Reviews


This richly textured and informative treatise on humankind’s “love affair” with alcoholic beverages through the millennia expands upon Phillips’ _A Short History of Wine_ (New York, 2001), following a similar chronological format. Phillips focuses on the past 500 years (nearly three-quarters of the book), showing how Europe’s relationship to alcoholic beverages and regulations for their use/abuse have evolved and spread to other parts of the world. Contrary to what one might expect from the title of the book and the goal of providing a “global” history (5), the rich panoply of alcoholic beverages in Africa, Asia, Polynesia, the Americas, etc. are largely viewed, as it were, through a “European lens.”

Although Phillips sets the fascinating and far-flung dimensions of alcohol and fermentation within a larger biological and hominid context (6–7), he could have taken greater advantage of interdisciplinary findings. For example, he does not mention that astrophysicists using microwave and far-infrared-frequency telescopes have recently detected massive clouds of ethyl and other alcohols in the star-forming regions at the center of the Milky Way, with significant implications for the beginning of life on earth.1 He might have stressed that anaerobic fermentation or glycolysis is probably the earliest energy system on the planet, dating back 4 billion years. The availability of a kind of “carbonated, alcoholic beverage,” even before water, might explain why many animals, ranging from fruit flies to elephants, share many of the same genes and physiologies as humans for sensing and metabolizing alcohol (about 10 percent of the enzymes in our livers serve to metabolize alcohol into energy). The enjoyment that most animals, including humans, derive from alcohol is a result of a “pleasure cascade” of neurotransmitters in their brain, and the unpleasant effects of over-indulgence (including loss of coordination, followed by sedation and finally paralysis or worse) are not confined to humans. In light of such considerations, is it any wonder that the consumption of alcoholic beverages, which is literally in “our genes,” is no easier to prevent through legislation than is, say, sugar?

The modern-Eurocentric approach of the book, informed by recent prohibition movements, probably contributes to Phillips’ largely negative approach to alcoholic beverages. Although he recognizes alcohol’s positive aspects—religious, social, medical, economic, etc.—he devotes most of his attention to such deleterious effects as the “gin-craze” of early eighteenth-century England or the drunken behavior of native peoples in the Americas and Africa (124–130, 149–150, 217–218). A more positive view would recognize the human ingenuity responsible for the discovery of how to make fermented beverages and how they have been incorporated into numerous cultures around the world from prehistory up

---

1 For much of what follows, see McGovern, _Uncorking the Past: The Quest for Wine, Beer, and Other Alcoholic Beverages_ (Berkeley, 2009).
to the present. For example, today’s African cultures are awash in sorghum and millet beers, honey mead, and banana and palm wines. Their ancient precedents, possibly extending back to the beginning of our species some 100,000 years ago, formed the social and religious core of countless “alcohol cultures” throughout the continent. They comprise the neglected part of a story obscured by European drinks, customs, and regulations. Similarly, in the Americas, ancient humans discovered how to make alcoholic beverage from a host of previously unknown fruits, cacti, and carbohydrate resources, which became central to everyday life, ceremonial activities, major public events, and the economies of numerous native peoples. Preeminent was a fermented chocolate beverage that Phillips does not mention. The same points apply to East Asia and Europe, beyond Greece and Rome.

A number of misconceptions have crept into Phillips’ otherwise interesting and accurate history. The earliest alcoholic beverages of humankind probably derived from the mastication of carbohydrate resources (wild grains, tubers, grasses, etc.), in addition to the collection of ripe fruit and honey and their natural fermentation to wine and mead because of associated yeast (10). Human saliva contains enzymes which readily transform carbohydrates into sugars; the resulting sweet expectorated liquid attracts insects who inoculate it with yeast and produce a beer. For example, numerous quids of masticated agave, sotol (a desert plant), yucca, bulrush, and maize, which were excavated in caves of central and southern Mexico dating back 10,000 years, imply that this method was used for making alcoholic beverages. Turning to later periods, the earliest chemically attested fermented beverage at Jiahu in China, c. 7000 B.C., was not a “wine” per se but a mixed or hybrid beverage made from fruits, cereal, and honey (12). It was thus a combination, wine-beer-mead. Its rice was not broken down by a specialized fungal preparation, which the Chinese uniquely developed for brewing thousands of years later, but most likely by masticating and/or sprouting the grain to make a malt. Fermented beverages, preserved as liquids, date no earlier than c. 1600–1046 B.C. in China; bronze vessels of the Shang Dynasty provide the earliest evidence. No pottery vessels were chemically confirmed to contain barley beer at Hajji Firuz Tepe in Iran (14); they were recovered from Godin Tepe, dating some 2,000 years later. Australia has many suitable fruits (wild plums, guandong, et al.), carbohydrate resources (bottlebrush and banksia flowers), and honey for fermentation (15).

The first long-distance wine trade identified thus far involved exportation from the southern Levant to Abydos on the middle Nile River in Egypt, c. 3150 B.C., not along the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in the early second millennium B.C. (18). Wine did not have more religious associations than beer in ancient Egypt (19, 21). The Canaanites and Phoenicians from the eastern Mediterranean, traveling in the first sea-going ships made of cedar of Lebanon, preceded Greece in establishing the earliest international trade routes for wine and other commodities (27).
Phillips’ discussions of later premodern peoples (including Israelites, Greeks, and Romans) are generally well-informed, but several instances could stand correction. For example, no Hebrew or Greek words in the Bible appear to be translatable as “beer,” and Yahweh did not consume two liters of beer per day (49). Beer was likely made by both Minoans and Mycenaeans (25–26, 46), and incorporated into a mixed fermented beverage that included grape wine and honey mead, similar to Homer’s kykeon. Greece and Rome did not develop alcohol cultures that were more elaborate than those of Asia and the Americas (44).

A more engaging writing style would have been more appropriate for a subject that has fascinated humans, both positively and negatively, for so long. For example, masses of tax and demographic data about alcoholic production and consumption, which Phillips uses to buttress his “key theme”—the widespread governmental regulation of alcoholic beverages (2–3)—are frequently dismissed as inadequate because of their failure to provide a firm basis for drawing conclusions (321). If so, how can he conclude that we have entered a “post-alcohol era,” especially when the worlds of craft beer, cocktail innovation, mead making, etc. are enjoying revivals around the world?

Several additional references, which are more recent or provide further documentation, are missing from this book. Interested readers should also consult Robert Dudley, The Drunken Monkey: Why We Drink and Abuse Alcohol (Berkeley, 2014); McGovern et al., “Fermented Beverages of Pre- and Proto-Historic China,” Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA, CI (2004), 17593–17598; Hans Barnard et al., “Chemical Evidence for Wine Production Around 4000 BCE in the Late Chalcolithic Near Eastern Highlands,” Journal of Archaeological Science, XXXVIII (2010), 977–984.

Patrick E. McGovern
University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology


Is religion a uniquely, or even particularly, problematical subject for historians, as is argued by the editors of this collection of papers? Questions of objectivity and the role of the personal opinions and commitments have occupied the discipline of history for decades, as has the challenge of the rhetorical and narratological turns. Indeed, this volume would seem to indicate, if only through its title, that religious historians are finally catching up with the rest of the profession.

Notwithstanding that such problems and issues are the same for every scholar who studies the past, historians of religion may well experience them in a more acute form. Because followers of most of
the major world religions are prone to insist that the history of their particular faith is intrinsic to that faith, they often feel threatened by the critical work of historians. Adherents to, say, a particular tradition of political thought usually do not object to the demonstration of shifts in that tradition in response to changing circumstances; nor do they generally suggest that only true believers in that tradition are qualified to comment on its history. Not only believers but also lay observers of all kinds are far more likely to discuss the place of religion in the contemporary world in historical terms than to discuss political or social problems in that manner. Certain primarily historical themes arouse passions similar to religious ones—the Holocaust and American slavery come to mind—but they are exceptions.

Readers who are persuaded by this argument, and by the issues raised by the editors in their introduction, will likely find this volume a disappointment. If the impressive group of eminent and authoritative figures in the field who contributed to this volume were given a brief to engage with these theoretical and methodological issues, most of them chose to ignore it. Instead, they explore different aspects of a broad subject throughout a vast period, with little interconnection. Many of the chapters are fascinating in their own right, covering such topics as ancient and medieval ideas about labor and poverty, early modern Jewish culture, and the development of nineteenth-century Islamic studies. But instead of theoretical discussion, they tend to be concerned with internal matters, like the conceptual frameworks of religious historians (for example, different approaches to characterizing the Reformation).

The wider issues in the study of religious history today, and their implications, are at best implicit in the various chapters. Even those chapters that address contemporary topics directly, such as the development of modern African Christianity or the role of the Bible in U.S. public life, assume historians to be separate, disinterested observers. The sole exception is a provocative piece by David Nirenberg, which engages directly with the idea of religious history as a battlefield in a “proxy war” about the present, arguing that historicism can be a means for religions to generate critique and to acknowledge ambiguity and complexity from within their own traditions (64). This approach could be seen as an attempt at engineering a less threatening, more Westernized Islam (an idea that Nirenberg dismisses rather than analyzes). At any rate, Nirenberg’s polemical call for engagement might seem less anomalous if the other chapters had offered similar examples of reflection on the role of religious historians in contemporary society.

The editors claim that religion is marginalized as a topic in history. This contention is true for neither classical antiquity nor the medieval period; if it is true for other periods, it may be in part a self-inflicted problem, just as the contributors to this collection have apparently avoided some of the most important issues raised by the chosen theme. The alternative explanation is that a collection of
unconnected chapters, full of gems of analysis and insight for historians of religion, has been over-sold as a coherent response to important theoretical problems.

Neville Morley
University of Bristol


Sussman’s stated purpose in the introduction to this book is to “describe the history of our myth of race and racism” (3). However, a few pages later, he admits that he has not done archival research himself but instead has “depended upon the published works of many historians, biographers, and philosophers” (9). In other words, he is basing his premises upon secondary sources that may have their own biases. He does not present a hypothesis or even a research question but boldly states what he is trying to find and backs up his thesis with interpretations that support it. This methodology could be considered historiographical research. However, rarely does he compare the interpretation of one historian with that of another in an objective manner or compare interpretations from one time period to those from another, as other historiographical researchers usually do. Researchers in the past, or present, who do not agree with his conclusions are considered “racists” or part of “the eugenic bigot brigade.” The research methods in Sussman’s work cannot be deemed historical precisely because it uses few primary sources.

Sussman suggests that for a number of years, most researchers in the fields of biology, anthropology, and genetics have agreed that biological “races” do not exist among modern humans and that race is a cultural construct, albeit with phenotypical differences among population groups. In this work, you “can’t tell a book by its cover” or, in this case, its title, since the book’s main emphasis is the evolution of the nineteenth-century hereditarian and early twentieth-century eugenics movements and its leaders and detractors into contemporary times. The book focuses on what Sussman perceives to be “racist” researchers and organizations—those who suggest the possibility of biological differences between human population groups. It glorifies the anthropological school of Franz Boas and discusses the hidden agenda of obscure philanthropic groups to re-institute immigration-restriction reform or rescind voting rights from minorities in contemporary American society.

Chapter I introduces two early concepts of race since the Middle Ages that recur throughout the book—the pre-Adamite (polygenism) and degenerate (monogenism) theories. The pre-Adamites believed that races, other than whites, were created before Adam and Eve and that they were biologically fixed. Degenerate theory suggested that
environment influenced “racial” characteristics, and that all humans were created by God, though non-whites were inferiors who needed guidance from whites. The chapter discusses the many early eighteenth- and nineteenth-century scientists and thinkers who embraced these various theories, including John Locke, Carl Linnaeus, Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Arthur de Gobineau, Charles Darwin, Ernst Haeckel, Herbert Spencer, and Francis Galton, among others.

Chapter 2 and 3 detail the early twentieth-century, American eugenics movement with a focus on various leaders, including Madison Grant, Charles Davenport, Henry Osborn, Harry Laughlin, and Henry Goddard, discussing their influence on the immigration-restriction movement, IQ tests, and negative eugenics, characterized by sterilization. Sussman also covers such organizations as the Eugenics Records Office and the Galton Society, as well as international eugenic conferences and related issues. In his opinion, the entire eugenics movement amounts to “blatant racism” (85). He is silent about the fact that many aspects of the eugenics movement were intertwined with early twentieth-century public-health measures that sought to improve the health of the American people—regardless of ethnicity—by raising public awareness of tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases, and alcohol/drug abuse and by promoting exercise, clean water, good nutrition, personal hygiene, healthy children, immunization, etc.

Chapter 4, in which Sussman shows the interlinking of American with German eugenics, portrays the various leaders of the German eugenics movement, including Ernst Rüdin, Eugen Fischer, Fritz Lenz, Alfred Ploetz, and Otmar von Verschurer, through the end of Nazi Germany and World War II. Chapter 5 treats Boas’ development of the concept of culture and its effect on human populations. Chapter 6 goes into greater detail about cultural anthropology and covers the conflict between various schools of thought, each side accusing the other of not doing true science.

The remainder of the book examines the downfall of the eugenics movement in the United States and the acceptance of culture and environment as the etiology for differences in population groups. The last four chapters provide a litany of groups and researchers that Sussman, following his secondary sources, labels as bigoted and racist because of a putative sympathy toward eugenics, flawed research methods, and the endorsement of ideas not compatible with his—the only correct ones. He levels his judgment of racism even on current researchers who suggest that such characteristics as IQ could have some biological or genetic basis. He is silent, however on contemporary eugenic methods practiced in the United States for healthier babies and children, such as in vitro fertilization (IVF) and other assisted reproductive techniques.

Sussman’s lack of objectivity in this book is disconcerting. For those looking for a work that summarizes the negative side of the hereditarian and eugenics movements, however, this book would be an adequate
Evening News: Optics, Astronomy, and Journalism in Early Modern Europe. By Eileen Reeves (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014) 301 pp. $69.95

The title of Reeves’ book compactly captures the scope of its ambitions; the subtitle pinpoints a problem of execution. Evening News concerns two modes of information newly disseminated and widely discussed in early Modern Europe—(1) revelations about the night sky, discovered via the telescope’s new optics, published most pivotally in Galileo’s evocatively named Siderius Nuncius (The Starry Messenger) in 1610; and (2) the copious new terrestrial journalism (newsletters, corantos, and gazettes) that was becoming a pan-European phenomenon, focused on the advent and the waging of the Thirty Years’ War. But the and in Reeve’s subtitle cues a question common to all interdisciplinary studies: How can we, and how should we, link such disparate phenomena and fields? This book is not sure.

Reeves’ main method is analogy, buttressed by close reading. Writers ranging from Johannes Kepler to Ben Jonson, Reeves shows, drew provocative parallels between astronomy and journalism, because both enterprises sought to tell new stories about remote phenomena. They returned repeatedly to the comparison, in manuscript letters and printed books, to express their perceptions—and often their suspicions—of both these new endeavors, and of the innovative optics (for instance, the telescope and the camera obscura) that furnished tools for the astronomer, as well as an endlessly re-usable metaphor for journalists in their attempts to narrate distant events that they had not witnessed.

As author of two earlier books on the responses generated by Galileo’s discoveries, Reeves is an expert on this material; her erudition is both this book’s cardinal virtue (she purveys a multitude of intriguing details about all of her topics) and its besetting weakness. Delving deep into the archives, Reeves seems preternaturally capable of hearing the minutest echoes, but she traces them at an often obfuscatory length; her close readings sometimes resemble free associations. When Kepler, for example, describes himself tracking the sun by projecting its image onto a “writing tablet,” Reeves wants that noun—tabella—to establish that he is depicting himself as a kind of tabloid journalist. In order to clinch the point, she first melds several categories (pointing out that tabella can suggest “a written composition or a public record, a category of documents into which tabloid news would fall”) and then fuses two terms that she admits to have different uses (“while tabella was a rather imprecise noun, tabellarius was a good deal more specific, and referred to . . . [a] bearer of written news”). Finally,
after propounding similarly tenuous links for another five pages, she treats as a (still under–demonstrated) Q.E.D. the proposition that Kepler’s astronomical writings relied on “the backdrop of journalism, that oblique position he characterized as a ‘turn towards the writing tablet’” (38–43).

In her elaborate attempts to tease out meaning, Reeves often appears instead to force it—as with words, so with people: Reeves follows long chains of intellectual correspondence, arguing as though the mention of a relevant topic anywhere within them—a telescope here or a gazzetta there—meaningfully, even deliberately, registers and responds to all of the others. This approach (“Twelve Degrees of Francis Bacon”) can become more fatiguing than convincing. In a favorite locution, Reeves singles out as “crucial,” or “more crucial,” one small item from among the welter of evidence adduced. But what is crucial for her often seems (as in the case of Kepler) distinctly more casual in the hands of the writer that she quotes (81, 116, 127, 144, 161, 216).

Casual utterances can be indispensable to interdisciplinary insights because they often reveal more than the utterer paused to notice. Reeves clearly intends her book to be the kind of cultural study that leverages a pervasive trope into something larger, in this instance a tracing of its consequences for astronomy, journalism, or the transformation of Europe. But her associative close reading is not sturdy enough to make her case. Late in the book, she restates her intent to show how “impressions of optics and of astronomy . . . served to evoke, if not to explain, the sudden availability of news” (206). Evening News is stronger on evocation than on explanation. Its running comparison among impressions, though intriguing, is too impressionistic to be conclusive.

Stuart Sherman
Fordham University


Resurrecting the structure of Crane Brinton’s *The Anatomy of Revolution* (New York, 1938), Stone attempts a comparative analysis of the upheavals in seventeenth-century England, eighteenth-century France, and twentieth-century Russia. Yet, whereas Brinton turned to corporeal metaphors, explaining the course of revolution as advancing “like a fever,” Stone foregrounds the structural similarities in the politics of the three affected countries, seeing each developing from “a dialectical relationship between increasingly severe external and internal pressures on governance” (xi).

Calling for “a modified, carefully nuanced structuralism,” Stone looks to amend the work of earlier generations of historians, sociologists, and political scientists who failed to allow sufficient “voluntarism” into
their revolutionary models—Theda Skocpol’s *States and Social Revolutions* (New York, 1979) particularly drawing his ire (43, 10). Instead of focusing on deterministic origins, Stone delves into the complex political processes that sparked and sustained each revolution. In 494 pages of text that move back and forth thematically between revolutions, Stone attempts a detailed reconstruction of each revolutionary process through extensive interaction with each revolution’s historiography.

Stone begins with the three revolutions’ origins, which he largely attributes to each country’s military “geostrategic decline” and its domestic political discontent, which together helped to spark radical transitions through “warning crises (46).” Revolutionary breakthroughs in each case led to short “honeymoons,” which were soon followed by drastic radicalizations. On the basis of his state-structural emphasis, Stone declares that “no realistic alternative” to terror tactics existed for the revolutionaries, given each authoritarian state’s legacies of coercion (393). In each case, the initial round of terror waned, however, leading to “Thermidorian . . . crises of revolutionary legitimacy,” which caused the common revolutionary path to diverge onto “very different postrevolutionary trajectories” for each country (395, 474).

Whether many historians will follow Stone’s return to a structural approach of revolution remains to be seen. Within his loose framework, Stone largely sublimates his own voice to that of the many historians whose work he discusses. Not incorporating primary-source work, he is unable to address the lacunae in each historiography that limit his arguments’ reach. The work does not directly address the glaring differences in state structure and culture that separate Commonwealth England and Revolutionary France throughout their 150-year divide, nor the often-fundamental differences throughout the 120 years between France and Revolutionary Russia.

Stone also limits his model to Europe, seeing the three revolutions as specific outgrowths of “European strategic and security issues” (46). Significantly, his stages of progression cannot be easily applied to China or Cuba, much less the largely nonviolent Velvet Revolutions of 1989—which largely avoided terror despite being the outgrowth of an even more brutal European empire—or the complex and divergent outcomes of the 2011 Arab Spring risings. Across Stone’s earlier cases, given the extent to which French and Russian revolutionaries were aware of (and the Russians often obsessed with) preceding revolutions, cultural imitation may well have played at least as strong a role as structural factors.

Even those uncertain of Stone’s theoretical approach, however, will find much of use and interest in his nuanced and far-reaching work. Stone’s reading across all three recent historiographies is unparalleled and likely to remain an unmatched synthesis of the three revolutions for some time.

Micah Alpaugh
University of Central Missouri

A simple bone spoon with a leaf-shaped handle illustrates the cover of Frantzen’s study of how food shaped identities in Anglo-Saxon England. Excavated from the middle Saxon settlement site at Flixborough, Lincolnshire, the spoon stands for the material culture of food production and consumption, the subjects that Frantzen seeks to elucidate in this genuinely interdisciplinary book. Most of our images of medieval food relate to feasting and its associated ceremonies—drinking, singing, and making speeches—because those are the occasions most frequently described in contemporary written sources. Frantzen widens his study beyond literary texts to include the words found in Old English to describe foods and the physical objects associated with agriculture and cooking, as well as the material evidence of the ordinary, everyday items used by the Anglo-Saxons to grow, transport, prepare, and eat their food. In addition to spoons and knives, he considers bowls, cups, cooking pots, and kneading troughs. He examines not only the tools of consumption but also the food producers—those who planted fields, kept swine, caught fish, brewed beer, or ground wheat—and the objects that they used in the production of food and drink.

Close focus on the material (and on excavated food waste) enables Frantzen to set legal and admonitory evidence about food discipline (for example, from penitentials) in new light. He argues that discussion of Anglo-Saxon social identity has paid too little attention to material culture, failing to acknowledge the extent to which the material world (amply evidenced through the archaeological record) served to construct social systems. Central to his study, therefore, is the integration of physical objects with linguistic and textual evidence, with an emphasis on the ordinary and mundane, and with the networks of food production and distribution that gave objects meaning in communication. Because food is personal in the literal sense of becoming part of the body, Frantzen argues that the act of eating is “the most-identity-producing point in the food network,” thus conferring on the objects associated with it (cups, spoons, etc.) the capacity to reveal individual identities, just as larger, often shared, objects involved with production—like quernstones and iron tools—signal community identity (173).

Frantzen locates his study theoretically in two contexts—Bourdieu’s theory of habitus (as developed in recent Anglo-Saxon archaeology) and Frazer’s theory about social identity (“situational identity” in this work) in medieval culture. Frantzen frequently criticizes other scholars who have not engaged with theory, and with those who have perpetuated a polarized Anglo-Saxon world, contrasting the feasting of the rich with the hunger

of the poor. He is markedly less transparent about his own ideological stance, particularly his repeated implication that the Church represented a negative force, exerting an unwelcoming control over lay society. Observing religion only through the lens of legislation and prescription seriously distorts its role in creating and enriching social identities. Frantzen clearly enjoys the anticlerical satirical poem The Seasons of Fasting (early eleventh century), with its ridicule of priests who failed to obey the injunctions of their preaching, but he never mentions the place of food at the heart of Christian liturgy in the Eucharist. His demonstration that fish became more plentiful in the late Anglo-Saxon period as a mark of high status that only the wealthy could afford, however, is important; fish was a luxury, not a fasting food. The increased finds of fish bones after c. 1000 do not reflect adherence to stricter rules about abstinence, as had once been thought.

Methodologically, the book has much to contribute but, as Frantzen admits, it is harder to provide explanations of objects than it is of texts. He has asked many questions of his spoons, but they do not always have the answers. To misquote Grierson, “It has been said that the spoon cannot lie, but it owes this merit in part to the fact that it cannot speak.”

Sarah Foot
University of Oxford


This important new book tells the story of the attempt to create a “humanitarian” policy for the British Empire in the early nineteenth century. It focuses on the network of protectors appointed after 1837 to mediate between aboriginal peoples and settlers and to shield natives from the violent dispossession that accompanied colonization. Their story is told through the individual protectors who worked in Australia and New Zealand and particularly the antipodean governors, Lt. Governor Sir George Arthur and Sir George Grey.

Lester and Dussart’s careful research throws new light on this episode in the history of the Empire. They have much to say that is thoughtful and interesting, but there are two methodological difficulties with the book. The first is their tendency to conflate “humane policy” with the work of the protectors, which entailed a wider and more complicated set of measures and discourse than Lester and Dussart imply. The second problem is a framework of analysis that leans heavily upon Foucault’s notion of

2 For the original quotation, see Philip Grierson, “Commerce in the Dark Ages: A Critique of the Evidence,” Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, IX (1959), 129.
governmentality and contemporary theories of humanitarianism, which provides neat and tidy explanations but leads to anachronistic readings of the historical evidence as each character is slotted into his appointed place.¹

Grey and Arthur, two of the most accomplished colonial governors of the nineteenth century, epitomized the scope of humanitarian sensibility and the variations of its policy initiatives. In this book, they are portrayed as moving from a humanitarian policy of “protection” to a more coercive policy of “development.” Thus, as governor of Bengal in the 1840s, Arthur wanted to encourage “improving” land policies through state subsidies and loans, which the authors tag as precursors to twentieth-century policies of colonial development. But (even to ignore the precedent of the Permanent Settlement of 1784) humanitarianism had always imagined social engineering. A decade before he was sent to Bengal, Arthur had presided over one of the most remarkable interventionist projects of the period when he successfully removed the Tasmanian Indian population to Flinders Island in the Bass Straits and launched an attempt to remake their society completely.

Similarly, Lester and Dussert see Grey’s policy of racial amalgamation as a shift away from humanitarian protection toward coercive policy targeted at the Maori. In fact, racial amalgamation had long been integral to humanitarian discourse; throughout his career, Grey had consistently worked to find ways to give it material expression. Like social engineering, coercion was always embedded in humanitarian initiatives. But like Protection, racial amalgamation did not unfold in the way that it was imagined. Nor was it simply rhetorical sham; it possessed an important ideological afterlife in the construction of a national identity for New Zealand.

Indeed, a salient feature of the effort to create a “humane policy” for Empire was that its short-term failures were matched by its long-term implications. The most important chapter of this book illustrates how protection facilitated indigenous agency. In the vastly different experiences of Australia and New Zealand, indigenous people relied on the protectors to secure their initiatives. In Australia, they used the resources of the protectorates to construct refuges from the violence of settlers, erect spaces of independent aboriginal politics, and establish places where the discourses of Christianity and progress could be integrated into their cultures. In the case of New Zealand, protectors were key in negotiating the terms of land dispossession, as well as negotiating intra-Maori conflict. This chapter alone makes the book worthwhile.

Richard N. Price
University of Maryland, College Park

This lovely book engages with the histories of work, women, and spirituality, as well as with urban and intellectual history. It tells a story of women from diverse class backgrounds living together in spiritual community while maintaining their livelihoods in all facets of the silk trade. Focusing on the community of Beguines, Miller shows how these women interacted with their patrons, their clients, and their spiritual advisors as part of the fabric of the medieval city. Despite rhetoric attacking the beguines as sexually promiscuous hypocrites, Paris’s beguines enjoyed the patronage of Louis IX and thus an association with that king’s renowned piety. Although ultimately not even royal support could save Paris’ beguines from decline during the course of the fifteenth century, Miller’s book highlights the important role of these women in the religious and economic culture of the medieval city.

Chapter 1 focuses on Louis IX’s decision to build and support the Paris béguinage by providing both money and spiritual guidance. Miller argues that the beguines’ commitment to a spiritual life embedded in, rather than removed from, the secular world was in line with St. Louis’ consistent support for lay religious expression. Chapter 2 examines the béguinage itself where women of diverse backgrounds lived in community. Particularly interesting is Miller’s exploration of the ways in which property and its control functioned. Elite beguines maintained control over their property, which was beneficial to the community members but also a source of tension.

Chapter 3 brings to light the tight connection between beguines and Paris’ silk industry. Miller’s careful tracing of beguines through the tax rolls enables her to argue against the assumption that women’s work in the Middle Ages occurred within the household of the biological family. Instead, she identifies households of women united in their religious and business commitments. Chapter 4 explores the relationship between beguines and the secular clerics associated with the Sorbonne. Following Robert of Sorbonne, who saw beguines as models of humility and caritas, university clerics preached to and about the beguines. This discussion is important for shifting away from the assumption that beguines were only the object of clerical scorn.

Chapter five uses sermons produced about and by beguines to explore more deeply the collaboration between the beguines and university clerics. Particularly interesting is Miller’s analysis of six excerpts from sermons preached by the mistress of the Paris béguinage, who resisted the emphasis on beguines’ outward behaviors that she noticed in the sermons of the male clerics.

Chapters 6 and 7 detail the slow dismantling of Paris’ beguine community, especially in the wake of Marguerite Porete’s inquisitorial
trial and execution for heresy. Despite their integration into the city, their support from prominent university clerics, and their royal patronage, the beguines were subject to persistent clerical attacks for false piety, which eventually took their toll. Miller suggests that some of this animosity stemmed from clerical anxieties about beguine’s poaching on their intellectual territory. She traces the effect of the condemnation of beguines at the Council of Vienne (1311/12). Even though France’s king insisted that the Paris béguintage was not subject to Vienne’s decrees, by 1485 the beguinage in Paris had become a convent for the Poor Clares, also known as the Order of Saint Clare. Despite this unhappy ending, Miller consistently makes the case for the centrality of Paris’ beguines to the spiritual, intellectual, and economic life of thirteenth and fourteenth century Paris.

One strength of this book is Miller’s adept handling of difficult sources. From the inconsistent and taciturn tax rolls, she identifies more than 100 individual beguines, linking most of them with the silk industry. She is further able to map the locations of the independent beguine houses to show their activity throughout the city. Her analysis of Robert of Sorbonne’s sermons, notoriously abstruse sources, reveals a new understanding of the beguines as a model of Christian behavior. Indeed, her use of sermons from many different sources reveals the complex “official” understanding of beguine spirituality and its place among the Parisian religious.

Two issues detract slightly from Miller’s argument. The first is historiographical. Although her rethinking of women’s work and its place is compelling, the use of more recent work in the history of sexuality might have been valuable in considering the beguines’ circumstances. Bennett, for example, argues that looking for “lesbian-like” behavior would illuminate the history of lesbians. The relationship between Martine de Maule and the embroider Jeanne, who were “consistently taxed as a unit” (74), as well as the relationships within independent beguine houses, seem particularly ripe for such an analysis. The other challenge is editorial. The text is often repetitive; many sentences are near replicas of earlier ones: for example, “A beguine called Bourges de Mortières was employed as the chambrière for Jean de Hétomesnil” (46) and “The beguine Bourges de Mortières worked for Jean de Hétomesnil as a chambrière” (47).

These minor infelicities are unfortunate, but they do not detract from an overall excellent book.

Susan McDonough
University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Smith’s book is an exciting contribution to the growing scholarship about the history of prostitution in modern Germany. With the intent of moving beyond the standard dichotomy of victim/villain, Smith uses myriad sources to sketch a vibrant picture of women in Berlin’s sex trade from the Kaiserreich to the end of the Weimar Republic. In doing so, she argues that cultural texts (popular novels, plays, social-hygiene films, police records, and sociopolitical essays) should be read not only as reflections of their historical time periods but as important shapers of contemporary debate and discourse.

For instance, Chapter 1 uses two Otto Erich Hartleben plays, Georg Simmel’s The Philosophy of Money (Berlin, 1900) and August Bebel’s influential Die Frau under der Sozialismus (Berlin, 1879) to examine fin-de-siècle debates about bourgeois marriage, “free love,” and prostitution. Smith concludes that although the authors use the sex trade to criticize the institution of bourgeois marriage, none of them is “truly able to imagine a world in which women can be both sexually and economically autonomous” (62).

Similarly, in Chapter 2, Smith examines the writings of the prominent German feminists Anna Pappritz, Helene Stöcker, and Hanna Bieber-Böhm to inform her reading of Margarete Böhme’s bestselling novel of 1905, Diary of a Lost Girl. Thus does Smith confirm what several other scholars have contended, that Germany was home to a vibrant and multifaceted reform culture in the early years of the twentieth century. For instance, although many feminist reformers placed the blame for sex-trade conditions at the feet of male johns and pimps, opinions about the culpability of female sex-trade workers were constantly shifting.

In Chapter 3, Smith focuses on such cultural artifacts as cinematic works, cabaret performances, and a visitor’s guide to “naughty” Berlin to illustrate the links between gendered public spaces, male anxiety, and female emancipation in the Weimar metropolis. In Chapter 4, Smith uses fictional works to gauge the effects of the controversial 1927 Law to Combat Venereal Diseases. As in earlier chapters, she uncovers a multiplicity of experience, which confirms one of her overarching arguments, that texts examining female prostitution should not be read “simply as indicator[s] of women’s oppression”; in fact, a reading of diverse cultural texts “reveals the fragility of gender relations and new modes of sexual expression in the Weimar era without resorting to defeatist conclusions” (184).

Berlin Coquette is an innovative interdisciplinary work that succeeds in illustrating the complicated nature of the urban German prostitution trade in the years before and after World War I. Smith defends the book’s narrow geographical focus by qualifying Berlin as “one of the quintessential modern cities of twentieth-century Europe” (3). Although this label is tough to dispute, a sole focus on the German capital ignores rich sources
in cities such as Munich, Hamburg, and Dusseldorf, let alone the smaller cities and towns that sought to deal with “prostitution problems” in their own ways. That said, Smith’s work will be read with interest by scholars and students of German history and literature, gender and sexuality, and culture and media studies.

Lisa M. Todd
University of New Brunswick


Soviet foreign economic relations are the attention-seeking yet neglected stepchild of Sovietological political economy. The demands are nagging: They require an understanding of the peculiar institutions, economics, and politics of both the Soviet Union and its trading partners. The return on this effort is sometimes meagre: What exactly did we learn that we did not know before? Combining broad sweep with close attention to the small but fascinating facts of history, and based on intensive labor in the former Soviet state and party archives, Sanchez-Sibony has overcome the difficulties of his theme to write an important book.

The message of Red Globalization is that in its orientation to the world economy, the Soviet Union was a more normal country than is evident from a Cold War perspective. Like others, Soviet leaders were well aware of the gains from trade and sought to realize them pragmatically. This course was not always easy, but, Sanchez-Sibony argues, the difficulties were largely shared by every economy with a similar structure and level of development. In the 1920s, the Soviet economy suffered, like other food producers, from adverse terms of trade. In the 1930s, the Soviet Union experienced economic autarky, not by its leader’s choice but, like any country, as an outcome forced by the closing of world credit and commodity markets. Sanchez-Sibony correctly credits Dohan with this hypothesis, but Dohan did not have access to the Soviet archives that could flesh it out, as Sanchez-Sibony did.¹

Another strength of the book is its discussion of how, after World War II, the Soviet economy aimed at re-integration into world trade and contributed to (and benefited from) postwar globalization. If politics seems absent from the story of Red Globalization, it is because, according to Sanchez-Sibony, the Soviet approach to foreign trade was not very political; typically it was quite “sensible” and often more “commercial” than that of its Western trading partners (7, 98).

Sanchez-Sibony supports his argument with extensive source materials. Even so, his focus on records left by Soviet trade and plan officials

might leave something out. These officials from the minister—Anastas Mikoian, the central figure of this story—downward were charged with implementing Soviet trade policy and not much more. It is natural to find that these people were pragmatists with a narrowly technical view of their roles. Because they were not accountable for managing the political risk of East–West trade, they naturally behaved quite differently from their foreign counterparts who, with commercial interests at stake, were more likely to suffer losses if they got it wrong.

This focus on the implementation of policy may detract from an understanding of the policy itself, which was more exceptional than Sanchez-Sibony supposes. The policy was aimed at growing production, not consumption. In the 1930s, when foreign currency was extremely scarce, it meant importing only machinery for industrialization. In the 1960s and 1970s, when foreign currency was more available, it meant importing fodder for domestic meat production—and machinery for more industrialization. This was not a “normal” trade pattern. But its origins will not be found in the records of everyday implementation of foreign economic relations. The overall pattern of trade was decided not by the trade minister or the planners but by Joseph Stalin in the Politburo.

In the Great Depression, for example, all of the agrarian countries suffered from a severe adverse shift in their terms of trade. But the Soviet response was unique. The fingerprints on key decisions are those of Stalin, not of Mikoian or any second-tier official. As the foreign-exchange crisis intensified, Stalin wrote to Sergo Ordzhonikidze on September 9, 1931: “I don’t think we will ever . . . have an adequate amount of steel, axles, wheels, etc., unless we minimize the imports of these items now, unless we set up production of these items in our country right now” by “organizing steel production on a large scale at our own plants.” Decisions based on this approach led directly to the death of millions in the Soviet famine of 1932 to 1934.

Sanchez-Sibony’s Red Globalization is a deeply researched, strongly argued, and highly readable study that introduces much valuable new material into historical scholarship. It will advance the debate about the political economy of Soviet industrialization but will not conclude it.

Mark Harrison
University of Warwick

The Legacy of Christopher Columbus in the Americas: New Nations and a Transatlantic Discourse of Empire. By Elena Bartosik-Vélez (Nashville, Vanderbilt University Press, 2014) 201 pp. $35.00

The Legacy of Christopher Columbus in the Americas examines the impact of Columbus’ imperial vision and the manner in which his encounter with

2 Robert W. Davies et al. (eds.), The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence, 1931–36 (New Haven, 2003), 375.
the New World inspired ideas about the translation of empire from Europe to the Americas. Deploying close textual and iconographic analysis—literary as well as historical approaches—Bartosik-Vélez explores the nature of the Columbian imperial theme in comparative methodological contexts, as well as how representations of Columbus became useful tools to formulate an imperial ideology. In the United States, these imperial aspirations were marked, above all, by territorial expansion. They are contrasted with what Columbus and the *translatio imperii* meant to Spanish American revolutionaries and intellectuals during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, for whom imperial ideology, sometimes represented by the very figure of Columbus, addressed questions of power, authority, and republican values rather than territorial expansion.

Bartosik-Vélez’s broad, interpretive goal is discussed throughout and fully articulated in the conclusion. Intervening in historiographical discussions, she critiques “nation-centric methodologies” that exclude supranational explanations for the rise of the nation-state, making the important point that empire and imperial ideologies were at the heart of the ideological foundations of the modern state. Her use of a comparative lens that does not privilege the nation-state represents an important contribution.

Chapter 1 focuses on Columbus and notions of empire in late medieval Spain (Castile) and the wider Western world. Bartosik-Vélez argues that the Columbian imperial ideology was Columbus’ own doing. Through a close reading of the agreement between the Crown of Castile and Columbus and of other texts, she shows how Columbus constructed an image of a new Christian empire, as opposed, or parallel, to one founded on the fiscal benefits of discovery and settlement. Chapter 2 turns to the biographies of Columbus and how his life and deeds were incorporated into the widespread narrative(s) of *translatio imperii*. Peter Martyr, Columbus’ own son, and others wedded the figure of Columbus and his humiliating denouement to a heroic imperial tradition.

Chapter 3 traces the links that joined Columbus and his claiming of the New World with a republican and imperial tradition (in terms of territorial ambitions) in British America and, later, the United States. By marshaling a series of writers—from barely known eighteenth-century poets to the well-known Washington Irving—Bartosik-Vélez establishes connections between the representation(s) of Columbus and the rhetoric of empire. She also deploys paintings, sculptures, the Columbian World’s Fair of 1893, and other material to demonstrate the connections. Chapter 4 provides a critical reading of some of South America’s most influential protagonists of the struggle for independence—Francisco de Miranda, Juan Pablo Viscardo, and Simón Bolívar—along with quasi-mystical pictorial representations of them (mostly Bolívar) at significant moments in their struggle against Spain. Names, such as the District of Columbia or the country of Colombia, are remainders of the symbolic valance of Columbus and of the imperial tradition in the
construction of two distinct models of nation-states. A short conclusion summarizes the points made throughout the book, while spelling out the relationship between imperial ideology and the nation-state.

This is a suggestive and original book. But the author herself seems to concede that there may be different ways to read the evidence; the construction of the Columbian ideal may result from different factors, as she demonstrates in her conclusion regarding the Italian appropriation of Columbus. Moreover, for a North American audience, Columbus may have served to further the Black Legend (writing that cast aspersion on the Spanish Empire), especially when the United States was casting a covetous eye on the last Spanish possessions in the Americas. Furthermore, Spain had its own Visigothic imperial tradition, exemplified by the programs of Alfonso VI and Alfonso VII in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, respectively. Alfonso X, greatly influenced by his interest in Rome, also aspired to empire in the thirteenth century. Contra Bartosik-Vélez, Castile did not exist when Jerusalem fell to the Muslims in 638; nor was there any obsession with its recapture in the West yet (17). Moreover, Columbus in his memorandum to the Catholic monarchs after his second voyage recommended measures that were financial in nature rather than “imperial.”

These are small quibbles. Whether or not Bartosik-Vélez’s reading of the evidence is problematical or debatable, her book’s attempts at a comparative approach—the hallmark of good history—raises important questions about the nation-state and its imperial ancestry; it forces us to think in different ways about narratives long taken for granted. As such, it is a great tribute to Bartosik-Vélez’s originality and methodological versatility.

Teofilo F. Ruiz
University of California, Los Angeles


Historians of American Indian history have shifted their focus in recent years from Native–Euroamerican relations to Native landscapes on their own terms. In the process, they have recast “frontiers” or “middle grounds” as Native “grounds,” “nations,” and “empires.” In his new book, Zappia furthers this work by describing an “Interior World” created by the diverse Native societies inhabiting the Colorado River Basin of North America. In showing how Native autonomy endured there for centuries after the first arrival of Europeans, Zappia’s work will prove of interest to scholars in a range of disciplines who are interested in indigenous peoples and colonialism in the Americas and around the globe.
Zappia argues that Native peoples in the Colorado River basin built a political-economic system centered on long-distance trading and raiding from the California coast to the desert interior. He charts the ebbs and flows of this interior world in geographical scope and influence over time, demonstrating that it persevered for centuries in the context of colonialism due to the innovation and adaptation of the distinct Native peoples occupying the region. In this regard, he highlights a shift from the trading of such commodities as shell beads, cotton, and baskets before the eighteenth century toward a reliance on raiding other Native, Spanish, Mexican, and then Anglo-American groups to acquire and barter captive laborers and livestock from the late-eighteenth century into the nineteenth century. He concludes by tracing how indigenous peoples in the interior world faced the challenges of U.S. conquest and managed to exercise a degree of control over their homelands that has persisted into the present.

Zappia’s explanation of the interior world is made possible by his interdisciplinary approach. Drawing from archaeology, anthropology, Native oral traditions, and geography, he pieces together how the political economy of this region worked and how Native groups—the Quechans, Mojaves, Cahuillas, and others—understood the world in which they lived. In tracing commodity histories—narrating how shell currency moved from the coast to the interior, for example—Zappia paints a vivid portrait of a Native-dominated landscape that would otherwise be inaccessible in a history based solely on archival sources. At times, however, the limitations of his sources and approach are apparent. Although Zappia argues for a shift in the interior world during the late eighteenth century from trading to raiding, he also demonstrates that previous commodity trading practices continued. The division that he posits between these practices may well be overdrawn. Describing in greater detail how distinct Native communities viewed raiding and trading and how their motivations for them evolved over time might have strengthened his argument about continuity and change in the interior world more broadly. Such questions likely reflect the challenges presented by Zappia’s source material, as well as his long-durée, multi-ethnic approach, but they also identify future areas of inquiry for scholars of the Colorado River Basin to address.

Zappia’s contributions to understandings of Native territoriality and political economy in colonial North America are substantial. He illuminates a region that has warranted more attention from historians, helping to connect the well-studied New Mexico borderlands with the missions of the California coast. More importantly, his well-theorized framework and arguments will prove of interest to scholars examining indigenous cultural persistence and territoriality in other global regions.

Paul Conrad
Colorado State University, Pueblo
Solow provides important insights for understanding the economics of slavery in the Americas. This posthumous volume brings together some of her seminal publications based on her research throughout the past twenty-five years. It well deserves to be collected in a convenient volume for scholars who study slavery in the Americas. The central theme is the significance of the institution of slavery in modern economic development. Always written with a brilliance and flare, Solow’s work ably outlines the basic features of slavery as a system and economic structure. Although her analysis is heavily weighted toward British and North American history, her explanation of slavery's underpinnings in economic terms applies to any society in any time period.

The book includes seven chapters about the economic consequences of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The first examines the development of capitalism and the role of slavery from the beginnings of sugar production in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic islands off the coast of Africa to its introduction into the Americas. It provides a perceptive appreciation of Williams’ hypothesis about the close association between capitalism and slavery.\(^1\) In the second chapter, she explores the role of forced colonization through slavery as a mechanism for development in places with an abundance of land, as in many parts of tropical America after the decimation of the indigenous population through disease and colonial conquest.

Her third chapter, which is published for the first time in this book, engages the debate between Williams and his critics, especially Drescher.\(^2\) She convincingly argues that Williams provided significant insights into the transition from slavery to abolition that have been supported by recent research. Her chapter about why Christopher Columbus failed, considers the development of the Americas without slavery. This counterfactual approach allows Solow to explore the entrepreneurial experimentation of various European colonial powers in the development of the sugar complex in the Americas and the tangential extensions of slavery into other spheres of economy and society. In her chapter about Caribbean slavery and the growth of the British economy, she examines the Williams thesis in greater detail, particularly in relation to the criticisms of Engerman and Thomas, employing an econometric analysis that uses a Cobb–Douglas production model to establish levels of profits related to the sugar industry.\(^3\) She demonstrates in her final chapter that the British experience in the Caribbean benefited from the transition to a plantation

---

1 See Eric Williams, *Capitalism & Slavery* (Chapel Hill, 1944).
economy. In her penultimate essay, also published in this volume for the first time, she explores the theories of Karl Marx and American economic growth based on slavery.

Conspicuously absent from this book is the impact of the trans-Atlantic slave trade on Africa, its states, its societies, and the economy. Solow’s insights cry out for a discussion of the transformations that occurred in Africa as a result of the modernization and industrialization of Western Europe and the Americas. How did technology and economies of scale affect Africa, and what was their role in the origins of the enslaved population? Although this question apparently never occurred to her, it is relevant for the historiography of the Atlantic world.

Solow is not the only scholar who has ignored Africa in this respect; the general silence raises important conceptual issues. Was Africa even part of the Atlantic world, other than as an ocean filled with people to enslave? Was Africa such a vacuum of meaning and history that its economies are not worth exploring? A volume dedicated to the issues that Solow has addressed in her scholarly career might at least have provided an introduction to global issues that go beyond an Atlantic that stops short of the African coast. In addition to the two new chapters in this collection, Solow would have done well to include a third one dealing with the African side of the equation. Other scholars will have to pick up where she left off.

Paul E. Lovejoy
York University


This provocative new study engages history, anthropology, ethnic studies, and English literature as it charts “the history and legacy of Virginia’s effort to maintain racial purity and the consequences of this almost four hundred-year effort for African American–Native American relations and kinship bonds” (xv). The first four chapters attempt to set the 400-year history of Native American–black interaction in the context of the development of a racist ideology privileging white over black. The final three chapters conduct three case studies of twentieth- and twenty-first century events “regarding the social interactions of Black–Indian peoples and the ways in which Virginia Indians of African descent negotiate[d] the complex terrain of race and identity” (15).

Coleman’s interdisciplinary approach provides distinctly uneven results. She never convincingly connects that pre-1865 history with the ugly period after the passage of the Racial Integrity Act in 1924. The problems arise early. For example, Coleman claims that free people of color from the West Indies emigrated to Virginia in the wake of the Haitian Revolution, but she offers no evidence other than a
single citation in a secondary source about a white Virginian’s complaint that slaves became more restive after interacting with the slaves of white Haitian refugees (32). How can Armstrong Archer’s 1844 antislavery pamphlet, containing second-hand recollections about his father’s experiences in the eighteenth century, provide any sort of “exceptional insights into seventeenth century Indian–White relations from the perspective of the indigenous population” (36)? Coleman also rather uncritically accepts Archer’s pamphlet as the voice of a person who self-identified first as a Native American (36).

The second chapter focuses on the “changing state of Black–Indian relations in the nineteenth century,” using Omi and Winant’s post–Civil Rights era racial-formation theory as the foundation for its argument (64). Coleman never addresses why a theoretical model explaining the process of racial formation in the late twentieth century remains an appropriate model for understanding events of the nineteenth century. This chapter is also built upon a thin evidentiary base. It may well be that “Indians continued to be bought and sold” in Virginia after 1682, but interpreting a handful of notices stating that a runaway slave “ha[d] much the look of an Indian,” that another was “attempting to inveigle away a number of negroes to the new or Indian country,” or that yet another “had on him a new Indian blanket” as clear evidence of Native Americans on the slave market remains unconvincing (75–76). Coleman cites only five judicial cases from 1772 to 1827 in arguing that in the nineteenth century, “It became increasingly difficult to sue for freedom using the American Indian ancestress defense” (77). Furthermore, citing only two Works Progress Administration interviews from a single state remains insufficient proof that “numerous slave narratives bear witness to American Indian slavery” (79).

That weak evidentiary base resurfaces frequently when Coleman references pre-1900 Virginia or when in the midst of a provocative condemnation of the Virginia Council on Indians (VCI). For example, free people of color may have often noted Indian ancestry in claiming free status, but this assertion goes completely uncited (192). Later, Coleman asserts that Nottoway tribal members in 2007 “were well aware of the VCI’s unwritten criteria of racial purity,” but she provides no compelling evidence of the unwritten criteria and no evidence about what the Nottoway tribe might have known (219).

Despite these flaws, That the Blood Stay Pure represents a bold attempt to re-conceptualize how we think about Native American racial identity in the context of both a four-century history of racism and the modern era of tribal recognition and identity politics.

Kirt von Daacke
University of Virginia

---

The True Geography of Our Country: Jefferson’s Cartographic Vision. By Joel Kovarsky (Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 2014) 200 pp. $35.00

The early republic was constituted around property, territory, and land. The surveying of property, the depiction of land, and claims to territorial expansion and annexation were important discourses in the intellectual life of the new republic. In all three areas, Thomas Jefferson, the third president, played an important role. He was following a long family tradition. His great grandfather surveyed county roads. His father Peter, who was a county surveyor and co-producer (with Joshua Fry) of one of the first accurate maps of Virginia, bequeathed his surveying tools to his fourteen-year-old son. Surveying and mapping comprised an important skill set for American landowners, since they had no access to the technicians available to their European counterparts. Land was the basis for wealth and prestige; territorial expansion was the way to personal fortune and national aggrandizement.

Kovarsky provides a good coverage of Jefferson’s cartographic vision. He discusses the regional geography of Notes on Virginia (1785), which contained Jefferson’s map of the state, a compilation of existing sources, and an update of his father’s map. Another chapter describes Jefferson’s extensive library of the geography of America, which was the basis for the Library of Congress. This chapter could have been expanded by considering the Jeffersonian legacy in the creation of the wondrous map collection of the Library.

Kovarsky also discusses Jefferson’s role as sponsor and supporter of expeditions that mapped the West. Jefferson’s encouragement of the Lewis and Clark expedition is well known, but Kovarsky also describes his support of the expedition led by William Dunbar and George Hunter and that led by Thomas Freeman and Peter Custis.

Jefferson’s geographical interests were also embodied in a voluminous correspondence that connected him with writers and scientists in Europe and America. He was part of a republic of letters fascinated by exploration, mapping, and scientific description of new lands. Kovarsky also covers Jefferson’s more detailed cartographic/planning concerns regarding the design of the new capital of Washington D.C. and the University of Virginia.

Jefferson’s interest in cartography and mapping was not simply an intellectual exercise. It was allied to the territorial expansion of the fledgling nation. His cartographic vision was finely calibrated to the continental ambition of the United States, foreshadowing the ideology of Manifest Destiny well before it was first articulated in 1845. He supported and corresponded with the Scots-American mapmaker John Melish whose 1816 map depicted the United States for the first time in a continental frame from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean.

The book has a number of illustrations that add to its appeal. One criticism, but a major one, however, is that it contains little critical
discussion of the costs and wider social implication of Jefferson’s vision, which condoned slavery and the removal of Native Americans from their ancestral lands. At the time, Virginia had almost 300,000 slaves. Notes on Virginia gives a convoluted and inconsistent justification of slavery. Yet maps and geographies of the time wrestled with the marginalization of blacks and Native Americans. Many of the cartouches for the maps at the time depict slaves working on docks or on plantations. No mention of these images appears in Kovarsky’s account. He seems willfully to have ignored these more compromised positions.

A depiction of Jefferson’s life and work that includes a more profound sense of the blind spots in his vision and a wider appreciation of the social consequences of his support for territorial expansion is not too much to ask in this day and age. Jefferson is too complex a character and too American a figure to dismiss easily as a sinner or to praise simply as an embodiment of uncompromised Enlightenment principles.

John Rennie Short
University of Maryland, Baltimore County

That Religion in Which All Men Agree: Freemasonry in American Culture. By David G. Hackett (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2014) 317 pp. $49.95

Hackett’s book is an attempt to offer a comprehensive account of the history of Freemasonry in the United States. Notwithstanding a few oversights and holes, it is by and large a constructive and welcome history that will not only be useful to scholars who study Freemasonry but also to those who study U.S. politics, political culture, and religion more broadly. Hackett takes as his guiding light Jürgen Habermas, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society (Cambridge, Mass., 1989), suggesting that the history of Masonic lodge activity and self-understanding parallels the rise and decline of an eighteenth-century enlightened public sphere. The intellectual and political health of civil society suffered with the triumph of modern, communicative capitalism. Interestingly, through the lens of the Masons, Hackett finds evangelical Christianity and partisan democracy in the antebellum United States to be far more significant than economic transformation in driving Freemasonry inward and thus away from the more civic and republican outlook that it espoused in the colonial and revolutionary eras.

Hackett’s sympathetic history elides the Marxist elements of the Habermasian scheme, allowing Hackett to avoid criticism of Masonry’s Whiggish narrative of its role in the founding and maintenance of the republic. Events like the disappearance of William Morgan, who was writing an exposé of the Freemasonry in 1826, and the challenges of Anti-Masonry appear as mere pathologies of populist excess in this book, threatening the purportedly benign, republican, and elite-guided public
sphere of the founding. Likewise, although Hackett incorporates the scholarly insights of other historians regarding gender and sexuality into his work, he keeps them at an appreciative but safe distance. He pays some attention to changes in gender roles and in the dynamic between the public and the private spheres, but he never explicitly discusses their stability as analytical tools. The book includes the history of African-American fraternalism (and Prince Hall Freemasonry), Native-American Freemasonry, and the participation of Jewish and even Catholic immigrants in the twentieth century, but by treating all of them as completely self-contained stories, in separate chapters, his book runs the risk of taking for granted the racial and gendered boundaries that are undeniably foundational to Freemasonry and its history. The rich and growing history of Latin American Freemasonry, in and out of the United States, also gets short shrift as a result.

These largely methodological hesitancies should not detract from the strengths of the book as a comprehensive study of Freemasonry within the context of U.S. history. The book is particularly strong in its careful attention to historical self-understanding, myth and narrative, historical symbolism, and temporality. Future research on Freemasonry will benefit greatly from it.

Matthew Crow
Hobart and William Smith Colleges

*The Workingman’s Reward, Chicago’s Early Suburbs and the Roots of American Sprawl.* By Elaine Lewinnek (New York, Oxford University Press, 2014) 239 pp. $45.00

This book provides readers with an insightful case study of patterns of human habitation in metropolitan Chicago. Although Lewinnek fixed its chronological parameters between 1860 and 1930, she nonetheless ventures in the direction of contemporary history.

Lewinnek’s initial sentence stakes the terrain: “Chicago’s first product was real estate.” She subsequently elaborates upon the real-estate marketplace, finance, geography, and construction. But this is hardly a book about joints and arches or dollars and cents. What makes the book interesting is Lewinnek’s clarification of it as “an analysis of ideas as well as actions.” It could have proved a dismal social-scientific treatise filled with theories and statistics. Instead, it introduces “novels and poetry as well as bank records and real estate maps.” Nelson Algren, Theodore Dreiser, Henry Blake Fuller, Louise Montgomery, Upton Sinclair, and Richard Wright step onto the stage. Readers will search in vain for Jane Addams—no entry in the index—who inexplicably hardly figures into this book.

Among the strengths of this study is its determination to place race in its storyline. Although this landscape is well known, Lewinnek unflinchingly and deftly manages to integrate race into a broader, much-welcomed
demographic context. The chapter entitled “The Mortgages of Whiteness” revisits the often-told narrative of the race riot of 1919 (“the riot helped move race relations toward a black–white binary”). Lewinnek, to her credit, recounts this narrative at ground level, for example, the paragraph in which she reports that the mean commute to work at the Argo Corn Refining Company for African Americans was one hour and for whites thirty–two minutes.

One aspect of The Workingmen’s Reward warrants elaboration. Lewinnek’s spatial sensibilities—inside Chicago, within the area commonly known as suburban Cook County, and the five outer counties—are lacking. To be sure, she rightfully labels the key word suburban as a recurring trope subject to change. Chicago’s great annexation of 1889 admittedly complicates the narrative. But for all of Lewinnek’s keen attention to mapping and ecology in Chapter 5, at times she might have covered a broader geographical plane. Geddes, who wrote at the turn of the last century, stated the matter of metropolitan geography succinctly: “[I]t takes the whole region to make the city.” It is not always clear whether Lewinnek situates readers within Chicago’s boundaries or beyond them. To this point, the six maps in this chapter—dating back in some instances to the nineteenth century—disappoint. In an age when the nexus of cartography and digital production offers endless, inexpensive possibilities, twenty-first century visuals would have been most welcome, and appropriate, in this book.

The Workingmen’s Reward, in spite of these concerns, is an insightful, thought-provoking, and highly readable book. It will surely appeal to those focused on cities and their diverse real-estate marketplaces. Lewinnek is especially adept at populating her narrative with the variety of people—buyers, sellers, and tenants—who contended with the complex, and even humiliating, contingencies entailed in their pursuit of satisfying human habitation.

Michael H. Ebner
Lake Forest College

Fueling the Gilded Age: Railroads, Miners, and Disorder in Pennsylvania Coal Country. By Andrew B. Arnold (New York, New York University Press, 2014) 277 pp. $49.00

Arnold takes us into the bituminous coal-mining areas of central Pennsylvania during the last three decades of the nineteenth century. Coal mining in this part of Pennsylvania largely has escaped the notice of historians—remaining in the shadows of the great anthracite coal region to the

northeast and the vast bituminous coalfields to the southwest. What is to be gained by a look into this neglected nook and cranny of coal production? From Arnold’s account, the answer is “a great deal.”

By the 1870s, relatively small, independent coal-mine operations had been established in Central Pennsylvania. Coal-mine owners there reached accommodations with the miners on whom they heavily depended to share the risks and rewards of business as market prices per ton of coal fluctuated widely. Coal miners formed loose alliances to achieve area-wide accords, a form of federation that Arnold dubs “community unionism.”

Harmonies shattered in the 1870s. Growing competition—spurred by the penetration of major railroad carriers into coal producing regions—and the economic hard times of the decade drove prices down, and as the operators cut wages, coal miners joined in job actions that turned violent when the mine owners attempted to enlist strikebreakers. Local judges then seized the day, enjoining both the formation of unions and strikes as conspiracies to do harm and restrain trade. Arnold documents the coal miners’ strategic move toward secret organization and the Knights of Labor, which soon operated openly in the region.

The Knights’ highly decentralized structure fit with the pit-level base of organizing in Central Pennsylvania mines. Knights’ members and leaders engaged in a series of strikes during the 1880s that achieved a key victory for the coal miners—the establishment of worker-appointed checkweighmen to ensure that the coal was weighed accurately. When organizers of the United Mineworkers of America entered the area in the 1890s, they met with an ambivalent response; the coal miners were wary of hooking their fortunes to a national, highly centralized organization.

Arnold presents a deliberately complex portrait of developments (“disorder” is a heralded theme for him). Hence, he finely depicts the complicated relations among mine owners, major railroad companies, and coal miners. The owners, faced with gluts of coal on the market and falling prices, could meet demands for higher wages only by negotiating lower freight rates from the railroads (they also remained at the mercy of the carriers for timely deliveries of coal to their customers). Major rail haulers aimed to keep their transport rates high, but competition among them drove down rates and revenues as they sought to capture greater traffic. The miners were caught in the middle. Greater stability, controls on market prices, freight rates, wages, and returns to investors proved elusive.

Arnold’s detailed account of ten different strikes and the complicated play of forces at work is challenging. The absence of maps and tables does not help. However, readers’ patience will be rewarded. This is a revealing book.

Walter Licht
University of Pennsylvania
Mehrotra’s award–winning book is truly a tour de force.¹ It chronicles a transformative period in the development of the American fiscal state during which the old fiscal order—characterized by indirect, hidden, mercilessly regressive, and partisan taxation—gave way to a direct, transparent, steeply progressive, and professionally administered tax regime.

The new revenue system “dramatically altered fiscal burdens and profoundly revolutionized federal government finances” (6). It also re-shaped social, political, and economic life in the United States. According to Mehrotra, the fiscal reordering that occurred between the late 1870s and the financial crash of 1929 “reallocated across both income classes and national regions the economic responsibility of financing the growing needs of a modern industrialized democracy” (11). Moreover, it remade the “social meaning of modern citizenship” and expedited “a fundamental change in political arrangements and institutions” that ushered in a “proto-administrative state” (11, 14). If these changes were not enough, the emergent fiscal order—which hastened the demise of the nineteenth–century party system and highlighted the contagion of civic irresponsibility—effectively “helped underwrite the subsequent expansion of the American liberal state” (11).

In Mehrotra’s skilled retelling of the period, taxes destroyed the old order and forged a new one. Consider what happened to the national tariff, a fixture of the old regime. Long decried as “the mother of all trusts,” the tariff, which protected domestic industries and generated a majority of national revenues, was highly politicized; its extensive duty list and rate structure fluctuated with each election and favored certain geographical regions over others. It was also thoroughly polarizing: “Protectionists” battled “free traders,” and consumers opposed producers. To ordinary consumers of the necessities burdened by the tariff, the levy meant higher prices and a higher cost of living, since merchants and manufacturers shifted the tax costs to end-users. Along with similarly unpopular excise taxes on alcohol and tobacco, the tariff hurt lower- and middle-class consumers more than wealthy ones.

As the beacon of a new fiscal order, the progressive income tax challenged the reign of the callous tariff. In 1890, the tariff produced nearly 60 percent of total federal revenue, but by 1920, the figure had plummeted to 5 percent (7). Meanwhile, the federal income tax—direct, transparent, and progressive compared to the tariff’s indirect, hidden, and regressive nature—started collecting revenue in 1913 with the passage of the Sixteenth Amendment. Six years later, it generated an astonishing 66 percent of federal receipts (7). Moreover, wealthy Americans began paying their fair share of citizenship under the new levy: In its first year,

¹ The book won the 2014 Society for U.S. Intellectual History Book Award.
the top marginal rate reached a modest 7 percent (a “normal” tax of 1 percent plus a “surtax” of 6 percent); by 1918, it had reached an astounding 77 percent.  

No palace revolution, the fiscal reordering that Mehrotra details was real and lasting. But its leaders were not the usual revolutionaries engaged in traditional combat: “The great transformation in American public finance was led by a conceptual revolution. Ideas were critical weapons and blueprints for building powerful political coalitions” (9). Professionally trained intellectuals and social scientists, many of them trained in Germany, soldiered this battle, wielding ideas rooted and forged in the “raw social experiences of the modern industrial age” and “the massive material inequalities of the time” (9). These “ethical” political economists—headed by Henry Carter Adams, Richard Ely, and Edwin R.A. Seligman—“trafficked in a new wave of transatlantic ideas about changing conceptions of the self, society, economy, and the state.” Their goal was to make “European ideas palatable for an American audience that was generally suspicious of foreign influences and entanglements” (11), particularly those that disturbed the existing social and economic order.

As the “visionaries” and “architects” of a new fiscal regime and incipient social-welfare state (11), the new public-finance theorists attacked the “benefits principle” of taxation (whereby taxpayers paid according to what they received from the state) and its policy manifestations (the tariff, excise taxes, and general property taxes) as an inequitable and immoral protection of private property. In its place, they championed the “ability to pay” principle, which “promoted an active role for the positive state in the reallocation of fiscal burdens, the reconfiguration of civic identity, and the rise of administrative authority” (10). With this principle as their rallying cry, the progressive political economists touted graduated income and wealth taxes as the way not only to raise revenue, but also to recalibrate the distribution of taxes, rewrite the social contract alter conceptions of civic identity (what Mehrotra calls “fiscal citizenship”), and build a professional administrative infrastructure that could mold new political institutions.

According to Mehrotra, however, these fiscal revolutionaries were not radical redistributionists; they were middle-ground progressives fighting to ensure “that those who had the greatest taxpaying capacity were contributing their fair share” (12), not to create a perfectly egalitarian society. Their pragmatic and contextually bound reforms laid the foundation for the modern American welfare state. In the process, they helped to alleviate wealth inequality and administrative corruption to some extent, but they also had a hand in restricting the options available to remedy these social and institutional ills. By heralding “ability to pay” and denouncing the “benefits principle,” these ethical political economists severed the link between benefit and burden and between

---

spending and extraction. By fixating on reallocating fiscal burdens through soak-the-rich taxation, they ignored the “transfer” side of the tax-and-transfer system. Direct transfers, funded by steeply progressive taxes, could have reapportioned fiscal burdens. Consumption taxes, too, could have raised revenue to counterbalance the regressive incidence of other consumption taxes (an approach that some Western countries adopted later in the twentieth century to finance redistributive social-welfare states). But the reformers’ “fiscal myopia” limited their imagination, as well as “the imagination of future American tax theorists and reformers” (17).

In some respects, Mehrotra’s criticism of the reforms explains too much. Arguably, for instance, the runaway success of the federal income tax—particularly the “mass-based” income tax that was born of World War II exigencies—made consideration of other national taxes less pressing. Moreover, although consumption taxes, such as a sales tax or a “spendings” tax, failed to take root at the federal level, states and municipalities embraced and expanded versions of those revenue instruments throughout the twentieth century. Furthermore, Social Security, the largest U.S. social-welfare program, has always funded its reserves with a regressive tax (exempting earnings beneath a certain level), but it pays out benefits that provide higher returns to workers’ first dollars earned and lower returns to last dollars earned.

In any event, the fiscal transformation that Mehrotra recounts was a “qualified success” (20). It did not go as far as some populist reformers and intellectuals may have wanted (25–27, 143–154). But the “dramatic shift from a regressive, hidden, disaggregated, and politicized tax system to a graduated, transparent, and centrally and professionally administered one” . . . laid the foundation for a revolution in American fiscal relations” (27). The resulting bedrock was “absolutely crucial to the accelerating development of the modern fiscal state,” not just during the crucible of two world wars but also “for its resiliency” after both conflicts.

As Mehrotra notes in this book and elaborates elsewhere, this period of fiscal reordering marks a “lost moment in American history—a moment when progressive reformers, thinkers, lawmakers, administrators and ordinary citizens believed in social solidarity and collective obligations” (414–418). Although its promise “may have lost some luster over the years, it can still remind us of what was, and is, possible” (416).

Making the Modern American Fiscal State will appeal to historians across multiple disciplines with diverse research interests. Mehrotra’s diligent chronicling of “what actually happened in the past” aptly fulfills
the historian’s mandate “to trace and explain change over time.” Moreover, Mehrotra identifies and informs all of the relevant schools of thought about state-building at the turn of the century, including the influence of national crises, the “corporate liberal” view that Progressive Era reforms were designed to deflect more radical change, “progressive” historical accounts of ineluctable advancement and “great men,” and “democratic-institutionalism” as advanced not just by historians but also political scientists, sociologists, and economists. By emphasizing the power of ideas and the contested and contingent nature of history, Mehrotra fits comfortably in the democratic-institutionalist camp, while adding to the interpretive approach an abiding and expert appreciation of “the role of law, juridical institutions, and legal professionals and processes in the creation of a new fiscal order” (29).

Dennis J. Ventry, Jr.
University of California, Davis, School of Law


The history of childhood is an interdisciplinary field of study that focuses on age as a central category of analysis. To understand better the lives of children in the past and the cultures that defined them, childhood historians often integrate the methods and concerns of the social sciences, media and cultural studies, educational and intellectual history, and material–culture studies. Much recent childhood scholarship has converged on the post–World War II period, examining the influence of politics, institutions, and the popular culture of the 1950s and 1960s on young people. Books in this vein include Mickenberg’s work on radical children’s literature, Delmont’s study of American Bandstand, and de Schweinitz’s research on children and the civil-rights movement. Holt’s Cold War Kids is a helpful contribution to this growing historiography.

Holt seeks to understand the ways in which the presidential administrations of Truman and Eisenhower “reacted to special problems and needs associated with children and teenagers” (3). In particular, she examines the national discourse surrounding issues of education,


health, and welfare in the postwar era. Faced with the prospect of growing prosperity and peacetime after years of depression and war, government entities took stock of the nation’s children and, in Holt’s words, asked, “Were existing programs enough, or did circumstances call for additional legislation and funding?” (7)

Holt organizes her narrative around the 1950 and 1960 White House Conferences on Children and Youth. Though not the first of their kind—Theodore Roosevelt launched the series in 1909—the postwar conferences were notable for their new focus on “all children,” not just the economically and socially disadvantaged, as well as their call for more federal involvement in the lives of children. Holt recounts the planning, proceedings, and outcomes of the conferences by drawing extensively on archival materials housed at the Truman and Eisenhower presidential libraries. Her first chapter provides a useful history of the White House Conference on Children and Youth, and her three subsequent chapters concentrate separately on the topics of education, child welfare (delinquency and dependency in particular), and health (namely, nutrition, disease, and physical fitness).

The book is at its best when Holt situates the work of various federal bureaus, committees, and departments within a larger cultural context. For instance, we learn that the President’s Council on Youth Fitness worried that television and suburban car culture might be contributing to the “subtle physical erosion” of America’s children (134). In her section on adoption, Holt explains how the efforts of the U.S. Children’s Bureau resonated with the postwar “obsession” with marriage, children, and family (82). At other times, the book could benefit from greater engagement with secondary sources that have already covered some of the more familiar ground in Cold War Kids, especially with regard to education in the 1950s (Kliebard, Clowse, Foster, and Hartman, for example, would all be vital resources for this kind of study).2

Adam Golub
California State University, Fullerton

Nixon, Kissinger and the Shah: The United States and Iran in the Cold War. By Roham Alvandi (New York, Oxford University Press, 2014) 272 pp. $55.00

In November 1976, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, the king of Iran, wrote a sternly worded letter to President Ford rejecting a White House

plea to cap the high oil prices that fueled Iranian prosperity but that threatened American prosperity. “Nothing could provoke more reaction from us,” declared the Shah, “than this threatening note from certain circles and their paternalistic attitude.”

Oil prices were the most contentious but not the only source of tension between the two allies, as Alvandi makes clear in his enlightening new book, which offers a timely revisionist approach to one of the most misunderstood bilateral relationship of modern times. In his lifetime and in the decades since, the public image of the shah has been that of an American “puppet” or “stooge,” a brutally effective caricature that sharply influenced scholarly discussion of U.S.–Iran relations for at least the past generation. Not that the three principals discussed in this tome did themselves any favors. By engaging in secret diplomacy, and later refusing to explain their methods and decisions, Nixon, Kissinger, and the shah left the historiography of the era vulnerable to a raft of literature that was often as poorly sourced as it was speculative. Only with the release of thousands of declassified documents from the Nixon and Ford administrations have historians finally had the opportunity to assess a record that was once the preserve of sociologists, political scientists, and journalists.

The picture that emerges from the archives and collections is full of surprises and contradictions. It portrays the shah as a canny nationalist who brilliantly exploited American weakness in the wake of the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal to establish Iran as the dominant power in the Persian Gulf and southwest Asia. In breaking from the client status expected of him, the shah threw down the gauntlet to U.S. policymakers, making it clear, to their consternation, that thenceforth he expected to be treated as an equal. This story, which is completely at odds with conventional wisdom, is highly complex and involved. Indeed, Alvandi is forced to concede that his work is by no means “a comprehensive history of the U.S.–Iran bilateral relationship in the 1970s.” His focus, rather, is on “three historical episodes that map the rise and fall of the Nixon–Kissinger–Pahlavi partnership”: (1) the Nixon Doctrine, which legitimized Iranian supremacy in the Persian Gulf; (2) covert cooperation to support the Kurdish uprising in Iraq; and (3) negotiations over the shah’s desire to obtain nuclear power for his country.

This structure suits Alvandi’s purpose. He points out that oil prices and arms sales have been intensively covered elsewhere. Nonetheless, neither of these issues can be regarded as entirely separate from the ones that the book covers. The shah’s nationalist rhetoric was never more apparent than on the subject of oil policy, which he regarded as critical to his regime’s survival, and bilateral differences on prices were an important factor in the malaise that permeated U.S.–Iran relations even before the outbreak of

---

1 Presidential Correspondence with Foreign Leaders, Iran—The Shah (2), “Letter from His Imperial Majesty the Shahanshah Aryamehr to President Gerald R. Ford,” Box 2, National Security Adviser, Gerald R. Ford Library, Ann Arbor.
This book, written by many of Canada’s leading historical scholars, sheds new light on a number of topics, including language identity, aboriginal populations, family and household arrangements, immigration, politics, and social class and mobility at the beginning of the twentieth century. Its most important feature is the analysis of historical census microdata. The four introductory chapters deal with census data and methods, the new 1911 census microdata sample, and parallel projects for samples of the 1851/52, 1871, 1881, 1891, and 1901 censuses. In addition to the 1911 census sample, comparable samples are also underway for the 1921, 1931, 1941, and 1951 censuses. The other twelve chapters present an analysis of historical census microdata. All of them analyze 1911 data, but several use other historical data sets. A chapter about Quebec City explores the linkage of individuals over several censuses for the 1871 to 1911 period. About one-half of the chapters examine Canada’s national population. Other chapters deal with subnational populations, including Trois-Rivières, Newfoundland, Quebec City, and Hamilton.

The development and availability of census microdata samples has been the basis for improvements in research during the past five decades. The methodological foundation for these new data emerged in the 1930s and 1940s when statisticians provided the theory and methods for survey sampling. By the 1950s, researchers were able to conduct national surveys of 1,000 respondents, with valid inferences about entire populations. Because of new sampling methods, better statistical software, and big advances in computing technology, census microdata has progressed in four stages.

First, survey sampling techniques were employed for the first time after the 1960 U.S. census to make data tapes with public-use microdata samples (PUMS) available. These PUMS files were either 1-in-1,000 or 1-in-100 (1 percent) samples of individual records—omitting identifiers that could reveal individual identities—with information about age, sex, ethnic origin, nativity, marital status, family relationships, occupation, income, and other data collected in the census. These first PUMS files proved to be a treasure chest; researchers could, for the first time, prepare their own tabulations rather than depend on tables published by the U.S. Census Bureau. Moreover, researchers could use modern multivariate statistical techniques for the analysis of census microdata. By the end
of the 1960s, academic journals routinely included articles with regression and other multivariate analysis of census data.

The second major advance occurred when census microdata for several countries became available for comparative analysis. By the 1970s, the census microdata samples for many countries could be used for the study of such topics as the factors associated with international variations of female employment.

When researchers realized the value of PUMS files for several censuses, they began to develop PUMS files for earlier censuses—the third stage. In the United States, researchers initially took samples from the 1940 and 1950 censuses in order to make longer-term comparisons with existing 1960, 1970, and 1980 censuses. Currently, 1 percent PUMS files exist for U.S. decennial censuses from 1850 to the present, comprising one of the most valuable quantitative data sets for historical research.

We are currently in the midst of a fourth stage—the development of large census-data collections that are both historical and comparative, as evidenced by the pioneering work of IPUMS-International (https://international.ipums.org/international/), which now includes PUMS files for 258 censuses from 79 countries. For a comparative study of, say, southern Latin America, IPUMS-International currently includes sixteen census PUMS files for Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay that could be used to analyze trends from the 1960s to the present. The next frontier for census microdata analysis is the comparative study of change over time in, for instance, the determinants of fertility variations, correlates of family structure, and factors affecting the living arrangements of elderly adults.

U.S. census microdata files—including individual data with detailed codes for age, country of birth, ethnic origin, and place of residence (though no personal identifiers)—are usually available for public use, as evidenced by their availability for download from IPUMS-USA (https://usa.ipums.org/usa/). Canadian census data, however, are relatively restricted. Some of it, such as census microdata samples for the 1921 to 1951 censuses, are available only within special limited-access research data centers. Moreover, Canada’s PUMS are more limited than comparable data in the U.S. and some other countries. For example, information about place of residence is limited to the several-dozen-largest metropolitan areas (compared to several hundred cities of smaller size in the U.S. PUMS files). Moreover, Canadian public-use data on couples is confined to the ethnic origin of only three categories for husbands and wives—British, French, and other—thus preventing analysis of ethnic intermarriage.

PUMS have several distinctive advantages over files in data centers or other facilities that limit the access and release of data tabulations. Although researchers can prepare tabulations and multivariate analysis with both public-use and restricted data, public-use data offer significant advantages in three situations: (1) Analysis of individual census data often requires supplementing the PUMS files with other data, including contextual variables like the unemployment rate in a city or town. Public-use
data facilitates downloading such information from internet sources and linking contextual variables to individual records. Since restricted-data centers often prohibit internet connections and prohibit researchers from entering with other electronic data, they inhibit the development of new data sets. (2) New data files can be created within a restricted data center, but, at least in Canada and probably other countries, they cannot be removed from the center. Hence, researchers who spend considerable time linking individuals with their spouses, children with their mothers, or adults with information about their household cannot easily share their findings with researchers outside the data center. This problem relates to another particularly important issue—(3) the difficulty of replicating empirical research conducted within a restricted data center because other researchers may not have access to the original or intermediate files.

The Dawn of Canada’s Century provides a valuable source of historical evidence about the development of Canada at the beginning of the 1900s. It should appeal to readers and scholars in search of a systematic and stimulating treatment of historical census data.

Barry Edmonston
University of Victoria


From late 1780 to 1782, indigenous uprisings convulsed Andean society from Cusco to Potosí, presenting the most significant challenge to Spanish rule in America between the conquest and independence. During the past half-century, the “Great Rebellion” of the Túpac Amarus in southern Peru and the Kataris in Bolivia has morphed from footnote to central narrative in Andean history, generating a substantial scholarship; it is now treated as a major anticolonial revolt in the Atlantic world’s age of revolution. Sergio Šerulnikov’s recent Revolution in the Andes: The Age of Túpac Amaru (Durham, 2013) offers a strong synthetic summary of this violent assault on the colonial order, but no English language narrative of Josef Gabriel Túpac Amaru’s attempts to establish a colonial, neo-Inca order in Cusco has appeared since Lillian Fisher’s dated The Last Inca Revolt (Norman, 1966). Drawing primarily from correspondence and official colonial records during and just after the rebellion, Walker’s book meets that need with a careful, engaging account of the leaders, military campaigns, and chaotic violence that captures the excitement and dread of the time.

Focusing on the Túpac Amaru family, this book is a top-down story of the uprising and its organization. From Josef Gabriel’s unsuccessful efforts to win recognition of his Inca ancestry and his claims to a vacant mayorazgo to the carefully planned revolt and unsuccessful siege of Cusco, the capture and savage execution of him and his wife, Micaela Bastidas, in the city’s plaza through the continuation of the rebellion by their nephew, The Túpac
Amaru Rebellion makes excellent use of primary documents to represent the principal actors’ views and provide a detailed account of the conflict. Since the events and trajectory of the rebellion are well known, the book’s contribution to the scholarly literature does not involve novel findings so much as its strong representation of Bastidas’ central role in the planning and execution of the rebellion and its discussion of the Church’s stance and actions in the crisis. Similarly welcome is the attention to Diego Christobal Túpac Amaru’s continuation of the rebellion around Titicaca from 1781 into 1782, and to its spiraling violence. A solid chapter discusses the Katarista campaigns and sieges that moved northward from Potosí to Titicaca in 1781, but, particularly with its emphasis on the Túpac Amarus, this account, too, encounters the central challenge of “Great Rebellion” studies—how to explain the simultaneity, similarity, but lack of clear integration between the neighboring revolts.

A strong narrative account written with the non-specialist in mind, the book raises the issue of how necessary to a broad and accessible history of this crucial moment in Andean history are the leading questions and theoretical frameworks—of political and moral economy, subaltern agency, indigenous identity and social hierarchy, and cultural geography—that have dominated the specialized study of these rebellions for the past two decades. Walker’s general portrayal of colonial society resembles that by colonial officials, compressing the ethnic complexity of the viceregal Andes into a Spanish/Indian dichotomy that minimizes the intra-Andean aspects of the rebellion. The increasingly common editorial decision to forego a bibliography and offer thin historiographical notes limits the usefulness for those wanting an introduction to that scholarship.

With its focus on leadership, broad characterizations of the structural and legal injustices of the colonial order, a generally sympathetic stance to rebels and critical view of loyalists, and its focus on the Peruvian half of the rebellions, this book follows in the protonationalist and anticolonial reading that emerged in the mid-twentieth century to dominate the popular history. To this foundation Walker adds rich new detail from extensive research, while bringing attention to neglected and important episodes and characters. The Túpac Amaru Rebellion is a comprehensive, useful account that serves as an excellent introduction to the Túpac Amaru rebellion and a substantial contribution to the study of Túpac Amaru’s central role in Peru’s national history and historiography.

David T. Garrett
Reed College


Rodríguez has devoted more the thirty years of his academic life to studying the concluding history of the Viceroyalty of New Spain and
the early years of independent Mexico. The book under review is the English translation of a study in two volumes published originally as Nosotros somos ahora los verdaderos españoles (Mexico City, 2009). The new edition eliminates material that the author did not consider essential for an English-speaking audience but incorporates research that he performed after the publication of the first version.

Rodríguez is the staunchest supporter of a controversial thesis regarding Mexico’s independence movement—namely, that the emancipation process of New Spain consisted of two revolutions, “The Cádiz Revolution” (Chapter 5) and “A Fragmented Insurgency” (Chapter 6). In principle, without ignoring the connections between them, this notion is acceptable; the problem, however, is the way in which Rodríguez presents and contrasts both processes. He defines the Cádiz Revolution as “the fundamental revolution” (1), whereas he considers the insurgency as “violent and disastrous” (336).

Many nationalist historians cannot accept his position because it deprecates the movement that fought against the Spanish authorities from 1810 until Mexico’s independence in 1821. That the insurgency (more specifically, the leadership of Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla and José María Morelos) has been over-praised by Mexican historiography is undeniable. But Rodríguez’s conception of the Spanish liberal revolution that took place in Cádiz between 1810 and 1814 is also a panegyric. The Cádiz Constitution is not the quintessence of liberalism and modernity that Rodríguez portrays. Moreover, regarding Spanish America, it was fraught with ambiguities and limitations that barely appear in the book (including the extensive notes). This deficiency is the result of Rodríguez repeatedly dismissing or simply ignoring the copious bibliography concerning those shortcomings.

The other flaw that decreases the value of this ambitious interpretation of Mexican independence is the omnipresence of the terms “home rule” and “autonomy,” which Rodríguez treats as a passe-partout for not only the Cádiz Revolution but also the insurgent movement (for example, see 3, 4, 148, 185, 200, 201, 234, 241, 253, 268, 271, 341, and 342). Why would someone who has devoted many years to the study of this period promote a Manichaean perspective on it, forcing every aspect of it to turn on what appears to be an incommensurable contrast between “a great political revolution” and “a violent and disastrous” movement (148, 336)? Needless to say, the period is much more complex.

Roberto Breña
El Colegio de México

The Work of Recognition: Caribbean Colombia and the Postemancipation Struggle for Citizenship. By Jason McGraw (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2014) 328 pp. $34.95

This well-researched, passionate study focuses on the negative attitudes of literate white elites, particularly in Colombia’s interior, toward the
black population in the Caribbean zone and on the struggle of coastal blacks for social recognition and citizenship (including the long-delayed right to vote. McGraw examines the whites’ contempt for the Caribbean blacks’ population via their frustration with, and anger about, the lack of discipline of the *bogas*—black males who painfully propelled their boats up the Magdalena River with poles. He suggests that white elites in Colombia’s interior welcomed the introduction of steamboats on the river because it lessened the necessity of relying on the bogas. Steamboats could go upriver in eight or nine days compared to the more than a month that the poled boats took.

Also examined are the cases of two Caribbean blacks who became educated: Candelario Obeso became a writer; his literary status among the white literati appears to have been at best ambiguous. Luis A. Robles, who became governor of the State of Magdalena, appears to have been an unmitigated success.

In treating Colombia’s “Regeneration” years (1884–1898), McGraw undoubtedly is correct in emphasizing the damaging effect of extreme monetary inflation on the black population of the Caribbean. Other poor people in Colombia must have been similarly affected. The role of blacks who fought for the defeated Liberal rebels in the War of a Thousand Days that followed the Regeneration years (1899–1902) was compromised by the inability of Liberal elite leaders to communicate effectively with the black rank and file in the Caribbean zone.

This book is based on deep and original research and explores in considerable depth social themes not previously treated in the literature. Other scholars, notably Helg and Lasso, have also dealt with the social or political status of black populations in Colombia’s Caribbean zone but in earlier periods.\(^1\) McGraw’s literary analysis of Obeso’s work is as close as the book gets to interdisciplinary work.

Frank Safford
Northwestern University

*Disease, Resistance, and Lies: The Demise of the Transatlantic Slave Trade to Brazil and Cuba.* By Dale T. Graden (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 2014), 291 pp. $35.00

The substantial growth in the number of enslaved Africans transported to Brazil and Cuba following the Haitian Revolution and Britain’s abolition of its own slave trade in 1807 is now well documented. Such growth, which reflected the demand for slaves among Brazilian and Cuban sugar and coffee planters, was sustained by, among other things,

inflows of capital, ships, and other resources from U.S. capitalists willing to assist transatlantic slave trafficking after 1815. Much less well-documented is how the growth in concern among local white populations within Brazil and Cuba about the sheer scale of slave imports after 1790, in combination with international efforts to outlaw slave trafficking, helped to bring about the ending of such imports between 1850 and 1867.

Graden’s purpose in this book is to explore this concern and its impact. In doing so, he offers valuable insights not only into the socio-political tensions that sustained slave imports caused in both Brazil and Cuba but also into the alliances forged between newly arrived Africans, especially those from Yorubaland, and freed blacks in resisting slavery. He also shows how the specter of the Haitian Revolution hung over arguments and debates about the wisdom of continuing to rely on imported Africans to meet planters’ demands for labor.

To investigate these issues, Graden largely consults conventional historical sources, including publications by contemporary Brazilian and Cuban scholars as well as reports by British diplomats and officials resident in Havana, Bahia, and Rio de Janeiro. But his methodology is implicitly comparative, involving analysis of the perceived risks to social order and stability in both territories due to the unhealthiness of newly arrived slaves and the propensity of those who survived the Atlantic crossing to wage war on the slave system. In support of his argument, Graden offers detailed evidence about the machinations of U.S. capitalists and local Brazilian and Cuban traders and officials to circumvent efforts to suppress slave imports. Moreover, to allay fears of importing disease through slave trafficking, local officials worked with the British navy to establish quarantine arrangements in Bahia and Havana for disease-ridden ships arriving from Africa.

Most importantly, Graden describes in detail the recorded history of slave rebellions in Brazil and Cuba from 1790 onward, noting the scale, frequency, and ubiquity of such activities and their wider socio-political consequences from the late eighteenth century onward, which culminated in political action during the 1840s to stem the flow of the slave trade. Some people’s disenchantment about the importation of slaves betrayed racist caricatures of Africans, but others pointed toward deep misgivings about the practice of slavery itself. Particularly noteworthy was a speech made in 1843 by a Brazilian senator from Maranhao, who argued that instead of “accepting that the agricultural sector in Brazil will be destroyed by a lack of African slaves, we must show that a country worked by slaves is never happy” and that “such a system only brings bad outcomes” (145).

Graden is fully aware that such sentiments alone were insufficient to prompt Brazilians and Cubans to end slave imports, thereby alleviating the social risks attached to them. International pressures and external events, including the American Civil War, have to be given due weight. But Graden is surely right to insist that any explanation of the closure of the slave trade to Brazil and Cuba that ignores local perceptions of the
hazards to national security posed by it is incomplete. By advancing that claim, he places slave resistance and memories of the Haitian Revolution firmly in the mix of factors that shaped political discourses about transatlantic slavery in the century after 1790.

David Richardson
University of Hull

State of Ambiguity: Civic Life and Culture in Cuba’s First Republic. Edited by Steven Palmer, José Antonio Piqueras, and Amparo Sánchez Cobos (Durham, Duke University Press, 2014) 365 pp. $94.95 cloth $26.95 paper

The editors of this wide-ranging collection of eleven incisive chapters have set themselves the task of providing an introduction or, more precisely, a re-introduction, to the history of the Cuban republic. This is no small task. As the editors point out in their opening essay, the years bookended by the end of Spanish colonial rule in 1898 and the revolution of 1959 have often been dismissed, distorted, and misunderstood—when they have not been ignored—by generations of historians in Cuba, North America, and Spain. The editors have turned to historians from these three parts of the world to rescue the republic from facile description and analysis. They succeed in their mission, challenging scholars to re-examine the republican period for what it was, not for what it failed to be.

The collection’s introductory chapter sets the stage by exploring the historiography of the Cuban republic, which, they argue, generally focuses on the republic’s shortcomings (the island of “generals and doctors,” in Carlos Loveira’s famous framing) without acknowledging Cuba’s many attempts to create a new nation. The editors suggest, in a provocative and useful analogy, that the intellectual and cultural currents coursing through the island made it something akin to a “tropical Weimar.” Indeed, many of the chapters highlight the thriving cultural and intellectual milieu of the republic and the ways in which Cubans articulated ideas of nationhood.

The chapter by Steven Palmer about the Havana-based scientific community that centered on scientist Juan Santos Fernández during the late colonial and early republican periods, and that by Reinaldo Funes Monzote’s about food safety, hygiene, and veterinary medicine in Havana, make clear that Cubans were deeply concerned with creating a republic built upon science and the application of modern technological innovations. One such technological innovation was radio. Alejandra Bronfman provides an excellent analysis of the advent of radio culture in republican Cuba and the creation of scores of “listening spaces” that reflected the political and cultural priorities of the island’s “público oyente.”

Two chapters cover the development of Havana as a republican city. Marial Iglesias Utset provides an expert forensic analysis of the remains of the doomed USS Maine and the role that they played within the city’s important public spaces. José Antonio Piqueras recreates the ebbs and
flows of diverse architectural styles in Havana and their connection to Cuban elite thinking about class and cosmopolitanism.

The international connections of Cubans during the republican era is at the center of Amparo Sánchez Cobos chapter about the life of the anarchist newspaper Tierra and Maikel Farías Borrego’s history of the rise of Rotary clubs. Each of these chapters provides new insights on Cuban participation in transnational social movements.

Three chapters address issues of citizenship and class in the new republic. Rebecca Scott, building in part on her earlier groundbreaking work on post-emancipation Cuba, delves again into the contests about race and citizenship in Cienfuegos. Imilcy Balboa Navarro examines the social costs of republican-era agricultural re-organization on Cuba’s colonos. Robert Whitney considers how the early government of Fulgencio Batista sought to nationalize the Cuban working class. Finally, Ricardo Quizá Moreno provides a fascinating intellectual history of the short-lived Sociedad del Folklore Cubano and the new and decidedly non–elite conception of cubanidad that it inaugurated.

Taken as a whole, this provocative collection reveals that the Cuban republic was a vibrant locus of intellectual ferment ranging from the natural sciences and architecture to medicine and the media. It is proof that the history of the Cuban republic requires much more from historians than simplistic accounts of “doctors and generals.”

John A. Gutiérrez
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
City University of New York


Two decades ago, when Mexico’s remarkably durable one-party state was showing signs of imminent collapse, historians began dissecting the immediate postrevolutionary Mexican state (1920–1940) searching for clues to its longevity. They found it to be surprisingly fragile. Lacking the political muscle to impose its will, the state was forced to work through (often counterrevolutionary) regional strongmen. Cultural policy had to be negotiated with peasants, Catholics, and the parents of schoolchildren. Even the administration of Lázaro Cárdenas (1934–1940), which expropriated the foreign-held oil fields and redistributed nearly 50 million acres of land, was, in the words of Knight, more “jalopy” than “juggernaut.”

Today’s scholars of modern Mexico are turning their attention to the middle decades of the twentieth century, a time of robust economic

growth and political stability known as the dictablanda, or “soft” dictatorship. This timely edited volume explores how the country that launched the first social revolution of the twentieth century became one of the world’s most unequal and least democratic societies. Its regional and methodological sweep is impressive. Taken together, the eighteen chapters challenge the conventional wisdom in many ways. Graduate students in particular will mine this volume for promising leads; indeed, this book will likely inspire a wave of interdisciplinary research on the period.

How did Mexico’s one-party state manage to prevail after 1940? As Paul Gillingham argues, its success was not simply a matter of electoral alchemy. Nor was it the result of brute force. Thomas Rath notes that Mexico’s army was relatively small, and its share of the budget actually declined over the period. Nor was it through largesse. As Benjamin Smith writes, Mexico’s heavily regressive tax structure ranked last among other Latin American countries in terms of tax collected as a percentage of GDP, thus “limit[ing] the state’s capacity for authoritarianism, corporatism, or even cultural hegemony” (256). Nor was the Mexican state particularly modern. As Rogelio Hernández Rodríguez notes, it continued to operate through regional powerbrokers as late as 1958. Mexico’s criminal-justice system was arbitrary and its authorities untrustworthy. As Pablo Piccato writes, murder investigations were open to diverse voices and interpretations, and “there was a consensus in favor of bending the rule of law to achieve swift justice” (336).

The dictablanda state was also more willing to cede control over its cultural policy than it had been during the immediate postrevolutionary period. American William O. Jenkins achieved nearly monopolistic control over Mexican movie theaters, and media tycoon Emilio Azcárraga came to dominate the (privatized) television industry. “Diffusion of nationalism remained a key policy goal but not the transcendent one,” writes Andrew Paxman, “for it often jostled with the federal aims of popular containment . . . and with the economic realities of production costs and elite profiteering” (315). The Mexican state’s retreat was even clearer at its Rural Normal Schools, where Cardenista commitment to agrarian reform was infused with the legacy of the Cuban Revolution. According to Tanalís Padilla, “the very schools the revolutionary government had once designed to create a loyal citizenry were now producing its most militant foes” (356). The one-party state was even outflanked by its old nemesis, the Catholic Church. Roberto Blancarte writes that after the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), the Church strengthened its image among the emerging middle class through its appeals for more equitable development and less corruption. It also issued “a coded call for democratization” (84).

This intriguing volume holds other surprises. Michael Snodgrass argues that Mexico’s much-maligned charros (official labor bosses) delivered the goods to industrial union workers during the period; rank-and-file workers enjoyed “greater job security and material progress than any generation of Mexican workers experienced before or since” (191).
Gladys McCormick explores why most sugar workers in the restive state of Morelos—home to legendary Emiliano Zapata and Rubén Jaramillo—chose to remain loyal to the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). She attributes it to “a combination of co-option, divide and rule among popular groups, the narrowing of protest channels, and the strategic deployment of repression” (211).

In the opening chapter, Knight convincingly argues that 1938 marks the start of Mexico’s soft dictatorship. It is unclear, however, why 1968 marks the demise of dictablanda. Presumably, the year was chosen as a “book end” because of the massacre at Tlatelolco, when state security forces opened fire on hundreds of students. Jaime Pensado, the only scholar in the volume to deal explicitly with the student movement, argues, however, that that the ferment actually began on working-class campuses as early as 1956. Even the editors admit that “1968 was a turning point more in perception than in reality” (11). If so, Mexico’s dictablanda may actually have persisted well into the 1980s, when the economic collapse of 1982, the tragic mishandling of the Mexico City earthquake in 1985, and the electoral fraud of 1988 finally forced Mexico’s political class to make fundamental changes in how it conducted its business.

Stephen E. Lewis
California State University, Chico


Given its troubled and contested past, its recent wild inflation, and President Robert Mugabe’s destruction of the country that he has led badly and autocratically since 1980, Zimbabwe needs a comprehensive history researched and written by someone closely attuned both to the precolonial rise and fall of the Rozwi or Zimbabwean Empire and to Mugabe’s postcolonial failures and triumphs. Making sense of the precolonial era demands an interdisciplinary approach; much of the evidence about critical periods in the country’s early history is unwritten and must be recovered by oral or archaeological historians. Equally, making sense of the Mugabean maelstrom demands the mastery of several cognate disciplines alongside the best empathic techniques of modern historians.

Mlambo has hardly begun to write such a history of Zimbabwe. His is a purely narrative treatment. Moreover, it mostly skims the surface, trying to use as few dots as possible to create a connected story. Thus, his history says painstakingly little about most of Zimbabwe’s important early vicissitudes. He gives as scant attention to the creation of the early indigenous empires as he does to contemporary Zimbabwe (the subject of his last two chapters). Everything is brushed over lightly with almost no interdisciplinary attention to the kinds of new methodologies and techniques that readers of this journal expect.
Mlambo’s best chapter is titled “The Colonial Society and Economy.” All of the others are straightforward recitations of the main facts of a particular slice of time, with little interpretation, hardly any generalizations, and great omissions. Given a deep past that is unusually contested and a contemporary era that is equally polarized, Zimbabwe will need carefully to articulate a thorough historical treatment before it can come to terms with itself, and before its peoples can come to terms with one another.

—R. I. R.


If you are going to read one book about China’s perilous transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries, it should be Wang’s White Lotus Rebels and South China Pirates. Clearly written and theoretically informed, the book does far more than its title promises. In showing how the court of the Jiaqing Emperor (1796–1820) responded to the crises of the turn of the nineteenth century, it explains how the Qing dynasty turned away from the grandly assertive style of the Qianlong reign (1736–1796) to the more restrained and ultimately effective political style of the nineteenth century. Throughout their rule in China, the Manchus, leaders of the Qing dynasty, demonstrated an ability to adapt Chinese political institutions to meet the needs that they perceived, and this account amply demonstrates their continued ability in the early nineteenth century.

Like all good imperial history, this book describes both the center and the periphery, correctly understanding that imperial dynamics lay in the relationship between the two. Part II of the book offers a clear and valuable chapter about the rebellion lead by the messianic White Lotus sect in west-central China, and the growing problem of piracy along the coast. Despite abundant research, these events have not been placed in the larger context of imperial transition. Descriptions of the White Lotus rebellion have often come in articles or dissertations that, for one reason or another, have not been published. Wang’s careful and informed synthesis of writings about the White Lotus represents, in itself, a valuable contribution to the field.

But the core of the book—a careful study of the abdication and death of the Qianlong Emperor, and the reforms undertaken by the Jiaqing Emperor in the first months of his reign—will attract the most attention. Although the events of early 1800—in particular, the dramatic execution of the old emperor’s favorite Hesen within a week of Qianlong’s death—have long been known, the careful reconstruction of the logic behind the execution and the controversial institutional reforms that followed it are new. Those who had suffered at the hands of Hesen protested that the reforms did not go far enough. They, and historians who follow them today, argued that the reforms left in place a system in which a handful...
of imperial counselors could dominate policy making. The counselors may have changed, as the argument goes, but the basic system did not. Wang counters this view, carefully tracing the changes in procedure and the increased attention to statute that marked the documents of the reign. Wang’s position is convincing and important; it demonstrates a continued political flexibility that rendered the Qing viable, if occasionally beleaguered, for another century.

The only minor cavil is the book’s lack of a bibliography, necessitating time-consuming searches through the notes for the full citation of sources. Nonetheless, it is a small price to pay for an extremely valuable book.

R. Kent Guy
University of Washington


In this book, Stolz tells the story of three Japanese who in differing ways set out to challenge Japanese capitalism while seeking a new relationship with nature. In doing so, he relates their works and their thought to events and currents in Japan in the context of Marxist ideas about the subsumption of nature by capital. He provides many fresh insights, even when covering those parts of the story that are already familiar. His interpretations are cogent and clearly argued.

Stolz starts with the basic premise that the liberal ideology of Meiji Japan was inherently problematical in its rupture of the human subject from nature, leading inevitably to the severe cases of environmental disaster that have occurred in Japan throughout its modern history. At several points, Stolz eschews the view of a naturalized past based on a radical ecology. The advent of the Meiji era, he writes, in no way represented a clean break with the past. Despite all attempts to arrest it, nature insisted on intruding into the falsely dichotomized human body, most notably in the form of cholera outbreaks and then of ever-more devastating floods. The flood of 1896, the worst at that point to hit the Kanto Plain on which Tokyo stands, was rendered all the more damaging by the cocktail of poisonous pollutants that it carried from the Ashio copper mine.

This event, the first and the most egregious of the pollution scandals that have chequered Japan’s modern history, provides the framework for much of the discussion in the first half of this book. The reaction of the state, in a move that was repeated many times later, was to engineer a solution through a reinforcement of dykes and levees, but this strategy only made the flooding worse. Eventually, in an ironic twist, the authorities destroyed the homes of the villagers who were strengthening the levees against the flood waters because according to the recently enacted River Law, the state had the prerogative to do so. This telling episode forms one of the centerpieces of Stolz’s book. It marked the moment when Tanaka Shōzō, one of the book’s three main protagonists, converted from
his faith in a governmental solution to a complete opposition to the liberal politics of Meiji Japan and an active support of the villagers whose homes were destroyed. He lived among these people until his death in 1913.

The Ashio copper mine and Tanaka’s role have been treated before in the English-language literature, but this book is surely the first to interrogate this transformation in Tanaka’s thinking. From this time onward, Tanaka advocated a social ecology built around the concepts of flow (nagare) and poison (doku)—all-encompassing concepts for him. Any attempt to control the constantly flowing force of nature gave rise to “harmful backflows” (95). In Stolz’s words, “Human action contrary to nagare not only thwarted nagare but actively created doku” (97).

The other figures about whom Stolz writes have figured less prominently in writings on radical Japanese thought. One of them, Ishikawa Sanshirō, was a sort of rural anarchist who was deeply influenced by the English activist Edward Carpenter and the French anarchist geographer Elisée Reclus. Ishikawa rejected a party-based socialism in favor of one based on the transmission of ideas outside formal organizational structures. He espoused a democracy that was close to the soil, believing that it could be reinforced through constant contact with nature, including nudism.

Kurosawa Torizō, the third member of Stolz’s triumvirate, was the founder of one of Japan’s best-known dairies. Kurosawa’s social ecology was based on a “critique of capitalism and its relations with nature” (164), as well as a fundamental attachment to the symbolic and actual appeal of the “dairy farm,” on which cows’ manure fertilized the soil on which grew the grass that fed the cows. Kurosawa, however, never extended his criticisms of capitalism into a critique of imperialism; he and his company were co-opted into the war effort. Both during and after the war, his dairy developed incongruously into a major pillar of the Japanese food industry, eventually becoming embroiled in a series of scandals concerning tainted products, as if to support Tanaka’s thesis about the pervasiveness of poison under capitalism.

Stolz’s book gains its special strength from its close intertwining of Marxist theory with the lives of the central protagonists, as shown in his conclusion about Kurosawa’s dairy: “In the process of tracing the continuities between the pre- and postwar incarnations of Snow Brand, our true enemy has now revealed itself: the real subsumption of nature under capital, or, in other words, the active manipulation of nature by humans to produce a nature most conducive to capital accumulation” (189). As this statement suggests, Bad Water successfully stitches together environmental history, a social ecology that predates that of Bookchin, and Marxist theory.¹

Paul Waley
University of Leeds

¹ See Murray Bookchin, The Philosophy of Social Ecology (Montreal, 1994).