95

When presenting the first Hossein Ziai Memorial Lecture at the University of California, Los Angeles, in February 2012, Ringer described her book in terms of a “historiography of modernity.” This phrase neatly summarizes the broad methodology of her text, which focuses primarily on the Zoroastrians of India (known as Parsis), whose reformulation of the religion in response to nineteenth-century European concepts of modernity and civilization had a profound impact on their co-religionists in Iran. In tracing the re-conception of the Zoroastrian religion during a limited historical period within its two homeland settings, Ringer sets up a model for a wider, transcultural, mapping of paths to religious reform and of the sociopolitical dimensions of debate concerning “true religion” and religious “truth.”

Ringer demonstrates how Western definitions of modernity establish a dichotomous structure for discourse relating to religious reform. Reformers use the designations *modern*, *progressive*, *intellectual*, *scientific*, and *civilized* in their bid to legitimize their radical realignment of religion, and refer to *tradition* as *backward*, *entrenched*, *irrational*, or even *superstitious*. This power to define, Ringer notes (referring to Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of the intellectual field), is central to the production of knowledge and *truth* (11).<sup>1</sup> The dueling claims to “authenticity” or religious “truth” by reformists and traditionalists are based on both the interpretation of theology and the identification of the locus of interpretive authority.

The narrative of the book traces the evolution of understandings of “true” religion within the Zoroastrian setting in India and then Iran, echoing the religion’s transition with regard to its late modern articulations. The story begins with the rise of the Parsi merchant class under the British and ends slightly more than a century later with the re-imagining of Zoroastrianism as part of the rhetoric of Iranian nationalism.

With minimal restrictions in terms of caste or custom, urban Parsis engaged closely with Europeans, enhancing their status through business contacts and embracing Western-style education, dress, and practices of social integration, notably the introduction of women into the public arena. As Parsi lay leadership grew, so it began to comment decisively on religious issues as well as matters of social and political reform. Internal Parsi debate about the markers of religious truth was prompted by ideological attacks from Protestant proselytizers, particularly the Scottish

1 In an endnote, the author refers to Pierre Bourdieu, “Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction,” in Richard Brown (ed.), *Knowledge, Education and Cultural Change: Papers in the Sociology of Education* (London, 1974), 257–271; *idem*, “The Genesis of the Concepts of Habitus and Field,” *Sociocriticism*, II (1985), 11–24. See also *idem*, “The Intellectual Field: A World Apart,” in *idem* et al. (trans. Matthew Adamson), *In Other Words: Essays toward a Reflexive Sociology* (Stanford, 1990), 140–149.

missionary John Wilson, who castigated Zoroastrianism and its prophet as false and misguided. In response, both reformist and traditional Zoroastrians used the Western analytical tools of historicism and linguistics alongside European translations of Zoroastrian texts to generate respective reconstructions of the “original” teaching of Zarathushtra, which promoted its historical primacy, and its moral and intellectual progressiveness, over Christianity.

Reformist Zoroastrianism emphasized individualism and internalized piety and ethics but disparaged rituals. This approach was countered by self-defined orthodox Zoroastrians, whose own imagining of modernity led to their re-evaluation of some traditional aspects, specifically the education of priests. Orthodox laity and priests continued to affirm the value of ritual performed in its original language as cosmically efficacious in both the spiritual and material realms, but, ironically, access to Western religious scholarship led several of the next generation of priests to reformist positions. The most significant of these reformists was Dastur Dhalla, who became high priest in Karachi (126–134). This pattern was later repeated in Iran, spurred by the arrival of Parsi reformers. The Parsi re-imagining of the past appealed to Iranian Zoroastrians and also to Iranian nationalists, for whom Zoroastrianism was viewed as an authentic placeholder of Iranian culture and therefore integral to the reconstruction of Iranian society at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The book under review is as much about the social, political, and economic history of Zoroastrians in India and Iran as it is a history of religious reform. Its narrative has less to do with the complexities of theology than with the challenges to a minority community concerning its construction of Self and Other. Ringer’s specific study of the Zoroastrian responses provides a model for a wider analysis of the reciprocity operating between Western approaches to the non-West and the reception of “the West” by non-Westerners. The term *pious citizens* in the title reflects the symbiotic nature of the Western-defined relationship between moral religion and civilization, as well as between religious truth and social and political vitality. The book highlights the impact of Zoroastrian reform in recasting and rationalizing religion as an internalized human phenomenon, which shaped modern “pious” citizens with a sense of individual moral responsibility. Motivated by rational religion, these citizens saw themselves as agents for reform of both society and state.

Ringer forcefully demonstrates that religious change must be considered as a central feature in the construction of modern societies, in which citizens publicly identify themselves as members of a national community, superseding their private religious or sectarian identity. This book charts the Zoroastrian construction of its own alternatives to Western models of modernity; its rationalist religious discourse, along with that of other non-Western religions has, as Ringer concludes, “yet to be fully mined” (212).

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