

Reviews

State Formation in Italy and Greece: Questioning the Neoevolutionist Paradigm. Edited by Nicola Terrenato and Donald C. Haggis (Oxford, Oxbow Books, 2011) 281 pp. $70.00

The chapters in this volume are predominantly by archaeologists; the data set is comprised mostly of the excavated remains of burial sites, settlements, and other traces of human alteration of the landscape. But the central topic to be addressed is state formation, which is a mismatch with the evidence. Mortuary remains, surface scatters of pottery and other human artifacts, and foundations of buildings (or even better-preserved remnants of buildings) cannot inform us about a complex, nonmaterial, and essentially ideational social process like state formation. At best, evidence of certain kinds of large-scale buildings—fortification walls and/or palace complexes, for example—or of organized patterns of settlements and roads, may be suggestive of something that might legitimately be called a state, depending upon one’s definition of “state.” But to be certain that a state actually existed, and to say anything useful about its formation, requires the right sort of written source material.

This basic incongruity between, on the one hand, data and methodology and, on the other, goal or purpose overshadows this collection. The book’s surviving virtue lies in the fact that some of the chapters present and analyze interesting sets of archaeological data. Among the best in this regard are Chapter 3—“Society against the State? Contextualizing Inequality and Power in Bronze Age Crete,” by Krysti Damilaki and Giorgos Vavouranaki; Chapter 5—“Monumental Architecture and the Construction of the Mycenaean State,” by Rodney D. Fitzsimmons; Chapter 10—“Constructions of Authority through Ritual: Considering Transformations in Ritual Space as Reflecting Society in Iron Age Etruria,” by Carrie Murray; Chapter 13—“Seeds and the City: Archaeobotany and State Formation in Early Rome,” by Laura Motta; and Chapter 14—“Relocating the Center: A Comparative Study,” by Albert J. Ammerman.

Too many of the other chapters, however, seek to cover the mismatch between evidence and analysis through a recourse to methodological and/or compositional follies that are all-too-common in the ivory tower of academic research: One of these is the attempt to compensate for inadequate data by importing a “model” drawn from another field or discipline, thereby covering the gaps in data that would otherwise make useful analysis and far-reaching conclusions impossible.

As a case in point, J. Theodore Peña, purporting to illustrate “State Formation in Southern Coastal Etruria” (Chapter 9), employs as his prime heuristic tool something called the “Kipp-Schortman model.”!

This anthropological model posits that “when traders from state societies develop exchange relations with chiefdoms in the context of a trade di-

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aspora, exchange will at the outset assume the forms of gift exchange between elites” (quoted on 190). Regardless of the model’s validity, however, applying it assumes a number of things that Peña cannot prove—for example, the existence of chiefdoms in early Etruria and the practice of gift exchange between Etruscan and foreign elites. Although Peña’s chapter contains interesting material evidence of developing exchanges between Etruscans and Greek and Phoenician traders, its relevance to state formation is problematical at best, and the relevance of Kipp-Schortman is purely hypothetical, not to say implausible.

D. I. Redhouse and Simon Stoddart’s chapter, “Mapping Etruscan State Formation” (Chapter 8) illustrates another methodological folly—the attempt to compensate for inadequate data by using mathematical symbology and statistical formulae to disguise the arbitrariness of analysis. Redhouse and Stoddart use something called the “XTENT model” to apply “mathematical reasoning” to their topic (165): $I = f(C) - k.d (I \leq 0)$.\(^2\)

This formula certainly looks impressive, and—to the mathematically uninitiated—highly sophisticated. But doubts arise when the meaning of the symbols becomes clear. For example, \(k\) is a constant representing the fall-off of influence \((I)\), which, the authors assure us, they “investigated empirically.” But this constant is inherently immeasurable given the limited data set available and the lack of any definite criteria for determining influence (which is, after all, what this formula, with neat circularity, is supposed to measure). The key variable \(C\) stands for the size of the urban center assumed to be influencing smaller surrounding settlements. For the formula to be valid, accurate figures for \(C\) must be available, but Redhouse and Stoddart have to admit that they do not have any (166). They simply used estimates of the sizes, partly based on their own eyeballing of the sites. But absent reliable figures for \(C\), this ostensibly scientific formula becomes useless.

The conclusions that Redhouse and Stoddart reach simply confirm the standard picture drawn from eminently familiar written sources and from standard archaeological interpretations, except for one instance (Vetulonia) in which the authors are tellingly obliged to admit the superiority of the “historical reality” based on “traditional evidence” (174, 176). This chapter thus offers not science but pseudo-science—not surprisingly, given that Stoddart is the author, as his bibliography reveals (178), of a 1990 paper with the astounding title “The Domestication of the Proto-Villanovan Mind.”\(^3\) As the late great Louis Robert reputedly remarked in one of his infamously scathing reviews, “Le sujet n’existe pas.”

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Edward van der Vliet’s “The Early Greek Polis: Regime Building, and the Emergence of the State” (Chapter 6) suffers from a slightly different defect—the attempt to redeem the unhelpful analysis of inadequate evidence through constant reference to other modern scholarship. Van der Vliet can scarcely string three sentences together without embedding two or three citations in his text to render what is said, presumably, more plausible. Even the patently obvious requires a cited authority: “In this context, Huntington observes that the legitimation of institutions requires their persistency” (130). Indeed!

Beyond massaging the egos of the cited authors and his own ego by demonstrating his erudition, what does van der Vliet’s strategy achieve? His conclusion—“As far as archaic Greece is concerned, an essential and historical factor was the mutual exclusivity (and even enmity) of neighboring poleis and other polities, which blocked the way out for dissenters and thus impeded the possibility of fission” (130)—turns out to be faulty. In his love affair with “theory,” he has forgotten to be a historian. The well-known archaic colonization movement, in fact, provided a ready escape for dissenters and other disaffected, undervalued, or disadvantaged groups in the developing Greek city-states. Many exiled dissenters found refuge in hostile neighboring poleis where they plotted against their home cities. Not infrequently, exiled groups seized control of outlying settlements in their home poleis, creating precisely the sort of fission that van der Vliet rules out. Such ignorance of the facts is inexusable, irredeemable by any amount of scholarship cited from other disciplines.

State Formation in Italy and Greece does not do what its title promises. Too many of its chapters, though good in some respects, attempt to do more than is possible with the available data, and a number of them are, frankly, embarrassingly bad.

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The Problem of Slavery as History: A Global Approach. By Joseph C. Miller
(New Haven, Yale University Press, 2012) 218 pp. $30.00

This main aim of this ambitious book is to trace the creation of slavery rather than examine its features as a legal institution. As such, this book is also a reflection on history as a process. The author’s hope is that “historicizing slaving will suggest relevant strategies of moderating the circumstances that render some people vulnerable to enslavement and induce others to slave at their expense” (xi). The first chapter, “The Problem of Slavery as History,” takes seriously the intellectual challenge of thinking about slavery outside of the box of contemporary views. Motivated human action, carefully contextualized, is thus the starting point for Miller’s understanding of slaving. In analyzing slavery
as a strategy, the author convincingly ends up explaining the unprecedented manner of how slavery became institutionalized during the late eighteenth-century Americas. From this standpoint, the historical problem of slavery is political—how enslavers (insiders to a given society) appropriated outsiders’ (slaves’) energies in support of their own strategies.

Chapter 2 (“History as a Problem of Slaving”) seeks to discuss slaving in pre-history and antiquity in the Near East, Asia, and the Mediterranean. This chapter (together with the first half of the third chapter, on ancient Africa) is the least convincing one in the book; Miller reduces his discussion to basic second-hand considerations about slavery that are not far from those of Patterson and other authors whose approaches Miller previously qualified as “a-historical.”

Chapter 3 (at least the second part of it) on African slavery and Chapter 4 on the Americas are path-breaking and challenging enough to make this book a masterpiece. Miller begins with the simple but fertile assumption that Africa was significant to world history well before European colonialism. For example, the period running from 500 to 1500 C.E. was an era of innovative political consolidation among the already existing African communities. Personal networks were formed through commercial contacts, which developed sophisticated systems of credit and slaving. Yet, in the seventeenth century, the Dutch and the English introduced much greater quantities of mercantile credit, which intensified militarized strategies of slaving in Africa. Then, African buyers of European wares delivered nearly all the captives sold for transport to slavery in the Americas.

On the other side of the Atlantic (Chapter 4), the antebellum United States provided a distinctive, even unique, historical context. According to Miller, the motivating, enabling strategy of slaving in the Atlantic era was financial. The slaving Atlantic was built on a limited budget because most of the available capital was needed for agriculture and early industrial development in Europe. Hence, slavers were “marginal” in Europe; they had difficulties raising money, whether from interested monarchies or private lenders, to enhance their business. However, when public debt intensified governments’ interests in the slave trade, finance became as efficacious in the Euro-American Atlantic as it was in Africa; slaves became critical collateral behind the debt that financed the rapidly growing Atlantic economy. In other words, commercialized slaving was a core component of the fundamental process of capital accumulation and market organization that permitted the continuing escalation of slaving in Africa and the Americas. From this perspective, Europe, Africa, and the Americas during the slaving period can no longer be seen as separate, let alone inimical, entities, but as a unified world.

These and the many other original arguments in Miller’s book will surely provide a solid ground for the next generations of economic and

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1 See, for example, Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death* (Cambridge, Mass., 1982).

In Freedom Papers, Scott and Hébrard use five generations of the Tinchant family genealogy as a lens for understanding the complex Atlantic web of national and imperial power from the late eighteenth century to World War II. The saga begins in Senegambia with a woman “of the Poulard nation” who was later called Rosalie. A captive of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, a resident of revolutionary Saint-Domingue, and a temporary exile to Spanish Cuba, Rosalie was able to achieve a tenuous and contestable freedom. Her efforts launched her family on a trajectory through an “unknown zone of changing law” (46)—a phrase that sets the tone for subsequent chapters that follow Rosalie’s descendants into the interstices of various internally contradictory national and imperial systems.

The authors describe their book as a “micro-history set in motion” (4). Structured around arrivals and departures, the book charts the circulation of the Tinchants through far-flung yet interconnected locales, including most prominently the port cities of New Orleans, Veracruz, and Antwerp. With a truly transnational (rather than a simply comparative) approach, Scott and Hébrard mine public and personal documents retrieved from archives and private collections on three continents. In an instructive and unconventional “acknowledgements and collaborations” section, they demystify the process of archival research (243–252). They track the efforts of this family of African descent to secure recognition and protection within the flows of revolution and repression encompassing the Haitian Revolution, the French Revolution of 1848, and the U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction. They also detail the family’s participation as aspiring proprietors in the tobacco industry’s sprawling “commodity chain.”

As its title suggests, the book focuses on documents and their power within the bureaucracies of nation, church, and empire. The Tinchants were keenly aware that official papers—such as marriage certificates, bills of sale, formal declarations of citizenship, recognitions of paternity, and the like—mattered. Hence, they filed, concealed, and deployed these documents in creative and unexpected ways. The authors bring these shards of evidence together in the final chapter, which shows the Tinchants attempting to express their identities as “citizens beyond nation.”
Scott and Hébrard enact a methodology that bridges various subfields of history—cultural, economic, political, intellectual, and legal. In a number of exemplary close readings, they also engage techniques of literary scholarship. Not only do they place these “freedom papers” in the swiftly moving currents of history; they also discern subtle shifts in form and language, allowing readers to glimpse the intent of the people involved. As a result, the authors parse the language of rights, terms of citizenship, and “various elements of freedom” with uncommon historical and philosophical precision (45). Witness, for example, their discussion of Édouard Tinchant’s insertion of “public rights,” a notion forged in the French republican context, into U.S. political discourse (Chapter 7).

In short, Freedom Papers is an important contribution to historical, philosophical, and literary scholarship on the age of revolution and emancipation. Groundbreaking in its scope and methodology, it is well written, holding an almost novelistic suspense, especially its final pages, in which the family story culminates in Nazi-dominated Europe.

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A profound critique of “collective security” and the statesmen who relied on it, this impressive study by two distinguished American diplomatic historians examines international relations during the interwar period through the refractory lens of the Versailles Treaty. As in the painting on the book’s cover—Sir William Orpen’s “The Signing of Peace in the Hall of Mirrors, Versailles, 28th June 1919”—the complex world depicted in The Versailles Treaty and Its Legacy, as glimpsed through the elegant windows reflected in the mirrored wall behind the seated figures of President Wilson and other peacemakers, is cloudy, distorted, and broken. Could Wilson’s Covenant, and the League of Nations soon established (albeit without American participation), have corrected this fractured image, bringing lasting peace rather than allowing—or even causing—the more devastating next war that came to Europe and the world? The fundamental question posed by this book concerns the efficacy of treaty making, for good or for ill, in a dynamic world, in which paper commitments may not contain changing realities, in this case the rising power of Germany under Adolf Hitler.

Graebner and Bennett dissent from the view of MacMillan and other historians who consider that “the work at Paris was in no way responsible for what occurred later” (60, n.), and who hold that to blame the treaty itself is to ignore the actions of political leaders, diplomats, sol-
diers, and also ordinary voters for what happened in the twenty years following.\(^1\) Graebner and Bennett assign primary responsibility to the work of the peacemakers—what they did, what they thought, and, crucially, what they (Wilson in particular) caused others to think. Their view is that the creators of the Versailles system, led by Wilson, “saddled the world” with misleadingly “attractive post-war notions regarding international life,” including “the promise of collective security.” This “determined the behavior of nations between 1919 and 1939.” A fatal pattern was established. “That behavior, marked by the refusal of all of the victors at Versailles to assume responsibility for the defense of the treaty, ended with the catastrophe of another world war” (60, n.).

The Versailles Treaty with the League Covenant, in short, functioned as a political and intellectual straitjacket, which not only inhibited Germany but also constrained the Allies and Associated Powers. People supposed that the structure erected in Geneva made military alliances unnecessary and that peace could be maintained cooperatively. *Omnium contra unum* was the prevailing doctrine. The injustices that resulted from the compromises made at Paris in 1919 were not completely ignored, but most of them were assumed to be minor. The prevailing idea was that the League of Nations could make any necessary corrections by employing Article 19 of the Covenant, in the name of “peaceful change.” Such was the theory that Graebner and Bennett identify with American “internationalism.” They equate it with a rationale for keeping the status quo. It made no allowance whatsoever for violent change, on any scale. This outlook Graebner and Bennett consider unrealistic, even “utopian” (87).

The authors’ philosophical realism, influenced (for Graebner especially) by the writings of Morgenthau, is evident throughout this work—a cogent, dense amalgam of political reasoning and fine historical analysis (grounded in extensive archival research, such as that undertaken by Bennett for the book’s excellent description of Anglo-American relations).\(^2\) Their reality-based view of “what underlay the disaster of war” in 1939 and, by implication, of war in 1914, was a breakdown in the understanding of the balance of power, of the need for political flexibility, and of what they term the “diplomatic tradition” (247, 67). Graebner and Bennett’s emphasis on the factor of diplomacy, and its absence, is original and distinctive. They propose that a nation’s interests in the world can not only be expressed but also identified through the competitive process of direct diplomatic engagement.

This point applies with special force to the United States, which, because of its geographical separation, political isolation, and moral elevation could not easily determine what its “national interests” were on a

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\(^1\) For Margaret MacMillan’s perspective, see *Paris 1919: Six Months that Changed the World* (New York, 2001), 482, 493-494.

global scale, except maybe in the Western Hemisphere. President Wilson and, after him, Secretary of State Cordell Hull spoke in terms of “principles” that, being universal and abstract, committed the United States either to everything or to nothing. President Franklin D. Roosevelt was more realistic, but the “world conferences” that he occasionally considered, but never actually brought to fruition, to discuss all but the most nettlesome political-territorial issues, were too general—and, by 1939, too late. British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain remarked of him that it was “always best and safest to count on nothing from the Americans but words” (156). After Chamberlain’s cession of the Sudetenland at Munich, when Danzig became the apparent issue, Hitler—ruthless in pursuit of the overthrow, not just the revision, of the Diktat of Versailles—wondered whether Britain “had ever found a solution for any of the idiocies of Versailles by way of negotiation” (244). The Führer wanted war, which the major democratic powers were not forearmed to prevent and “the international community” at the League of Nations could not prevent.

Did the German attack on Poland of September 1, 1939, mark the ultimate “failure” of Wilson’s internationalist vision? The very finality of Graebner and Bennett’s historical judgment makes the present-day version of Wilsonianism, the United Nations Organization, look all the more dubious. Yet the institution exists and functions. What Wilson’s vision might have needed, for its gradual realization, was time—the benefit of further tragic experience, a second chance at peacemaking, and new international leadership. Such a longer-term historical view is not, however, the perspective embodied in The Versailles Treaty and Its Legacy. The failure of Wilsonian peacemaking at Paris appears, for them, definitive and conclusive: The Wilsonian “Legacy” ended.

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Monter takes the longue durée approach in his comprehensive study of European female rulers during the half millennium from 1300 to 1800. As the title suggests, this is not a book about queens; Monter confines his study mostly to sovereign women who served as legitimate heads of state from the high Middle Ages to the dawn of the modern era. He employs the term female king, first suggested in this reviewer’s 2006 work, The Lioness Roared, to emphasize the fact that these women fulfilled the office of king, rather than the role of queen.¹ But Monter’s approach is remarkably different from other scholars who have written about European female rulers in a similar fashion, such as Earenfight and Crawford,

who employed gender analysis and feminist theory in order to explain the phenomenon of female rule. In contrast, Monter seemingly has no use for feminist modes of analysis. Freeing himself from the restraints of theory, Monter attempts to impose an analytical approach to his topic that is occasionally contradictory. Claiming that conventional political theory is not helpful in analyzing female kings, he tries to downplay the differences between how male and female kings ruled, although much of the body of evidence offered suggests that men and women did, in fact, rule differently from each other. More salutary is Monter’s use of numismatic evidence, which provides an informative portal into the ways in which female kings created iconographic representations of themselves in coins, medals, and other forms of literary and cultural texts.

Although this book lacks a recognizable analytical framework, Monter constructs a sort of roughly chronological quantitative interpretation—perhaps not the best approach to a historical problem that is by nature qualitative. Monter identifies two distinct phases of female rule, with the year 1500 as the chronological dividing line. In the first phase, characterized by a succession of female kings in the tiny kingdom of Navarre, the solution consisted of female heiresses jointly sharing power with husbands who functioned as reigning kings. But in the second phase, joint sovereignty became the exception rather than the rule; early modern monarchs such as Elizabeth I of England, Christina of Sweden, Queen Anne of Great Britain, and an entire procession of Russian empresses discarded the male consort entirely. In the final pages of this book, Monter’s narrative about the discussion of Catherine II (The Great) of Russia becomes animated, exhibiting a level of enthusiasm normally reserved for Elizabeth I of England. It describes the remarkable career of a woman who defied the odds to emerge as possibly the most unfettered female sovereign in history, a fitting conclusion to this informative and well-written study.

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Ireland, Sweden and the Great European Migration, 1815–1914. By Donald Harman Akenson (McGill–Queen’s University Press, 2011) 293 pp. $65.00 cloth $34.95 paper

Akenson compares Ireland’s emigration with Sweden’s, although he has more to say about Ireland’s. He also offers a detailed analysis of the work of the experts in the field. What really interests Akenson, however, is the experience of migration, not, for example, the economic history of it. For example, those people who emphasize real income differences between, say, Ireland and the United States often think “that the consequences of a decision are the cause of that decision” (229). There are

2 Theresa Earenfight, Queenship in Medieval Europe (New York, 2013); Katherine Crawford, Perilous Performances: Gender and Regency in Early Modern France (Cambridge, Mass., 2004).
many things wrong with these data sets, but this fallacy is not one of them.

Akenson’s view is that more people could have left Ireland before the Famine than did—the O’Grada paradox. Why did people who were able to leave remain behind? The Irish population was increasing at an annual rate of about 1.4 percent during the 100 years before the Famine—much faster than that of rapidly industrializing Britain. In the 1840s, about 60 percent of the pre-Famine population lived in poverty; that is, they would have been at risk after only one year of distress. In Sweden, 40 percent of the population was at risk during the key decade of the 1860s. In other words, according to Akenson, the Irish were not alone.

The Famine changed Ireland into a county where emigration was normal and expected. Akenson holds that after the Famine, the Catholic Church changed the population dynamics by restricting sex before marriage, reducing future agrarian risk by tight controls on sexuality. The view that the Catholic Church acted in response to the Famine is not held by many people. Akenson also rejects the view that pre-Famine Ireland was “morally pure,” maintaining that just before the Famine, probably 20 percent of the women who were about to be married were pregnant at the altar.

There are some problems with the comparative approach. For one thing, Sweden might not be the best comparator. The Swedish depression (called the Great Deprivation) from 1867 to 1869 was the equivalent of the Famine in Ireland, but many of the Swedes who emigrated during the 1870s traveled more comfortably, by steamship, than the Irish did. Moreover, their rate of emigration was far lower than that of the Irish. Sweden’s decadal emigration rates were 0.5, 3.1, 2.4, 7.0, and 4.1 between 1851 and 1900 (lower than Britain’s), whereas Ireland’s were 14.0, 14.6, 6.6, 14.2, and 8.9 during the same period. Furthermore, the Irish preferred urban settings wherever they went. Their westward movement in the United States was far more limited than that of the Swedes and others. Akenson says nothing about the sex ratio. Irish migrants were almost 50 percent female, a figure that was unique in this period. Returns are also a problem in Akenson’s scheme. The rate of return migration to Ireland was unusually low; returns to Sweden were about 20 percent until 1930.

This book does not tell specialists much more than they already know about these migrations, largely because Akenson’s real interest, the experience of migration, is not really knowable. Nonetheless, the book is a fine survey of Irish and Swedish emigration in the broad sense.

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In War’s Wake: Europe’s Displaced Persons in the Postwar Order. By Gerard Daniel Cohen (New York, Oxford University Press, 2012) 237 pp. $34.95

When the Nazis finally surrendered in May 1945, 8 million civilians who had been torn from their homes and homelands were stranded in Germany, constituting a new category of war victims—displaced persons (DPs). Most of them wished to return to their native countries, and within a few months, all but about 1.2 million did. But that “last million” objected to repatriation. Cohen’s book is about the international politics, stretching until the early 1950s, surrounding the attempt to deal with this diverse population of Jewish survivors, as well as the Poles, Baltic peoples, and Ukrainians who did not wish to live under Communist regimes in their homelands.

The postwar refugee problem was unprecedented. Despite the millions of DPs across the world, the last million Europeans received unique attention from the victorious Allies, the United Nations (UN) (and its newly founded International Refugee Organization [IRO]), and Western human-rights activists.

Unlike Anna Holian’s recent book, Between National Socialism and Soviet Communism: Displaced Persons in Postwar Germany (Ann Arbor, 2011), which focuses on how the refugees themselves developed conflicting political agendas within DP camps, Cohen emphasizes the role of international jurists, political philosophers, and activists from welfare organizations in creating expansive conceptions of human rights through their advocacy on behalf of the DPs. He pays significant attention to the writings of Hannah Arendt, Eleanor Roosevelt, and of lesser-known American figures within the IRO, such as the aid worker Kathryn Hulme and General Director J. Donald Kingsley.

DP politics intersected with conflicting Cold War nationalist agendas. Most Jewish DPs wished to go to Palestine, but the British and Arab governments tried to limit Jewish immigration severely. American politicians expressed idealistic conceptions of free movement, but only reluctantly did they ease existing restrictive, fundamentally antisemitic immigration laws and policies. The Soviet government, desperate for labor to rebuild after the German devastation of the western USSR, demanded the immediate return of its former citizens, hoping also to prevent them from contributing to the increasingly vocal anti-communism of the West.

Cohen’s identification of the DP camps as a “field of experimentation” is a reference primarily to the elite inquiry that developed the structures, principles, and language of modern human rights as international law (82). He studies the political and intellectual experimenters, far outside the camps.

The Soviet refusal to accept the IRO’s constitution at the end of 1946 or to join in its work allowed American interests to become predominant within the IRO. The international political implications of refugee
work, the increasingly important leadership role of the IRO, and the power of American funding behind that bureaucracy transformed what had once been charity work into “liberal humanitarianism.” Cold War liberalism infused the “emergence of enforceable international rights” (99). Discussions of DPs showed significantly less concern for anti-fascism than for anti-communism, excluded consideration of the millions of refugees and dissidents in European colonies across the globe, and promoted political dissidents from Eastern Europe as ideal refugees.

Although DP camps in Germany did not disappear until 1957, the European refugee crisis officially ended in 1951, the same year as the UN’s promulgation of the Geneva Refugee Convention, the so-called Magna Carta for refugees. Despite the politicization of the plight of the refugees during the postwar period, Cohen makes a persuasive case for its significance in creating the intellectual framework for our current worldwide concern for, but still limited willingness to accept, refugees. Its concept of the refugee as “any person which owing to a well-founded fear of persecution is outside of his country” created political criteria for judgments about asylum seekers that continue to be dominant today.

On the ground, organizations that had dispensed charity in ways familiar for hundreds of years began a transformation into nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), competing with governmental power in the international arena. As the arm of the new United Nations, the IRO led the way, notably in its advocacy for Jewish emigration to Israel.

Cohen makes expansive claims for the significance of his subject. His assertion that the DP question was the first real confrontation of the Cold War (19), “the first international stage for a ‘clash of civilizations’ between the coalescing West and the nascent Soviet bloc” (28), is overstated. He is persuasive about how the international controversy over Jewish Holocaust survivors in Germany promoted the creation of the state of Israel, but not about his claim that it was an indispensable cause (149).

Cohen, along with Holian, reliably and intelligibly places the vast migratory movements of DPs into the political contexts in which their mobility was debated and administered. As yet, our understanding of the actual migratory process, the social histories of refugee movements around the globe, lags behind.

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That the poor are always with us was a touch of worldly reality known only too well by the people of England—from whoever graced the
throne down to those who composed the ever-growing legions of the “aged, impotent, and poor . . . sick and maimed soldiers and mariners . . . [and] persons decayed,” as characterized in the famous Elizabeth poor law of 1601.

In this wide sweep of social and legal history, McIntosh bravely overleaps the traditional boundary of the Reformation, discussing her subject from the early days of post-plague society (with its greatly diminished population and relative affluence for many of the survivors) to the turn of the seventeenth century. By the latter date, the malevolent conjunction of such forces as a growing population, inflation, and a series of poor harvests had conspired to make the problems of both rural and urban poverty ubiquitous—especially in a world that feared “masterless men” and idol vagrants who might turn to crime and violence whenever opportunity offered. McIntosh’s chronology ranges from a medieval world of purgatory and indulgences, with doctrines and institutions that loosened pocketbooks and founded hospitals and almshouses, to a new world in which Protestant and humanistic mores worked in consort with governmental concerns and policies.

The Elizabethan poor laws of 1598 and 1601 came as the climax, or the logical conclusion, to several centuries of searching for a way to accomplish the worthy, if elusive, goal of regulating, controlling, and perhaps even ameliorating the conditions of people who lived on the margins of society. By 1601, volunteerism had given way to what, in effect, was a set tax to dull the sharpest edges of poverty. The parish was designated as the unit of government (and of social interaction) that would be the focal point of collecting and disbursing; it remained so until 1834. Licensed begging was no more. Its haphazard nature as a form of social welfare was made even more obsolete by the ease with which fraudulent letters of permission could be obtained, as well as by the chicanery of local authorities who were not held to account for money raised or bequests that they were meant to distribute.

McIntosh supports her positions with a database of statistical and tabular material (given in the appendixes) of her own construction, giving statistical support to an evolutionary or developmental view of social awareness and then of social change. McIntosh moves past fifteenth-century worries and early Tudor legislation in her close analysis of the various approaches that the have-tos took in their dealings with the have-nots. But beyond the numbers, McIntosh builds her argument by way of case studies and anecdotes or vignettes—for example, the 12d. given by Nottingham officials to “4 lame men coming from Kendall going unto the bath in Leicester shire” or those fortunate unfortunates at St. Thomas’ Hospital in London who received some beef or mutton four days a week and then, as a supplement, some cheese or butter on the other three.

This study rests on the organization of data and the mining of the archives of thirty-five counties and regional repositories. It stands as a worthy sequel to the pioneering work of Jordan, whose research on this
topic inspired McIntosh’s sympathetic studies. They show how large social issues can be illuminated when examined at the level of the village and the local community.¹

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Embodied in a handful of manuscripts, the central evidence for Dillon’s book consists of several hundred short polytextual motets composed in late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century France. The distinctive feature of this new genre was the overlapping of (usually three) voices, each with its own words, which arguably gave rise to an effect that made the sense of the words subordinate to the sounds that accompanied them.¹ The crux of Dillon’s argument is that these musical sounds themselves conveyed a range of supplemental, “supermusical” meanings that had a demonstrable relationship with other, nonmusical, sounds that had meaning for people at the time—including city sounds, the noise of charivari, the nonsense of the madman, and the sounds of public and private prayer.

Methodologically, Dillon draws on theoretical insights from the field of sound studies (a still-developing discipline that “listens” to the “soundworlds” of particular societies and individuals), combining them with the techniques that cultural historians and musicologists now use to interrogate medieval manuscripts.² The twist, however, is that she is not trying to recover past sounds, but following Bakhtin’s dialogical model, to explore how sound entered into the cultural production of artists (musicians, poets, illuminators, and manuscript makers) who constructed the sense for sound in the act of representing it.³ Some of these representations are reproduced in the book (black and white images, verses, and musical examples) and on a companion website (color pictures), but pre-


² Note that Christopher Page, Discarding Images: Reflections on Music and Culture in Medieval France (New York, 1994), for example, suggests that motets were not aimed at a listening audience but rather composed by and for a clerical elite who sang them as private recreation. Thus, the particular effect that Dillon describes was never experienced widely, not even among the nobility.

sumably, and regrettably, for reasons of cost and copyright, no recorded interpretations of the motets that are central to Dillon’s argument are available.

Dillon’s methods are exemplified in the second chapter, which explores how artists represented the soundscape of medieval Paris in various media. One source is the illuminated manuscript *Vie de Saint Denis* (1317), some of the magnificent images of which portray civic hubbub and song as constitutive of the city’s life. Next she examines four texts describing Paris and its commonplaces, showing how various rhetorical techniques vividly convey and give meaning to the chaotic sounds of the city. Among the most notable are the cries of street vendors, an audible trace of which finds its way into one of the few motets that refer explicitly to Paris. According to Dillon, this contrived musical effect recalls and idealizes the sounds of the city and suggests that the artists involved recognized an affinity between urban sound and song that “contrives words to clash and cancel out their semantic content” (90).

This strategy of juxtaposing sources that are not normally considered to be related is repeated to good effect in subsequent chapters, which gradually attune readers’ attention to more aspects of sonic experience in the Middle Ages. Dillon’s new way of imagining the past and will hopefully “encourage others to turn an ear to the acoustic past” (328), including those who have no idea what a motet sounds like.

Penelope Gouk
University of Manchester


The revolt in Buzançais of January 1847 began as a traditional grain riot; townspeople, squeezed by unemployment and high prices, were provoked by the sight of a grain convoy passing through the town. The riot escalated into three days of violence, culminating in the brutal stabbing and bludgeoning death of a property owner who had shot and killed one of the protestors. The waning July Monarchy mounted a serious repression, including a major trial and three death sentences. The event, its just-price origins an unwelcome anachronism in the era of liberal economics, resonated powerfully with the French public and contributed to the sense of unease that preceded the 1848 revolution. The Buzançais uprising seemed to be more, or to stand for more, than it was; for that reason, the event has been periodically re-told in a variety of media, including a contemporary re-enactment in the town itself.

As Bouton notes, the event does not have immediate name recognition among the general public. Instead, the story has popped up from time to time, resuscitated for political, and often commercial, purposes.
Bouton, author of *The Flour War: Gender, Class and Community in Late Ancien Regime French Society* (Philadelphia, 1993)—an examination of a series of politicized grain riots—returns to the intersection of hunger and authority in her new book; this time, however, she examines the event and the works of imagination that the Buzançais riot inspired, discussing along the way the publishing and newspaper industries.

The re-tellings of the event generally seem to have fallen into two broad narrative trajectories, two examples of which suffice. Jules Vallès’ novel, *Les Blouses*—first serialized in 1880—portrayed the event as a struggle in the ongoing battle against social injustice. The visual images of Mario Simon in the re-published version of 1919 (reproduced in Bouton’s book) highlighted the archetypal character of the Old Woman, who both inspired the crowd and attempted to restrain it from mindlessness (she also seems reminiscent of the title character in the 1926 Soviet film *Mother*, directed by Vsevolod Pudovkin). In direct contrast was a 1956 illustrated series, “Le Jacquerie de Buzançais,” which ran for nineteen days in the newspaper *France-Soir* (as part of a series suggestively titled “Crime Doesn’t Pay”). Its chief character was Baptiste Bienvenu, a sinister, axe-wielding worker; among its images was a graphic portrayal of the pitchfork murder of the man of property. The story in this case served to examine issues of law, order, and social stability. Bouton speculates that *France-Soir’s* circulation-boosting serial resonated with the post–World War II anxieties—high prices and hoarding, combined with rapid modernization—that had also created the lower-middle-class phenomenon of Poujadism.

Bouton, in this illuminating and well-researched study of the “interplay of popular culture and collective memory” is not so much focused on the event per se—though she covers it ably, too—than on its longevity and plasticity in politics and art (5); to each era, its own Buzançais.

Jill Harsin
Colgate University


In *The Pariahs of Yesterday,* Moch makes her comeback to the history of internal migrations in modern France, to which she had devoted a path-breaking book nearly twenty years ago—*Paths to the City: Regional Migration in Nineteenth-Century France* (New York, 1983). The title of her latest work comes from an expression coined by François Cadic in 1899 to characterize the regional flow of Breton migrants to Paris who were globally poorer, and condemned to more modest economic niches, than the other native emigrants from the French provinces. They were pari-
ahs because Bretons were the last wave of internal migrants to have experienced a massive attraction to the capital. As such, they constituted the missing link between ancient provincial streams of mobility and twentieth-century foreign and colonial immigration. They were pariahs also because zealous end-of-the-century ideologists and politicians considered Bretons to be a backward Celtic people, who needed to be converted to the great lay, supposedly universal, République, which was then under construction. One anticlerical weekly, L’Assiette au Beurre, treated “the Breton trash [as] the negro of France.”

In the 1891 census, 88,000 Bretons were registered in Paris and its blooming suburb. Most of them were (female) servants and (male) unskilled workers, but Moch complicates the picture. Through a sample of marriage certificates allowing her to compare two extremely different areas, she shows the progressive diversification and rise of Bretons’ occupations toward skilled and white-collar positions—a process that started early in the socially mixed arrondissement surrounding the Montparnasse station in Paris, eventually reaching Saint-Denis, a working-class town in the north of Paris, during the interwar period. Moch stresses how the demographic diversity of this immigrant population—in terms of fertility, endogamy, and illegitimacy—was related to its local origins. Brittany was divided politically, religiously, and even linguistically (between French and Breton-speaking areas), and its variations segmented the immigrant community in Paris.

By qualifying classical statements about Bretons’ social status and homogeneity, Moch, who also uses memoirs and interviews collected around the 1980s, directly questions the cultural and political representations that accompanied their settlement into the Paris region. Her book efficiently unearths a series of forgotten characters—Jean Lemoine, François Cadic, Arsène-Guillaume Trégoat, René Le Fur, Suzanne Ascoët, and Elie Gautier—who both promoted philanthropy among their fellows (charities, clothing banks, employment agencies, and medical care), and acted as their spokesperson through books and newspapers. Most of them were active Catholics, some of them even priests (nuns also played an active part among charities), but Moch does not forget socialist networks, even though she might have devoted more attention to them.

All of those self-designated advocates were struggling against great odds to maintain the dignity of their (imagined) community. The stereotype of the poor, filthy Breton went hand-in-hand with that of the stupid female servant, fluctuating between sexual naivety and excessive sensuality. They soon gave way to mockery of the ridiculous Bécassine, one of the first French comic strips, which was due to become a several-decade-long bestseller. Moch follows the durable traces of these clichés in the most “legitimate” literary writings, from Guy de Maupassant and Émile Zola to Octave Mirbeau and Roger Martin du Gard. Most interesting is the way in which Moch studies the Breton reaction toward these caricatures. In the 1930s, cinematographic transpositions of these
depreciative clichés prompted actual riots from a community whose social and economic integration in Paris was now complete. The time was ripe to transfer the racist burden on other shoulders, Jewish immigrants ranking then at the top of the list.

The book ends in the 1970s, when doubt about modernization accumulated and Republican self-confidence waned: Ethnological testimonies and Celtic music then paved the way to a mix between pride and nostalgia, which in contemporary France characterizes feelings of regional identification. Moch might have investigated more deeply the economic and political interests that help to explain why some Breton immigrant elites rather than others were willing and able to advance their community, as Françoise Raison-Jourde did in *La Colonie Auvergnate de Paris au XIXe siècle* (Paris, 1976). Nevertheless, *The Pariahs of Yesterday* provides a sensitive model that can be applied to the study of many settlement processes in unfriendly environments.

Paul-André Rosental
Sciences Po, Paris

*Interstizi: Culture ebraico-cristiane a Venezia e nei suoi domini dal medioevo all’età moderna.* Edited by Uwe Israel, Robert Jütte, and Reinhold C. Mueller (Rome, Edizioni di Storia e litteratura, 2010), 600 pp. N.P.

This book has great import for many aspects of the history of the Jews in the Venetian state, especially, but not exclusively, in the social, economic, and legal spheres. As its subtitle promises, it sheds much light on the evolution of Jewish–Christian interactions. Those interested in that general subject, as well as in the particular topics that the volume covers, would do very well to consult it. Those, however, who would like more information about Homi K. Bhabha’s theory of *Interstizi*, from which the volume’s title derives, would do better to look elsewhere—for example, in the opening pages of Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture* (New York, 1994), which offer an examination of the overlapping and displacement of domains of difference.

After a brief editorial foreword, in Italian and German versions, the book begins with a reproduction of a letter written in Latin by Cardinal Basilios Bessarion, then papal legate in Venice, in 1463. It reassures the Doge of Venice that all agreements made with Jews were to be observed and that they could live in peace and tranquility and do business freely. The transcription of this material—also translated into Italian and German, with notes and two related documents—merits special attention because it constitutes the first critical edition of an important medieval text about the interaction of Jews and Christians.

The rest of the collection contains eighteen chapters—eleven in Italian, five in English, and two in German—divided into four thematic sections: *Introduzione, Economia e Società Nello Stato di Terrafirma, Econo-*
omia e Società Nello Stato da Mar, and Cultura e Scienza. The volume concludes with English abstracts of the articles and a useful index of names and places. Many of the chapters contain new information derived from the archives that should enter the mainstream of historical research; others present new perspectives through a detailed discussion of a single issue or theme.

Despite the significance of the individual components of the book, however, a detailed opening essay (rather than merely two general paragraphs in the forewords) specifically devoted to Bhabha’s theory, with special emphasis on its application to the complex question of Jewish–Christian relations and the insights that it can yield, would have been helpful. Only five of the eighteen chapters mention Bhabha at all, and only three of them in any detail. Additionally, the extent to which Bhabha’s ideas informed the methodologies of the scholars who cite him—rather than merely confirming the results of historical research undertaken in more traditional ways—remains unclear.

Benjamin Ravid
Brandeis University

Jews Welcome Coffee: Tradition and Innovation in Early Modern Germany. By Robert Liberles (Waltham, Brandeis University Press, 2012) 169 pp. $85.00 cloth $35.00 paper

This is a short book about some large and important topics. Its main theme is assimilation, both of things and of peoples. It compares the introduction and assimilation of coffee into early modern central Europe with the assimilation and accommodation of Jews into early modern German society. Liberles notes that Central European Jews developed a taste for coffee quickly and that, on the whole, they faced comparatively fewer religious or moral objections about drinking it than did Gentile German communities, many of which sought to regulate, or even ban, coffee drinking or coffeehouses. Furthermore, many Jews became involved in the coffeehouse trade, both as patrons (or proprietors) of coffeehouses and as traders in coffee. Liberles finds evidence of Gentile resistance to the assimilation of Jews into this social world, which many historians link to the emergence of a new secular and bourgeois public sphere.

Historians of urban society in Central Europe have often noted the prominent role that Jews played as coffeehouse patrons and proprietors in the modern age. The cultural world of the coffeehouses, particularly in the late Habsburg cities of Vienna, Prague, and Budapest, is often associated with a putative golden age of Jewish society in the years between emancipation and the Holocaust, as works by Torberg and Segel will attest. The early modern origins of this efflorescence of Jewish coffeehouse culture, however, are not so well understood; Liberles’ book is a welcome and important contribution to this historiography.

Jews Welcome Coffee is far from a complete history of the reception of coffee in early modern Germany. For one thing, it discusses the late eighteenth-century trend in several German states to regulate coffee consumption—a complex topic—in just five pages (26–31). The bulk of the original archival research for the book concerns the city of Frankfurt and, to a much lesser extent, Berlin, whereas information relating to other German cities tends to be gleaned from secondary sources. Liberles attempted to locate further information about Jews and coffee culture in other German cities, such as Metz, Strasbourg, and Hamburg, but apparently the archival record of these cities is not nearly so rich (85–86).

Liberles situates his work within the historiography of everyday life in early modern Jewish society, but he does not engage with the substantial scholarly literature about early modern sociability and public life in Germany—by, for example, Blanning, van Horn Melton, or Hertz—or, more surprisingly, the influential arguments of Habermas about the origins of the bourgeois public sphere. Hence, he misses an opportunity to advance the history of the Jewish role in creating a distinctively Germanic coffeehouse culture in the years between the end of the Thirty Years’ War and Napoleon Bonaparte’s dismantling of the Holy Roman Empire.

Nevertheless, Liberles provides several important leads for future scholars of this important theme in early modern social history. The most interesting, and best documented, chapters are the final two, which primarily concern with regulation of Jewish participation in the coffee trade and access to coffeehouse society in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Frankfurt. Many Christian merchants and civic authorities were opposed to Jews participating in the coffee trade, while others resented Jews frequenting public coffeehouses outside of their ghetto. Liberles’ work demonstrates that the participation of Jews and Gentiles in coffeehouse society at the time was hardly on equal terms; it

1 Friedrich Torberg (trans. Maria Poglisch Bauer and Sonat Hart), Tante Jolesh, the Decline of the West in Anecdotes (Riverside, 2008; orig. pub., in German, 1973); Harold B. Segel, The Vienna Coffeehouse Wits 1890–1939 (West Lafayette, Ind., 1993).

is certainly not evidence for Jewish assimilation into a predominantly Christian Germany: “When Jews and Christians did sit in the same tavern or coffeehouse, they often sat at separate tables” (132).

Unfortunately, Liberles did not live to see this book published, but he left his readers with a tantalizing set of speculations and archival trails that will surely lead to further work about early modern German coffee culture.

Brian Cowan
McGill University

_Catholicism and the Roots of Nazism: Religious Identity and National Socialism._ By Derek Hastings (New York, Oxford University Press, 2010) 290 pp. $29.95 cloth $21.95 paper

In the later years of Nazi Germany and in the postwar era, first the Nazis themselves and subsequently the spokespersons for the Catholic Church found it expedient to minimize or deny their close connection during the early days of Nazism. From the perspective of a Party that had turned vehemently against Christianity, actively persecuting Catholic clergy and institutions, it clearly was not expedient for the Nazis when in power to emphasize the ties that they once had with the Church from 1919 to 1923. During the Nazi regime, when they were being persecuted, and in the postwar years when it had become fashionable to denounce that regime, Catholics were especially loathe to recall how many among them, including priests, had been enthusiastic participants in the formative years of a movement that was to bring horror and destruction to Germany and the rest of the world. Hastings deserves credit for lifting the veil of neglect and disinformation from an important aspect of the Nazi Party’s early days.

Utilizing a truly enormous array of archives, contemporary newspapers, and magazines, as well as the relevant literature, Hastings demonstrates why certain Catholics around Munich, as opposed to those in other parts of Germany, were disposed to join the Nazi Party in the immediate post–World War I years. Their opposition to the Center Party that appealed to many Catholics throughout Germany, as well as their insistence on a greater degree of independence from Rome, led them to accept the platform of “positive Christianity” that comprised part of the Nazi Party’s original and official program. By delving carefully and deeply into the contemporary press and other publications, Hastings reveals the reciprocity between Adolf Hitler’s public avowal of his Catholic identity and the Catholic priests’ encouragement of their congregants to join the Nazi Party. As would occur later and elsewhere in Germany, university students in post–World War I Munich who identified themselves as Catholics moved toward the party that appeared to share their nationalistic and antisemitic views. This political alliance came apart...
when Hitler openly embraced racist movements, like Erich Ludendorff’s anti-Catholic organization, for the attempted coup of November 1923.

In the aftermath of the failed coup, as Hitler became ever-more anti-Christian in his orientation and oratory, many, though not all, of the Catholic clergy who had supported the Nazis turned away from them. Hastings shows, however, how both sides of this growing divide retained two common elements from their prior relationship—a strident nationalism, which would eventuate into another war, and an extreme antisemitism, which already included repeated references to “extermination” as the appropriate direction of policy.

All that is missing from the book is a discussion of the origins and effects of the policies that were implemented in Bavaria after Hitler came to power due to the ongoing determined advocacy of politicians and clergymen.

Gerhard L. Weinberg
University of North Carolina


In *The State of Health*, Cocks examines a set of compelling and interlocking themes in the social history of medicine and in the history of Nazi Germany. Principally, the book’s subject is illness and health in the Third Reich, but Cocks also aims to contribute to the history of the modern self. This forthrightly interpretive work is not an attempt to treat any one topic exhaustively. It likely will, and indeed should, inspire further research.

Cocks begins by laying out some of his conceptual and historical starting points. Views of aging, illness, and death fundamentally shifted during the nineteenth century from a “pre-modern resignation” toward an increasingly medicalized “search for treatment and cure” (21). This change, he argues, brought a “preoccupation with...the newly medicalized body and mind of the self” (103), which was concomitant with the creation of a new subjectivity, grounded—as Cocks frequently asserts—in individuals’ self-knowledge of their morbid, mortal, and sexual bodies. Cocks links this development to Germany’s industrialization and unification—in short, its “modernization,” which he finds to have been “peculiar in degree and kind” (4): “The social, economic, and political organization of material interests in modern Germany was a vital condition determining individual and social experience” (19). The corporatism of German society set the stage for this “peculiar” German modernity, one both productive of and at variance with the needs and dictates of the “individual self.”

As the location of this self, the body was constantly challenged in
Germany by illness, hunger, and death. But nothing made the fragility and mortality of human bodies more evident or more troubling than the technologized warfare of the years between 1914 and 1918. In Chapter 3, “The Body Politic,” Cocks offers a fascinating, psychoanalytically inflected reading of Adolf Hitler’s wartime experience of being gassed. That experience had powerful effects, laying bare how “questionable if not meaningless the cultural association of masculinity with will and power” became with the onset of industrial killing. Having experienced his own mortal weakness, Hitler spent the rest of his life projecting that frailty outward, and onto the “Other—as unfit und unworthy” (36)—with devastating consequences for Jews, handicapped persons, homosexuals, and other groups. At the same time, the Nazi state’s “shrill and endlessly repeated insistence on health” touched almost everyone, terrifying the great along with the small (104). The State of Health is, in one sense, a portrait of social pathology as governmental form.

Yet the book does not always follow up on the methodological or substantive promise of Chapter 3. Many of the chapters take a less adventurous social-historical look at “the state of health” for various populations of Germans—women, workers, and soldiers. Drawing upon a considerable body of evidence, Cocks shows how profoundly unhealthy the Third Reich was not only for the explicit victims of the regime but also for many Germans who did not suffer persecution. Mental illness, nervousness, and depression resulted from the pressures to continue to work despite the war and the terror unleashed by Allied bombings. Germans also suffered from disease, a lack of adequate or proper food, and a lack of access to care and medicines. When they could get a doctor’s appointment, they feared their doctors, feared being sterilized, and feared needing medication. They also feared pain, but they probably feared being weak, or being wounded, even more. At the same time, Cocks offers relatively little discussion of what illness (and health) meant to Germans, besides being a source of anxiety. Surely it is true that illness is a “negotiation of fact and discourse” (66), but the culture of sickness—of the meanings of health/illness, and what these looked, felt, smelled, and sounded like for Germans in the Third Reich—also deserves attention.

The central explanatory category of The State of Health is modernity, as embodied in particular state forms and economic relationships, which determined and produced the “individual self.” Modernity, Cocks tells us, connects the Germany of the 1930s and 1940s to other parts of Europe and to North America—that is, to other societies that emphasized individuals’ right to health (vouchsafed by a powerful and all-providing state) and linked it to their contributions to the public good. In the Third Reich, this bargain not only took the form of childbearing, soldiering, or laboring but also a generalized “sacrificing.”

But is this modern self really singular across time and space? Is it not possible that a wholly new form of subjectivity was under construction in the Third Reich, one centered on honor, the embracing of death, a stoic acceptance of pain for collective advancement, and a meaningful
compulsion to sacrifice combined with the urge toward personal attainment associated with “the” modern self?

These questions hold important consequences for this book. Though Cocks is at pains not to see the Nazi notion of Volksgemeinschaft (national or racial community) as “just an artefact of a darkling German past” (13), The State of Health consistently sets “Germans” (as modern, individualist selves) in an uneasy tension with “Nazis” (modern, yet really unmodern, collectivists). Rather than explaining something, Cocks’ idea of modernity just gets in the way; its telos makes the Nazi project appear doomed to fail from the start. “[M]odern habits of body, mind, self, and o/Others, even though not as manifestly powerful as Nazism at its brief and horrible zenith, certainly proved more durable in the end (271).” This point makes certain questions difficult to answer. “German tenacity in battle until the end of the war,” in Cocks’ reading, becomes principally an “expression of modern and material individual ‘pride and self-assertion’ (255),” as if Nazism never really changed anything at all. In light of much recent scholarship on the power and persuasion of the ideal of national community in the Third Reich (the work of Fritzsche, Kühne, and Wildt, for example), many historians will find this explanation less than convincing.¹

Monica Black
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Portrait of a Province: Economy, Society, and Civilization in Nineteenth-Century Nizhnii Novgorod. By Catherine Evtuhov (Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011) 320 pp. $34.95

Social and economic histories of tsarist Russia are frequently told at a macro-level with occasional allusions to events in the capital cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg. Unfortunately, such perspectives tend to miss much of the rich socio-economic variation that was evident across the vast Empire. In this impressive and wide-ranging book, Evtuhov offers an important corrective to several strands of the historical literature about Russia that tend to overemphasize the aggregate story at the expense of local nuance. Her focus is the province of Nizhnii Novgorod during the last two-thirds of the nineteenth century. The province, which lies along the Volga River roughly 250 miles east of Moscow, offers a rich arena for examining how the cultural, political, economic, and social influences of the absolutist center were countered, accommodated, or ignored by the local population. In drawing on archival documents, government records, and the writings of provincial intellectuals,

Evtuhov goes beyond a standard history of Nizhnii Novgorod to evoke multiple dimensions of provincial life in striking ways. In this enterprise, she engages with, but also goes well beyond, the noble tradition of local history (kraevedenie) in Russia.

The starting point of Evtuhov’s analysis is geographical. Variation in soil conditions, access to transportation, and availability of natural resources drove communities to specialize in different occupations—agriculture, fishing, handicraft and protoindustrial production, resource extraction, or modern industrial employment. The province of Nizhnii Novgorod possessed rich black soil in the southeastern agricultural districts, close ties to the industrial networks of Vladimir and Moscow provinces in the eastern districts, and poor soils and heavy forests in the districts north of the Volga. Geography not only affected local economic activity but, according to Evtuhov’s account, it also influenced the structure of social interactions, religious life, politics, and even culture in the province. In chapters about topics ranging from economic conditions to local government and religion, this book explores the ways in which geography (both at the micro- and the macro–levels) helped to define Nizhnii Novgorod within the broader Empire. This exercise produces a particularly vivid portrait of the zemstvo—a newly created tax authority and arena for enacting local public policies—as the fulcrum around which district and provincial intellectual, political, and economic life revolved.

Evtuhov’s study not only brings this corner of tsarist Russia into sharper focus; it also makes a strong case for the value of local publications—newspapers, journals, government reports, etc.—as important complements to archival documentation in reconstructing provincial life. The stories behind the work of the Nizhnii Novgorod Archival Commission, the first local newspaper (the Nizhegorodskie Gubernskie Vedomosti), literary investigations into local handicrafts and Old Believer communities, and the compilation of a massive report on land values under the auspices of the zemstvo form much of the backbone of Evtuhov’s thematic narrative. The focus on these local efforts shows how provincial intellectuals and authorities conceptualized their relationship with the central regime and constructed a new “Idea of Province” (Chapter 11).

Although Evtuhov’s effort largely succeeds in bringing nineteenth-century Nizhnii Novgorod province to life, her approach and her analysis are sometimes questionable. Foremost is the limited emphasis that she places on the peasant majority. Evtuhov is intent on uncovering the intellectual, political, and social thought of the local gentry, urban classes, merchants, and other people of “various ranks” (raznochintsy) as the basis for an identifiable provincial culture. Although she considers peasant religious beliefs (at least among the Old Believers) and economic activities to some extent, Evtuhov pays little attention to other areas of peasant culture that may have been unique or changing during the period. More problematically, her book says almost nothing about how lo-
cal institutions of peasant self-government—communes, townships (volosti), and courts—interacted with the new zemstvo or with agents and offices of the central government. This lapse is surprising, since archival and published documentation of these and other peasant institutions is plentiful in Nizhnii Novgorod. Recent work about the Russian peasantry suggests that incorporating them more directly into the narrative might have reinforced Evtuhov’s argument about the dynamism of local and provincial society.¹

A second difficulty with the study concerns the analysis of economic and demographic matters. The discussion of the local economy in Chapter 4 and artisanal crafts in Chapter 5 would have benefited from a more direct application of economic concepts (especially the notion of opportunity costs and the definition of profits), as well as from attention to a broader economic-history literature. For example, Evtuhov asserts that the absence of formal credit institutions constrained industrial development (76), but recent research about the industrial revolutions in England and elsewhere emphasizes the heterogeneity of investment financing.² Elsewhere in Chapter 4 and the concluding chapter, Evtuhov employs the word economy in ways that depart from standard definitions but not to its advantage. Such assertions as “we can look at the province as household or local economy” are unnecessarily vague and unsubstantiated. In Chapter 6, Evtuhov employs the term demography with regard to the size of estates and communities rather than to denote the actual characteristics of mortality or fertility behavior in the province. As a work of history, the study understandably shies away from formal social science, but the book’s argument loses force when it employs borrowed concepts in a loose or ill-defined fashion.

Finally, Evtuhov’s reliance on stories, biographies, and semi-random case studies lends underwhelming support for her claims about local dynamism. She supplies few numbers showing changes over time, and when she does supply quantitative evidence (as in Tables 7.1 and 7.2 about changing zemstvo budgets), she offers little commentary about it. In other cases, occupation totals (Chapter 6), religious affiliations (especially Chapter 9), and other isolated numbers are offered for particular years without information from other years or places or, in a sense, any “denominators” to provide reference points. This difficulty is worsened by a considerable repetition of particular facts and examples across chapters, an arbitrary ordering of chapters (especially Chapters 4 to 10), and a map inadequate for depicting the geographical details scattered throughout the text. Readers (particularly non-specialists) may find it difficult to

¹ Corinne Gaudin, Ruling Peasants: Village and State in Late Imperial Russia (DeKalb, Ill., 2007); Nafziger, “Peasant Communes and Factor Markets in Late Nineteenth-Century Russia,” Explorations in Economic History, XLVII (2010), 381–402; Jane Burbank, Russian Peasants Go to Court: Legal Culture in the Countryside, 1905–1917 (Bloomington, 2004).

evaluate how Evtuhov’s examples can represent the province as a whole, how Nizhnii Novogorod differed from other places, or how significant any changes in provincial life actually were during the period.

Despite these concerns, geographers, social and cultural historians, and social scientists, whether Russian specialists or not, will learn an immense amount from considering Evtuhov’s rich study. For those whose perception of the Russian provinces is limited to Nikolai Gogol’s 1836 satirical play “The Government Inspector,” this book offers a long series of surprises about just how complex the provinces really were during the nineteenth century.

Steven Nafziger
Williams College

_Witches, Wife Beaters, & Whores: Common Law and Common Folk in Early America._ By Elaine Forman Crane (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2012) 278 pp. $35.00 cloth $22.95 paper

Crane encourages her readers to think of her book’s six chapters as a collection of short stories, except that none of the tales are fictional; they all depict events that took place in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century America. Remarkably, enough historical material has survived for Crane to recount these dramas in vivid detail. She has culled and interpreted legal cases concerning domestic violence, slander, witchcraft, attempted rape, eviction, and inheritance like a skillful and patient translator. The thread that connects all of the cases is early Americans’ use of the law to resolve their differences, whether they resided in New Amsterdam, Rhode Island, or Bermuda. Indeed, the law developed from, and was confirmed by, ordinary people’s adherence to customs and compliance with authority. Modern readers should have no trouble comprehending the significance of the cases for the actual participants, particularly in regard to their gendered expectations of daily life, but the subtleties of interpretation are another matter altogether—hence this reviewer’s choice of the word “translation” to describe what Crane has accomplished. Her fluency with early American language, including its slang and idiomatic expressions, and her ability to piece together the strange fragments found in the court records, is nothing short of extraordinary.

What was the weight and scope of the law? Was fornication worse than adultery? Was bestiality worse than witchcraft? Could attempted rape be prosecuted successfully? Crane is masterful at explaining the implications of the charges against the accused. We come to understand how defendants tried to divert public scrutiny of their conduct to that of others to protect their reputations, or how they managed to escape punishment by appealing to sympathetic juries. Crane is also a gifted narrator. She weaves fascinating sagas out of what is sometimes elliptical documentary evidence. She is able to hint at the emotions that must have
been at play without presuming to assert a fabricated knowledge of her subjects’ innermost thoughts and feelings.

Many of Crane’s central characters were familiar with the law. Unlike today, when only trained attorneys can be expected to know legal details, the laymen and women in Crane’s book were often apprised of the fine points of prosecution and defense strategies. Even in the relatively rare cases of witchcraft, many of them seemed to recognize what would draw perilous attention and what might end with an apology and an admission of slander. Even though Crane knows the outcomes of the cases that she chronicles, she does not tip her hand, giving them the air of gripping mystery stories. In each episode, she argues that popular understanding was largely consistent with the law, even when trials turned on events, like ghost sightings, that now seem remote and bizarre to us. Early Americans had a shared sense of reality, and the law gave it substance.

Witches, Wife Beaters, and Whores immerses readers in lives that we might have assumed to be inaccessible. But despite this enhanced familiarity, much about the colonial period remains cryptic. Crane writes, “Even a historian who specializes in speculation is unable to subdue the surviving documents and force them to confess” (141). Happily for us, Crane comes as close as one can.

Elizabeth Reis
University of Oregon

The Religious Beliefs of America’s Founders: Reason, Revelation, and Revolution. By Gregg L. Frazer (Lawrence, University Press of Kansas, 2012) 299 pp. $34.95

Frazer identifies three camps in the politically charged debates about the religious disposition of the founding fathers. The “secularists”—a majority of historians and political scientists, together with the American Civil Liberties Union and Americans United for the Separation of Church and State—view the founders as either indifferent or antagonistic toward religion. The “Christian America” group—consisting of Barton and those who teach at sectarian schools like Patrick Henry College—view the founders as something akin to evangelicals.1 The third category—those who recognize “a significant degree of impact on the Founders from both secular and Christians influences”—consists of such diverse voices as Heimert and Marsden (4).2

Frazer wants to situate himself in the third camp. To do so, he ascribes to the founders the term theistic rationalism, “a hybrid belief system

1 See, for example, David Barton, Separation of Church & State: What the Founders Meant (Aledo, Tex., 2007).
2 See, for example, Alan Heimert, Religion and the American Mind: From the Great Awakening to the Revolution (Eugene, Ore., 2006); George M. Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture (New York, 2006; orig. pub. 1980).
mixing elements of natural religion, Christianity, and rationalism, with rationalism as the predominant element” (14). The author demonstrates his command of intellectual history by recounting the philosophical influences of such figures as Joseph Priestley, Conyers Middleton, Samuel Clarke, Jonathan Mayhew, Charles Chauncy, and Anthony Ashley Cooper (the Earl of Shaftesbury) on the founding generation. By the middle of the eighteenth century, Enlightenment rationalism had infected the colleges as well, especially Harvard and Yale. Patriotic ministers then preached the “fusion of liberal democratic theory with theistic rationalism” (81).

Frazer examines the writings and speeches of the founders, principally John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Gouverneur Morris, Alexander Hamilton, and James Wilson. Frazer insists that Jefferson never claimed to be a deist; that Franklin, although he had little regard for St. Paul, believed in the power of prayer; and that (despite Barton’s spurious claims) Adams was emphatically not a Trinitarian. Morris and Madison countenanced the possibility of miracles, but Wilson did not.

What united all of these “theistic rationalists,” according to Frazer, was their conviction that “the various roads to God were paved with good deeds and acts of public morality, not adherence to certain beliefs” (174). Frazer maintains that Washington is the real prize in the contestations over the religion of the founders, concluding that the first president was a theistic rationalist. He candidly opens the final chapter with, “So what?” (214). The theistic rationalism evinced by the founders, he concludes, was played out in both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

The range of Frazer’s knowledge is impressive, as is his prodigious research. Although he purports to take on both the secularists and the Christian America crowd, his conclusions strike a bit harder at the latter. “The fact that the Constitution makes no mention of God, much less the Bible,” he writes, “is in itself a telling refutation of the Christian America claim that the document was based on biblical principles and was meant to establish a Christian nation” (218).

Randall Balmer
Dartmouth College

Whispers of Rebellion: Narrating Gabriel’s Conspiracy. By Michael L. Nicholls (Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 2012) 248 pp. $42.50

In the past decade, the slave conspiracy of 1800 in Richmond, Virginia, led by Gabriel reached a millennial moment given the wave of renewed interests by politicians, artists, and historians. In 2002, Richmond adopted a resolution to commemorate the 202nd anniversary of Gabriel’s execution. After a successful petition to the Virginia Board of
Historic Resources, a highway marker recognizing the site of Gabriel’s execution and likely burial was unveiled in October 2004. In August 2007, Virginia Governor Tim Kaine issued a posthumous pardon for Gabriel and his co-conspirators—superseding the actions of fellow Democrat and gubernatorial predecessor James Monroe two centuries earlier. In 2010, songwriter Tim Barry, a Richmond native, memorialized Gabriel’s life, death, and legacy in a song entitled “Prosser’s Gabriel.” These efforts have now been joined by what will surely be considered the definitive historical account of Gabriel and his plot. Nicholls offers a convincing, comprehensive, extensively researched, and thoroughly documented account of one of the most imaginative efforts by enslaved peoples to cast off the chains of American bondage.

*Whispers of Rebellion* tracks the history of the rebellion from its rumblings across the physical, sociopolitical, and interpersonal geographies of Henrico and other nearby counties in Virginia to the immediate aftermath and repercussions of the court trials. What makes Nicholls’ account compelling is his extraordinary work in collecting and interpreting the available archival materials. His careful reading of the extant sources provided a solid frame from which he could correct errors repeated by previous historians. Included among his new insights are that Sam Byrd, Jr., probably initiated the conspiracy and Jack Bowler served as an early leader who recruited Gabriel. In addition, the plot was solely the work of aggrieved slaves and free blacks; no whites were involved or were asked by Gabriel and other leaders to lend support. Finally, the evidence suggests that no outside movement, political ideology, or force—not the American, French, or Haitian Revolutions, artisan republicanism, or cultural assimilation—helped to shape the planning in any way.

Nicholls hides some his best historical and historiographical commentary in the extensive notes at the end of the book. His decision to embed much of his analyses there allows the book’s narrative to flow more smoothly without the need for frequent tangents. The notes, when combined with some of the analysis in the main body of the book, become a referendum—of sorts—on Douglas Egerton’s *Gabriel’s Rebellion: The Virginia Slave Conspiracies of 1800 and 1802* (Chapel Hill, 1993). This widely acclaimed work turns out to be riddled with factual and interpretive flaws, including misreadings of documentary sources, chronological errors, and a range of unsubstantiated claims. Nicholls highlights no less than forty errors in Egerton’s work—some of which previously served to bolster his tenuous interpretation of Gabriel’s conspiracy as a multiracial class revolt inspired by artisan republicanism. To this end, Nicholls’ book has become the new starting point for future inquiries about Gabriel’s plot. Indeed, *Whispers of Rebellion* could represent even a compelling final word after a century of scholarly inquiry into the 1800 conspiracy.

Walter C. Rucker
Univeristy of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
A Generation at War: The Civil War Era in a Northern Community. By Nicole Etcheson (Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 2011) 371 pp. $39.95

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, town studies transformed historians’ understanding of colonial America. Today, within American historiography, community studies—now termed micro-histories—more likely focus on the Civil War, although they have yet to revolutionize historians’ understanding of that period. Most of them focus on southern communities. Etcheson instead looks at a northern one, Greencastle, Indiana, and surrounding Putnam County, and she covers a broader period of time than other Civil War era studies. Her admirably researched and ably argued account of the years from 1850 to 1880 in Putnam County is not heavily quantitative; she more often employs the stories of individuals and families to illustrate larger points of interpretation. Nor does she explore, as many of the colonial town studies did, the nature of community and the structure of the social order. Instead, A Generation at War employs Putnam County to explain how the war changed people’s attitudes and lives.

Etcheson includes a full discussion of politics in Putnam. She chronicles the antebellum divisions between Republicans and Democrats and provides an excellent discussion of those who became Copperheads, showing their ties to the Democratic Party and the role of racism in their dissent. She also discusses politics in the postwar period when the Republicans tentatively embraced the vote for African Americans, though their radicalism that did not extend to economics. They opposed policies to help “farmers and debtors at the expense of capitalists” (197).

In addition to politics, Etcheson discusses other developments during the period. In a substantial discussion of Civil War memory, she shows how people in Putnam County acknowledged the role of slavery in the war but never embraced an emancipationist memory. Instead, they held to a reconciliationist view, admitting the legitimacy of the actions of both North and South. Etcheson also explains, more briefly, a growing acceptance of immigrants and increasing support for temperance and prohibition after the war. Etcheson’s two major themes, however, are the war’s impact on gender and race relations.

In antebellum Putnam County, where a few women held jobs as teachers, most of the adult females were housewives, who occasionally engaged the public sphere in church, sabbath schools, and temperance reform. During the war, women expanded their involvement outside the home, but more through “personal care for their men rather than public work for the war” (133). They preferred “traditional roles within the household”; men provided for the home and women maintained it (125). After the war, families re-established traditional gender roles. Etcheson finds that unlike gender roles, however, attitudes about race did not remain the same. During the 1850s, Indiana pursued a policy of exclusion, passing laws to keep blacks out of the state and providing state
support for colonization. Racism persisted during Reconstruction, particularly among Democrats, but the war to end slavery contributed to a change in the attitudes of other whites who came to support African-American suffrage. In 1879/80, when Exodusters fleeing oppression in post-Reconstruction North Carolina settled in Putnam, increasing its black population and forming all-black schools and churches, Etcheson attributes the establishment of these segregated institutions to the growth in the number of blacks, but she notes that persistent white racism played a role as well. In similar fashion, even as she stresses the new racial attitudes among whites in Putnam County, she points out that they appear significant primarily when compared to the exclusionary goals of the antebellum years.

Such caution in making her arguments characterizes Etcheson’s fine book. It is a model of how to use a local study to test arguments about cultural and political changes that affected the nation as a whole.

Gaines M. Foster
Louisiana State University


In Sick from Freedom, Downs encourages readers to think about the lessons to be learned from African Americans’ struggles to survive in the months and years after emancipation. Although a relatively brief study, Sick from Freedom marks a major turning point in how we understand the African-American past, the nation’s past, and their intertwining.

Building upon a foundation of careful archival work and nuanced interpretations, Downs is consumed with the task of changing our perspectives about events and circumstances that appear to be familiar. Apart from the historians who debate the numbers of Civil War casualties, Downs argues that failing to account for civilian African-American illness and death in that conflict results in a significant underestimation of the war’s epidemiological nightmare (indeed, Downs’ first sentences ponder just what a “casualty of war” is). Unlike scholars who declare that much of the African-American past is inaccessible, Downs points to the stacks of evidence to be found in new places—most important to this book, the Medical Division of the Freedmen’s Bureau. Most people tend to think of emancipation as a moment of moral triumph and economic transformation, Downs sees it as a “process” laced with significant challenges about how individuals and institutions wrestled with the very meaning and consequences of freedom.

Sick from Freedom provides wrenching details about freed people becoming casualties of war when their basic needs—food, shelter, and clothing—were not met, even when promised. Children died from ex-
posure; newly freed black fathers bonded themselves to the Union Army in the hope that the United States government would stand by its word and care for their families; smallpox ravaged the African–American population unchecked because the science of the day suggested that African Americans were racially predisposed to illness and bound for extinction. In short, this book catalogs how misery was conjoined with the psychological blessing of freedom.

In canvassing what he terms the greatest biological crisis of the nineteenth century, Downs produces a sweeping history of disease, labor, and the debates about the obligations and limits of federal oversight or intervention. This book has interest for interdisciplinary scholars not so much because Downs employs a broad, interdisciplinary network of sources—he is, in many ways, a traditional archival historian—but because he marshals his evidence in such a way that his questions galvanize various methods and disciplines. What does a social history of emancipation reveal that a political history cannot? What can the history of science and medicine teach us about the history of labor struggles? How do illness and disease animate the body politic?

All of these overlapping issues are at play in *Sick from Freedom*. This smart book will force scholars to reconsider the consequences of emancipation when understood in light of individuals’ fleeting agency, the expansion of the federal government, and evolving conceptions of citizenship in the wake of the Civil War.

Jonathan Scott Holloway
Yale University


It is interesting, and not a little ironic, that much of the best work about the genealogy and what might be called the architecture of American capitalism has come from cultural and social historians. Political and business historians have weighed in on the subject as well, but mainstream economic historians, by and large, have remained on the sidelines. Why? Primarily because many, if not most, of them prefer to avoid messy questions relating to capitalism’s evolution in favor of a more static perspective that allows them to render capitalism and the behavior of the actors therein amenable to neoclassical assumptions and formal methods. Refinements in neoclassical theory over time and the rise of institutional approaches of one type or another have changed the landscape to some extent, but, even so, few mainstream economic historians spend much time dealing with capitalism as a process, particularly the ontology of its becoming.

But *Capitalism Takes Command*, an exceptionally fine collection by
a diverse cast of first-rate scholars, is full of messy questions. Writing about “capital’s transformation into an ‘ism’” in the nineteenth century (1), the various contributors assembled by Zakim and Kornblith strive to “illuminate the anonymous, often invisible workings of a system [capitalism] that has effectively reorganized our humanity” (12). The tack adopted in this “economic and cultural geography of capitalism” focuses not on the commanding heights of the system—such things as, for example, big business, dark satanic mills, or robber barons—but on, as Jean-Christophe Agnew points out in his provocative afterword, the “flatland of ordinary material practices that habituated Americans to the new, systemic rules of capitalism as a market form of life and that did so in ways of which most Americans at the time were only dimly and bemusedly aware” (279). Thus, among the twelve chapters included in the volume are pieces on changes in mortgage and inheritance patterns; new financial instruments (including securitization!); evolving forms of business organization (the rise of the corporation in particular); the beautification of capitalism, as seen in changing depictions of dockyards and maritime commerce; and the culture and work experience of the merchant’s clerk, one of the economic symbols of nineteenth-century American capitalism.

In focusing on the multifarious, often insidious, ways in which capitalism—“a thoroughly manmade system” (11)—came to dominate America, and how “business logic” became “a general social logic and the ‘bottom line’ emerge[d] as a favorite synonym for the unadulterated truth” (5), Zakim and Kornblith acknowledge their debt to Sigfried Giedion’s Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History (Oxford, 1948). In that brilliant work, Giedion explored the manner in which engineering and technology re-made modern society, a transformation that became manifest in myriad quotidian ways. The contributors to Capitalism Takes Command continue Giedion’s project, examining in close—sometimes excruciatingly close—detail how a system that arose to rationalize the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services had, by the end of the nineteenth century, re-organized most aspects of American life.

Peter A. Coclanis
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Three Worlds of Relief: Race, Immigration, and the American Welfare State from the Progressive Era to the New Deal. By Cybelle Fox (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2012) 393 pp. $80.00 cloth $35.00 paper

In the early twentieth century, African Americans, southern and eastern European immigrants, and people of Mexican descent experienced America’s fledgling welfare state in sharply different ways. As the author
of this extensively researched book documents, African Americans had virtually no access to public relief before the New Deal, whereas southern and eastern European immigrants had an easier time accessing public and private charity. People of Mexican descent fell somewhere in the middle, although any request for public assistance on their part could trigger one of the harshest state sanctions, deportation. This disparate treatment continued during the New Deal, albeit in altered form. As a case in point, since so many southern and eastern European immigrants were close to retirement age when the Social Security program first took effect, many of them received benefits despite not having paid into the new system. By contrast, the vast majority of African Americans and people of Mexican descent worked in occupations excluded from Social Security—specifically domestic service and agricultural labor.

The bulk of Fox’s wonderfully nuanced book is dedicated to describing and explaining these biases in the provision of public assistance. Above all, the author argues that variations in political systems, racial attitudes, and dominant modes of labor relations helped to create three distinct “worlds of relief” in the south, the southwest, and the north for African Americans, people of Mexican descent, and southern and eastern European immigrants, respectively. As the author repeatedly underscores, social workers in each of these regions comprised critical intermediaries whose actions helped to draw the dividing lines of social citizenship. The author’s utilization of a variety of methodologies, including quantitative analysis and rich archival research, makes the book an exemplary piece of interdisciplinary scholarship that should permanently push the study of race and the American welfare state beyond the binary of black and white.

Specialists in some subfields might quibble with certain particulars. At one point, Fox cites the number of Progressive Party voters in American cities as a way of partially explaining local relief practices during the late 1920s. Although the Progressive Party remained a force during the decade, garnering nearly 5 million votes in the presidential election of 1924, its membership in American cities at the time was probably not great enough to influence policy outcomes. Additionally, scholars of urban politics might question the degree to which each of the regions under scrutiny was defined by the kinds of political regimes that Fox ascribes to them and, thus, how well her generalizations hold in each case. Yet, the debates about methodological and interpretive issues that this book sparks will further scholarly inquiry on a number of fronts and in multiple disciplines.

Daniel Amsterdam
Ohio State University
In this ambitious volume of nineteen chapters, the editors aim to provide “an integrated history of North American migration” from a variety of perspectives, both at close range and in the context of world migrations throughout many centuries. Guided by the complementary interests of the editors—Hoerder focusing on world migrations and Faires on specific regions of the border—the volume provides a thorough and interesting kaleidoscope of views on contemporary scholarship regarding migration/immigration and borderlands in North America.

In the lengthy introductory essay, Hoerder sets the stage by emphasizing a layered approach to his survey of migration into North America. In the manner of Annales historians, Hoerder first discusses the immigration of native peoples before moving to migration in the context of colonial and state structures. Hoerder then discusses the historiography of migration in the context of the study of political and social borderlands from the 1920s to the 1980s. In his view, during the last two decades, a transcultural approach—understanding migration across cultural rather than geographical borders—has dominated the field. Hoerder’s scope is broad; other contributors, investigating a more specific slice of the story, take a more narrative approach. Most of the essays are easy to read and their historical frame is clearly outlined.

The firm guidance of the two editors is clear in the structure of the volume—to the great benefit of readers. The three chapters in Part I provides a survey of the landscape of North American migration regions with three essays—one about the northern (Canadian) border, one about the southern border (Mexican), and one about the Caribbean as a space of migration. The six chapters in Part II describe the political developments surrounding migration across specific border zones in more detail. The chapters on Mexico (by Delia Gonzalez-deReufels) and Canada (by Faires) as countries of both immigration and emigration provide a particularly welcome addition to this volume.

In many ways, Part III, carrying the mysterious title “Complicating Narratives,” contains the most interesting and varied analyses. The chapters by Susan E. Gray and Dan Killoren take up Hoerder’s theme at the beginning, introducing the migration of indigenous people into the cross-border history. The chapters by Yukari Taka and Sarah-Jane Mathieu highlight the histories of Asian border crossers and nineteenth-century black immigrants in Canada, illustrating Asian exclusion and black community life in myriad ways.

Part IV adds a quartet of chapters about issues and developments within the last thirty years into the mix. The presence of Central Americans in both Mexico and in the United States and Canada, the specific place of refugees and seasonal-labor migrants, and the teaching of migra-
tion history add some final and concrete building blocks to the story so generously laid out at the beginning.

It can be difficult to keep track of the materials published every year in the burgeoning field of North American migration. Edited volumes are often not given the consideration that they deserve. This unusually rich and accessible book shows considerable, and unusual, cohesion. It should have a long lifespan on the shelves of scholars and libraries.

Dorothee Schneider
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Fatal Revolutions: Natural History, West Indian Slavery, and the Routes of American Literature By Christopher Iannini (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2012) 296 pp. $45.00

The publication of Iannini’s book is timely; it arrives in the midst of a number of recent scholarly initiatives across disciplines that address the central role of the Caribbean, its natural history, and its plantation economy in the making of early modern empires, modern capitalist economies, Enlightenment sensibilities, modern science, and literary history. Adopting a circum-Atlantic perspective, Iannini makes innovative use of both published and archival sources, expertly drawing on literary studies, economic and social history, art history, and the history of science. The result is a rich account of eighteenth-century literary and scientific practices that will be of interest to a wide variety of scholars.

Iannini convincingly portrays natural history as the eighteenth-century literary genre that was most directly engaged with the scientific and economic transformations of the long eighteenth century. Thus does he highlight the importance of Caribbean slavery for a proper understanding of the cultural history of the Enlightenment world of letters in general and for the formation of the novel in particular. As a literary scholar, Iannini is particularly attentive to textual strategies. He shows that natural history functioned within a hermeneutic that was not strictly referential or “scientific” in the modern sense but frequently allegorical—a hermeneutic that Iannini calls “specimen—as–emblem.” Naturalistic descriptions of scenes of animal predation frequently evoked and offered moral reflections on the brutality and barbarism of the slave economy.

Individual chapters draw on the work of, among others, Shapin, McCusker, Menard, Roach, and Kriz to provide close readings of natural histories written during the long eighteenth century about the circum–Caribbean world (including Florida, the Carolinas, and Virginia) by Hans Sloane, Mark Catesby, John and William Bartram, George Lukas, William Byrd, Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, and Thomas Jefferson.¹ These chapters summarily show that the emblematic method of

¹ See, for example, Stephen Shapin, A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England (Chicago, 1994); John McCusker and Russell Menard, The Economy of
these natural historians (which often emerged from the interplay between naturalistic image and linguistic description) bear evidence of the rise of scientific empiricism, even as their visual aesthetics testified to the violence of slavery.

The epilogue briefly considers the controversy surrounding the English translation and English/American publication of Alexander von Humboldt’s *Essai politique sur l’île de Cuba* (Paris, 1826) in 1856 to suggest the continued significance of the Caribbean as an object of scientific knowledge and site of literary innovation. It also sheds light on the gradual, foreclosing of American Enlightenment in that area during the nineteenth century with the rise of U.S. imperialism. Some may take issue with the book’s general neglect of the important Iberian precedents in New World natural history during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which provided important precedents for the “emblematic” hermeneutics that Iannini finds to be particular to the Protestant tradition (201, 209, 24, 3). Certainly, his explanation of the nineteenth-century foreclosing of American Enlightenment would have benefited from a wider engagement with the history of continental Latin America, especially in light of slavery’s abolition there (excepting Brazil) since the 1820s.

Notwithstanding these issues, *Fatal Revolutions* is the most significant contribution to the study of eighteenth-century natural history to date. The book will stand out as a true milestone in scholarship, due to its exceptional methodological range and innovation, its considerable scholarly erudition, the insightfulness of its readings, its lucid prose, and its beautiful color illustrations.

Ralph Bauer
University of Maryland, College Park

“They do as they please”: The Jamaican Struggle for Cultural Freedom after Morant Bay. By Brian L. Moore and Michele A. Johnson (Kingston, University of West Indies Press, 2011) 580 pp. $65.00 cloth $45.00 paper

Questions of how inhabitants of the Caribbean found meaning in the institutional and material fragments that accompanied the journeys of migrants, forced or otherwise, have animated many histories and ethnographies of the region. Many of these works recognized a central quandary, as noted by Khan: “In fact, the concept of creolization is inherently paradoxical: the more one attempts to pin down the diversity that ‘creole’ represents, the more one creates a static (as opposed to fluid), predictive (as opposed to contingent), and monolithic (as op-

posed to multilayered) category.”¹ This volume contributes to the discussion of this issue with an encyclopedic approach to the Jamaica of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It posits a central conflict between the “cultural elite,” intent on promoting anglicization (and therefore civilization), and those whom they sought to transform, the Afro-creole majority. The outcomes of this conflict, according to the authors, were not monochromatic, since different kinds of cultural practices were variously embedded, resisted, or transformed.

Moore and Johnson visited a number of disciplines in their inquiry. In a series of separate chapters, the book examines architecture, dress, food, language, leisure activities, art, performance, and sports (among other themes). It also includes chapters about the practices of immigrants from China and India. The combination of archival material, journalism, and travel narratives (with attention to such material artifacts as buildings, clothing, and musical instruments) allows them to weave a narrative that incorporates both elite views of nonelite practices and physical evidence of those practices. Despite the book’s admirably broad scope, however, some silences remain, most notably regarding health and healing, which as many scholars have observed was subject to frequent contention among different sets of traditions and epistemologies.

The authors’ argument emphasizes variation and complexity. The “struggle for cultural freedom” did not have one outcome but many, ranging from the (attempted) repression of popular festivals to the widespread (if ambivalent) adoption of creole language and the creation of a cuisine based largely on locally grown food. Though persuasive, the argument loses some of its power by privileging synchronic over diachronic analysis. The question of change over time, crucial to avoiding the kinds of reification that Khan decries, recedes in this volume’s treatment of distinct practices. One exception to this tendency is the authors’ marvelous treatment of Christmas celebrations, in which the account spans a number of years, integrating political and contingent factors into the analysis.

This volume, together with its earlier companion, Neither Led Nor Driven: Contesting Cultural Imperialism in Jamaica, 1865–1920 (Kingston, 2004), invokes the sounds, sights, tastes, and textures of everyday life on the island that, according to the authors, everyone (including the island’s inhabitants) recognizes as authentically “Jamaican.” This view is at best a point of contention, given that it assumes rather than explains the concept of nation at play. But it provides abundant material with which to pursue further discussion.

Alejandra Bronfman
University of British Columbia

¹ Aisha Khan, “Journey to the Center of the Earth: The Caribbean as Master Symbol,” Cultural Anthropology, XVI (2001), 278.
The “meta-history of promise” proposed by modernization discourses and projects after World War II led to the growth of a development enterprise that touted fail-proof prescriptions. The argument was that rational applications of capital and technology would lead to modernity. Yet, as Way aptly illustrates, the modernity achieved in Guatemala was born from, and continues to thrive on, the “dialectic between chaos and rationality” (5).

Way’s The Mayan in the Mall is based on careful archival research bolstered by oral accounts and readings of literary and popular culture. Way grounds his complex story by focusing on Guatemala City. He traces the relationships between the shifting notions of modernity espoused by the government and the elite that changed the social space of urban workers and the poor. These shifts included a succession of what Way calls romantic, agro, social democratic high, anti-communist authoritarian high, and current neoliberal strategies for development. Way argues that all of these seemingly different stages or versions of modernity were fundamentally based on a racist and classist model of oppression that led to a paradoxical, chaotic modernity. For example, he notes, “Development has modernized Guatemala. However, the starvation wages and exploitation of workers embedded in that modernization guarantee the expansion of the informal economy that development putatively seeks to incorporate and transform” (10).

Way pays close attention to the process by which various interests within the city adapted and responded to governmental policies to meet their own needs. For example, he shows how the rise of working-class and poor neighborhoods, the land invasions of poor city dwellers, and the politics of the urban markets that employed and served urban workers and poor Guatemalans effectively challenged and contested orthodox renderings of modernity. Guatemalan modernity is as much a product of the urban working class and of poor Guatemalans as it is of the successive governments and the nation’s neocolonial elite.

Way’s methodology and research is the key to the study’s importance. In order to reconstruct and piece together the “chaos” of the unofficial and undocumented subaltern sectors, Way consulted the popular cultural expressions of different eras and excavated the archives of petty officialdom. The result is a fascinating narrative that complicates both sequence and chronology by weaving the hitherto hidden logic of everyday survival and resistance with the “rational” logic of a de-mythologized and demystified “modernity.”

Susan A. Berger
Fordham University

1 Mitchell Dean, Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society (London, 1999), 5.
Writing and Literacy in Early China: Studies from the Columbia Early China Seminar. Edited by Li Feng and David W. Branner (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 2011) 494 pp. $50.00

One of the most fascinating subject areas in historical research is the origin of writing and literacy in human civilizations; it is also one of the most difficult intellectual ventures in historical studies. First of all, what is “writing” or “literacy”? Second, should “writing” and “literacy” be treated as one subject or two separate intellectual domains? If we define writing as the process of creating symbols that allow concrete or intangible subjects to be remembered instantaneously and literacy as an instantaneous mental cognition of such symbols in a structured text, these two “actions” comprise a single subject area, though they progress separately. Yet, apart from this theoretical construct of the initial stage of “writing” and “literacy” in history, the fundamental questions about where and when writing and literacy began in China remain undefined and unanswered.

Any endeavor purporting to cover all of the research about these issues has to be interdisciplinary, involving, at least, linguistics, anthropology, archaeology, ethnography, sociology, psychology, mythology, demography, and several branches of the natural sciences. Furthermore, since the constituent elements and dimension of literacy change with temporal and geographical contexts, any type of research design to measure literacy in a given time period can be no more than a working definition. Literacy is a function of defined cultural and socioeconomic conditions in a delimited historical period. To achieve a defined goal, researchers need to have a thorough grounding in the history, literature, intellectual diversity, and political and socioeconomic development of the period under investigation. Under the circumstances, the 2004 UNESCO definition of literacy, for example, is only a work of twenty-first-century hegemonic culture, not to be considered a universal standard for measuring literacy outside its narrow confines.

A number of scholars have accepted the challenge of studying writing and literacy in Chinese history, especially in China since the early twentieth century and in North America since the 1970s. To achieve their goals, they have employed different kinds of fieldwork, designed different techniques of analysis, undertaken innovative research grammars, and utilized interpretive insights from various fields of comparative studies. In recent decades, various historical monographs about Chinese culture, state structure, popular literature, and urban development contain comments, inferences, and suggestions about the configuration of literary abilities and possible literacy rates in different periods of Chinese history.¹

¹ See, in addition to the works listed in the volume under review (6), David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan, and Evelyn S. Rawski (eds.), Popular Culture in Late Imperial China (Berkeley, 1985); Chang and Shelley Hsueh-lun Chang, Crisis and Transformation in Seventeenth Century
A theoretical construct for the period of Early China—from about 4000 B.C. (or the late Neolithic age) to the third century A.D.—based on these works and this reviewer’s research, has established four developmental phases and stages: (1) the primary phases, the origins of writing in varying forms of graphs and designs and elemental (primitive) literacy in diverse regions of late Neolithic China (c. 4000 to 2000 B.C.); (2) the formation of a simple writing system from diverse groupings of mostly “regional” logographs and symbols and of the second stage of literacy (marked by a relatively large working vocabulary) during the Xia (Hsia) and Shang dynasties (c. 2000 to 1000 B.C.); (3) the progressive and transformative stage of Chinese writing and literacy from around 1000 B.C. into the 230s B.C., from the Shang–Zhou (Chou) transition to the beginning of feudal–imperial transformation; and (4) the mature and sophisticated stage of Chinese writing and literacy in the Qin (Ch’in) and Han eras (221 B.C.–220 A.D.) when the standardized script system comprised more than 9,500 words, and literacy had reached an estimated 0.8 to 1.2 percent of the population. Further archaeological discovery and ethnographic and linguistic fieldwork will certainly enrich the many critical issues in this preliminary four-part construct.2

Writing and Literacy in Early China is a welcome contribution to this work. Stating the central theme of the volume to be “writing as a phenomenon of literacy,” Li and Branner describe four categories of inquiry that underlie the volume’s eleven chapters: (1) the circumstances that gave rise to literacy and possible stages in the invention of the Chinese system; (2) the ways in which literacy was acquired in early China and the factors that influenced the learning process; (3) the assessment of the current evidence for literacy and the multiple social spheres that it involves; and (4) the extent of literacy across regions, classes, genders, and professional social groups (3,7).

The first five chapters, written by language experts, diagnose the primary questions about writing and linguistics during the late Neolithic age and Shang China. William G. Boltz rightly suggests that two kinds of literacy should be defined—one associated with a “prewriting notational system” and the other with true “glottographic writing”—and he cites indexicality as key to the development of writing systems. He supports his theory with concrete examples from the Shang oracle bone and shell inscriptions. Two chapters in this group, by David W. Pankenier and Ken–ichi Takashima, complement the search for the origins and early diverse distributions of Chinese writing systems, investigating, re-
spectively, the astronomical, religious, and geographical dimensions. The major contributions of these five chapters involve the long-time research domain of “what” and “how” but not the developmental search for “when” and “where,” a challenging issue that will require much more work.

The rest of the collection, six chapters in all, deals with the developmental stages of literacy after the end of Shang (about 1000 B.C.), and the evidence for its expansion. In chronological order and by the degree and depth of scholarship, these pursuits fall into two long periods—from about 1000 B.C. to the founding of the Qin Empire in 221 B.C. and from the Qin to the end of the Han in 220 A.D. In general, the articles for the study of the first period make significant contributions, mainly by opening new trails for further investigation even though they blaze no new trails themselves. Li and Lothar von Faukenhausen study bronze inscriptions and bronze works for their ritual and political implications. Constance A. Cook examines the literary and political traditions among the elite of the Yellow and Yangzi river valleys, and Mathias L. Richter explores the material features of a manuscript and their ramifications as possible indicators of literacy.

The last two chapters, by Anthony J. Barbieri-Low and Robin D. S. Yates, focus on literacy among lower social strata—artisans and other types of workers—as well as females and soldiers. To achieve groundbreaking results in the long and broad Qin and Han fields, experts who are highly specialized in one or two subfields must also be versed in the massive collections of primary historical and literary sources of more than 450 years, as well as in the numerous secondary works about the period, all written in many different languages.

At the end of their introduction, Li and Branner write, “In spite of the many conclusions this book suggests or demonstrates, it is not the summary of the nature of literacy in Early China. . . . It is, we hope, the first of a series of probes into the darkness” (15). We might also add that it is an important contribution to the growing and challenging field of literacy in Chinese history on its own accord.

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A Passion for Facts: Social Surveys and the Construction of the Chinese Nation-State, 1900–1949. By Tong Lam (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2010) 263 pp. $60.00

The process of nation-building in China has attracted much attention in both China and abroad, as has the influence of scientism. But few have examined them in the ingenious and “factual” fashion that Lam has. Indeed, this book does not simply document the rise of modern social science in twentieth-century China; it analyzes the changing concepts and
methodologies used by Chinese scholars to obtain a comprehensive knowledge about their country’s past. In so doing, Lam transcends the received practice that often divided scholars in modern China according to their ideological persuasion, either as advocates of Western liberalism, committed Marxists, or Confucians. Instead, he discusses the changing landscape of social-science research across these ideological differences. In his own words, “Instead of focusing on the ideas and writings of major social scientists or the building of social science disciplines, this book analyzes how the ‘fact’ became the medium for discerning the truth about the human world, and how surveys were conceived, implemented, and received” (6). As a result, Hu Shi (1891–1962), the doyen of modern scientific research, and Mao Zedong (1893–1976), the Communist leader, appear frequently in the book.

The author’s ingenuity is also evident in his examination of the emergence of the “social survey movement” as a global event, thereby linking nation-building in China with the rise of scientism in other regions and countries. Though essentially studying Chinese national history, the author demonstrates a genuine interest in global history. Scholars of China as well scholars outside that field will find much of interest in the book.

Notwithstanding the book’s strengths, the author might have explored the Chinese roots of this “social survey movement” more thoroughly. Although surveys were not always conducted in the same fashion, or with the same accuracy, in imperial China as they are in the modern era, imperial authorities or private interests at times made serious efforts to take stock of the land and population. This tradition can be traced back to the Han period. But a more prominent example might be the compilations of the “Yellow Records” (census surveys) and “Fish Scale Records” (land surveys) by the decree of Zhu Yuanzhang, the founding emperor of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644). Moreover, further discussion of the rise of “evidential scholarship” (kaozheng xue) during the Qing period (1644–1911), with which the author begins his book, would help to lessen the contrast between modern and traditional techniques for interpreting the development of modern China. Lam would certainly agree that no modernity is ever built without drawing on traditional resources.

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_Hard Times in the Hometown: A History of Community Survival in Modern Japan_. By Martin Dusinberre (Honolulu, University of Hawai’i Press, 2012) xiv, 247 pp. $55.00

The subject of Dusinberre’s fine micro-history, which is both locally centered and globally expansive, is Kaminoseki, a small port town on an
island at the western end of Japan’s Inland Sea. The Inland Sea, a beautiful waterscape bounded by three of Japan’s four main islands, has been a corridor of political, economic, and cultural connections throughout Japan’s history. Using published sources, local archival materials, and oral-history interviews, Dusinberre gives us a rich account of the town’s trajectory from the early eighteenth century to the present moment.

Broadly, Dusinberre’s study depicts four epochs of town history. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the major maritime routes for trade and diplomatic relations led into the Inland Sea, Kaminoseki’s protected harbors became favored anchorages. Some local householders emerged as shipping agents and chandlers, and much of the local fishing and farming population was drawn to this highly commercialized economy, at least on a seasonal and part-time basis. Mercantile and service operations transformed the political economy and brought unequal prosperity and widening stratification to the local population.

The importance of Kaminoseki began to fade, however, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Japan’s Meiji decades), with changes to Japan’s transportation technologies and its industrial economy. The local elite could retain their power by filling administrative positions, but many of Kaminoseki’s residents migrated to Hawaii, the U.S. West Coast, or the Japanese imperial territories of Korea, Taiwan, and Manchuria. Dusinberre’s microhistory shows that this development did not entail irrevocable loss and isolation; contributions and communications from a number of the migrants trickled back to Kaminoseki.

After the Pacific War, Kaminoseki witnessed the departure of many of its young people, this time for work opportunities within metropolitan Japan. The town’s steady population decline and its dependence on government subsidies, which characterized much of regional Japan during the mid-twentieth century, have not been reversed. But in the early 1980s, Kaminoseki became the site of a highly contentious campaign to construct a nuclear power plant. The aggressive efforts of Japan’s regional power interests to develop stations throughout the country by identifying and bribing pliable local communities with offers to finance development and increase employment opportunities are now well known. What Dusinberre contributes to this story is a fine-grained account of the divisions of one local struggle and its grounding in the social conditions of the past. Families split; local elections became heated referenda on support or opposition; and even festivals became highly politicized.

Through his extensive local archival work and extensive interviews, Dusinberre demonstrates that the conflict about this issue, which persisted for nearly thirty years, followed long-standing fault lines between elite individuals, who actively lobbied for the plant, and most of the other residents. What was at stake were competing visions of the town and its future. Ironically, groundwork for the nuclear power plant actually began in late February 2011, a mere three weeks before Japan’s tsunami tragedy and the ensuing crisis involving the Fukushima nuclear
power plant. The Kaminoseki project was immediately suspended, but many local supporters for the project remain convinced of its necessity for the town’s survival.

The “hard times” of the title refers to Kaminoseki’s twentieth-century fate. Dusinberre believes that the town’s decline challenges unilinear narratives of Japan’s modern growth, although few historians or social scientists claim such a simple dynamism for Japan or its localities. Dusinberre’s attempt to show “the actions of ordinary people in the making of modern Japan” is not novel either (194). However, his account of the embedded and consequential actions of Kaminoseki’s villagers across temporal and geographical spans, as grounded in his composite methodology and his ethnographic understanding, provide us with an admirably nuanced analysis of the town’s ongoing “struggle for survival.”

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