Geopolitics and the Quest for Dominance. By Jeremy Black (Bloomington, Indiana University Press 2016) 336 pp. $85.00 cloth $32.00 paper

Despite its alternate fortunes during the past century, the term geopolitics has seen a considerable success in the last two decades. In this informative and updated book, structured in eleven chapters, Black explores many aspects of the “spatial dynamics of power,” expanding its historical horizon to find geopolitical precursors in ancient China and Rome, especially during the last 500 years, in Chapters 2 to 5. To such chronological and geographical extension corresponds a more general approach to the subject: Given that the ambiguities of the term and its use by politicians, diplomats, advisors, journalists, etc., are well known to political geographers, Black refuses to be constrained by disciplinary borders. Solidly grounded in many decades of historical and interdisciplinary readings, he considers the complex relations between power and space, and their perception, from a plurality of angles, ranging from the history of international relations and cartography to diplomatic and military history, to that of science and technology, etc. He even draws a few examples from the history of cinema, literature, and the arts. The book is thus a precious reference work that certainly enriches the historical and geographical horizon of political geographers, political scientists, historians, and scholars from other disciplines.

Historical geographers will appreciate the richness of Black’s historical contextualizations in Chapters 6 to 9 and will recognize the usefulness of extending the analysis backward, in order to balance the historical role of the British Empire and the usual criticism centered on U.S. hegemony. They will also appreciate the attention given not just to the geopolitics “of the land” but also to that of the seas and the air, as well as to the spatial implications of many technological innovations in transport and weaponry. Furthermore, in addition to his inevitable emphasis on British and German geopolitics, Black also gives attention to the American, French, and other national traditions, though in a more fragmented way. Indeed, Black would have found useful inspiration in the work of Harold and Margaret Sprout and in Jean Gottmann’s The Significance of Territory (Charlottesville, 1973).¹

Nonetheless, when confronted with the bulk of historical and political geographies, the book systematically accounts for most of the various ideological positions, debates, and controversies, opening the way to a number of interesting theoretical questions that are sometimes underplayed in the mainstream literature: Why does the common geopolitical unit of analysis have to be limited to the state seen as a monolithic entity? Why limit geopolitics to the global scale and not consider also the subnational scale, if international and domestic events are so often

¹ Harold and Margaret Sprout, The Ecological Perspective on Human Affairs, With Special Reference to International Politics (Princeton, 1965).
interdependent? Why are cities often excluded from geopolitics, given the global significance of the trend of increasing urbanization?

The most difficult historical context is indeed the contemporary one, which Black elegantly and usefully addresses and synthesizes in Chapters 9 and 10, allotting considerable space also to the rise of China. Black discusses current theoretical developments and their limits at large, including comparative methods and time geography. Black rightly directs a pointed question at the now largely dominant current of critical geopolitics: Does giving so much attention to deconstructing the discourse of power serve to prevent scholars from constructing anything, “for fear of becoming akin to the ‘metanarratives’”? (204), especially with regard to long-term views? Certainly, the many voices concerned could provide vastly different answers, especially in light of the diversity of critical geographers like Smith, Harvey, Ó Tuathail, Agnew, and others.2

Finally, in this book, geopolitics provides a powerful key that draws history and geography close to one another, allowing many fruitful exchanges between the two disciplines, especially through comparison of what could have gone missing in each of them. One further question arises with reference to the title: Is the quest for dominance simply a matter of power, or is it also a matter of dominating the increasing complexity of the world (and the knowledge about it)? From this perspective, space will certainly continue to provide a powerful key to conferring order to the world and its historical understandings, though, as the book shows for environmental determinism, a risk is always present. Geopolitics could also constitute a form of spatial reductionism in the face of an ever-growing complexity. Indeed, such an enquiry would require carefully balanced interdisciplinary discussion.

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Published originally in Italian in 2013, this edited volume is the offspring of a research project developed at the Istituto Storico Italo-Germanico about transition as a historiographical problem. The volume asks the question of whether modernity is an “Axial Age,” a term that Jaspers

introduced in 1949.\textsuperscript{1} For him, the period between the eighth and third centuries B.C. marked a major transition in the development of mankind. Its two key features were more highly developed societies (with greater control over their natural environment) and a parallel progress of multiple forms of thought (primarily in philosophy, politics, religion, and ethics).

Interdisciplinary interest in Jaspers’ Axial Age thesis has increased in the last decade, including contributions in sociology, history, anthropology, Biblical scholarship, and philosophy.\textsuperscript{2} According to Pombeni, some of the new contributions about the Axial Age downplay or simply ignore the transformative role of religion. This volume, on the contrary, emphasizes the religious underpinnings of axial transformations. Accordingly, the periodization of the epoch under analysis, 1494 to 1973, opens and closes under the influence of two Councils of the Catholic Church, Trent and Vatican II (the volume admits, however, that alternative periodizations are possible). Contributors apply this view to the modern age—understood as a Christian age—and claim that modernity constitutes a “second” Axial Age, building on a similar claim made by Eisentadt.\textsuperscript{3}

Although understanding “transition” is central to this claim, no chapter offers a conceptual history of the word during the period under study. As the contributions suggest, historical actors’ self-understandings of what a “transition” is changed between the fifteenth and twentieth centuries. The analysis of historically situated self-understandings of transition is not the volume’s goal so much as to explicate the term \textit{historic transition} as a Weberian ideal-type, which differs from competing terms such as \textit{historical epoch, anthropological culture}, and the \textit{us circle}. \textit{Historic transition} is defined as “the mechanism of evolution itself within a given epoch” (3). Contributors use the term to study transitions in four arenas: culture, religion, politics, and economics. Each arena, however, receives uneven chronological treatment, since not all of them cover the entire period from 1494 to 1973.

Geographically, the contributions focus on Western Europe. Yet readers might well contend that proving modernity to be a “second” Axial Age also requires analysis on a global-history scale (Jaspers’ first Axial Age included ancient China, India, Greece, and Rome; it was a multisite global transition). The fact that none of the contributions

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{1}] Karl Jaspers, \textit{Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte} (Munich, 1949).
\end{itemize}
addresses the role of science in “historic transitions” and in axial transformations during modernity is a significant absence; arguably, a key difference between the first and the second Axial Age is the rise of modern science and its complicated cohabitation with religion. Nor does any contribution discuss revolutions as pivotal moments of axial transformation (although Eisenstadt acknowledged revolutions’ influence on axial modernity in work that served as a historiographical inspiration for this volume). Instead, the volume frames transitions as somehow different from revolutions. In analyzing the shift from orality to print, Massimo Rospocher claims that this shift was less a revolution than a slow transition, during which both means of communication coexisted. Katia Occhi offers a similar interpretation of economic history, not as a clean rupture overlapping with the Industrial Revolution but rather as a gradual change spanning two centuries.

Translations of edited volumes are rara avis. Fortunately, English readers interested in the history of modernity, historical time, and periodization now have a volume that offers insightful ways of investigating historical change and continuity.

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Domestic Tensions, National Anxieties: Global Perspectives on Marriage, Crisis, and Nation. Edited by Kristin Celello and Hanan Kholoussy (New York, Oxford University Press, 2016) 279 pp. $99.00 cloth $29.95 paper

It is always a challenge to review a collection of academic essays, especially one that treats a key transnational human institution—marriage—in such a wide swath of national locations. The book comprises twelve chapters, an introduction, and a list of selected readings. The editors and most of the contributors are “contemporary” historians (late nineteenth-century to the present), but other contributors include disciplinary specialists in literature, social psychology, and sociology. Multidisciplinary might better describe the contents, rather than interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary.

The twelve authors investigate the “national anxieties” provoked by troublesome aspects of marriage practices in a wide variety of national (or quasi-national) settings: in order of appearance, prerevolutionary Russia, Brazil, the United States, India, Burma, Zanzibar, post–World War II France, contemporary China, Nigeria, Iran, Japan, and Egypt. Each chapter is well researched and thoughtfully written; some of them provide more salient backgrounds for non-specialists than others. In certain nation-states, marriage is governed by secular civil codes, but in others it is managed by religious authorities. Sometimes mixed marriage (across religious or ethnic lines) is the dominant issue (for example, in Burma, marriage of Burmese Buddhist women to Indian men, usually Hindu), but this “tension” is not discussed in other cases, as for example, in Japan.
or China. A number of authors address purported crises concerning marriage from the perspective of colonial and/or national government officials (as in the case of India, where child brides were an issue in the 1920s, or Nigeria, where efforts were made in the 1930s to stamp out precolonial mating practices including child marriage but also polyandry, woman-to-woman marriage [an arrangement for economic purposes], and woman—deity marriage. Other authors investigate “crises” that appear to have been generated by the media or highlighted by filmmakers.

Occasionally, efforts to modernize marriage practices went hand-in-hand with modernizing the nation—that is, with catching up with the West (or at least with some notion of the Western “modern”). However, the chapters dealing with France and the United States by Rebecca Puljo and Nancy Cott leave no hint of any trans-border angst. Marriage has multiple facets, some of which become more troublesome than others in particular settings. Religion, economics, sexual control, exogamy/endogamy, calls for women’s rights, defense of patriarchal values, worry about declining birth rates, all play a part in state efforts to control and channel relations between the sexes.

The issues covered in this collection that relate specifically to its title include quarrels about choice of spouse, parental consent, child marriage and age of consent, “mixed” marriages (across religious, ethnic, or “racial” boundaries), dower and property questions, sexual division of labor, marriage breakdown/failure, legal (or defacto) separation and divorce, “demographics,” “masculinity crisis,” and extravagant expenses associated with marriage ceremonies. They encompass questions of individual freedom for both women and men and young people’s difficulties regarding their choice of mate (the place of love and the problem of consorting across religious or racial/ethnic or social-class lines). Oddly, the production and rearing of children receives little discussion; contributors talk about families but rarely about children. To pursue that point, the editors’ introduction evinces a decided reticence about men and women per se, or even babies, though “gender” is prominently evoked, as though the focus on the institution of marriage had blurred the personhood of the individuals actually involved.

The editors’ ability to assemble this cornucopia of fascinating case studies is impressive. In their introduction, they point to the use of a “wide range of methodologies, including archival research, textual analysis, and demography, and a variety of sources, including legal petitions, novels, academic books and journals, newspapers and magazines, laws, court records, interviews, films, and survey data” (3). The final essay, by Rania Salem, concerning marriage in contemporary Egypt, disputes media declarations of “crisis” based on a statistical analysis of recent survey data sets that stretch across time. Overall, the volume features no single methodological approach.

The editors’ claim that “marriage frequently becomes a vehicle for critiquing larger socioeconomic and political changes, etc.” is disputable (2) It would be more accurate to say that the relationship between the sexes is the fundamental issue; historically speaking, marriage is the institutional structure developed to tie women and men together in families for the sake of producing and rearing children—and thereby reproducing their
societies in which they lived. It has immense consequences for all of those “larger socioeconomic and political changes,” but it is not the “vehicle” (or lens or prism for them), and the consequential changes are not “larger.”

This book could have been even more effective had the authors actually exchanged their contributions or compared notes and engaged in an interdisciplinary dialogue before publishing. To be sure, they duly write, often eloquently, about their individual findings, but they are neither talking to one another nor engaging across disciplines. Taking a long view, it is important to remark that domestic tensions and national anxieties about marriage are hardly new phenomena; marriage and its surrounding practices have constituted a “site” of crisis for centuries. Marriage has never been a strictly “private” institution. Indeed, in “modern” Western societies, and those aspiring to be both “modern” and “civilized,” the rules about, and the practices of, marriage have been (in some cases, forcibly) co-opted from religious bodies by secular authorities, usually national governments (Iran under the shah secularized marriage, only to have it re-appropriated in Khomeini’s Islamic counter-revolution).

Lest we forget, marriage crises have long had national political and religious consequences, as, for example, in the 1530s when England’s King Henry VIII broke with the Catholic Church over the question of divorce and remarriage and established the Church of England, thereby inflicting considerable social anxiety both at home and throughout continental Europe. State authority over marriage became a central issue during the French Revolution when the revolutionary government wrested control of marriage from the Catholic Church (which deemed marriage a sacrament) and established civil marriage (as a contract), legalized civil divorce, and made radical changes in family inheritance arrangements. The instigators of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia acted quickly in 1919 to abolish marriage as it was previously understood by the Orthodox Church. The historical weight of these world-historical decisions by revolutionary rulers concerning marriage continue to weigh heavily upon developments in “wanna-be” nation-states in our own time.

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Work, Psychiatry and Society c. 1750–2015. Edited by Waltraud Ernst (Manchester, Manchester University Press 2016) 392 pp. $125.00

The role of work in mental illness has a long and varied career. The inability to work is a major disabling characteristic of serious mental disorders, and the capacity to work a sign of mental health. Not surprisingly, therefore, many forms of treatment involved work-related activity as a therapeutic

1 See Suzanne Desan, The Family on Trial in Revolutionary France (Berkeley, 2004).
intervention. However, in those situations when large institutions were the sites for treating mental disorders, work as a treatment slipped easily from treatment and the prevention of idleness into a form of servitude that eased the financial burden of institutional care under the guise of therapeutic intervention. The work on asylum farms and light industries making uniforms, shoes, and other goods for the institution provided a much-needed income for institutions that were dependent upon public funding that was always grudging and often inadequate. Modern treatment of mental illness, responding to civil-rights concerns and the advent of better treatments, has moved the locus of treatment from the institution to the community. As a result, work has moved more surely into a form of treatment. A special profession, occupational therapy, with its own professional knowledge and standards, now has jurisdiction over therapeutic work activities in most organized treatment settings.

Work, Psychiatry and Society c. 1750–2015 offers both historical depth and international breadth in covering its topic. The earliest appearance of work as therapy took place in the context of so-called Moral Treatment, which was a product of enlightened practitioners in Britain and France in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In this case, the term moral referred to behavior, as in “moral philosophy.” The Tuke family, Quakers at the York Retreat in England, and Philippe Pinel at the Bicêtre and the Salpêtrière hospitals in Paris sought to replace chains and beatings with humane interventions—better diet, cleanly surroundings, and persuasion to counter non-constructive behavior. Included were activities to inculcate good habits and keep patients busy, but work itself as a treatment mode had a rockier course, being well-established only in the early to mid-nineteenth century.

Although the focus of interest regarding work and moral treatment has typically been on Britain and France, this multi-authored work ranges far more widely, covering developments in work as therapy in America, Italy, Russia, Germany, Austria, Ireland, Canada, south Asia, the British West Indies, and Japan. In many cases, the role of work as therapy reflected the colonial past of particular countries. The West Indies and India, for example, modeled their mental health systems on Great Britain, with the added element of rigid class distinctions between colonizers and the colonized. Japan, though starting with reflections of its own historically variable culture, was deeply influenced by the events after World War II, when during the occupation, its institutions were influenced by the United States, and its need for postwar recovery.

Work as therapy has not typically been a subject of academic psychiatric study. As a result, this volume occupies a singular place in the psychiatric literature. Its deep research and convincing argument offer new insights about the history and nature of a neglected feature of modern psychiatric treatment.

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Naval history, Harding notes, has ventured far from its roots in the telling of great deeds by warrior heroes. By the twentieth century, it had moved through several stages of development and increasing sophistication, borrowing from the scientific community to explain war and naval warfare within a framework of principles, in large part through operational narratives. During the Cold War, however, naval history fell into decline because of political and social factors but also because of scholarship that lagged behind the more broadened historical approaches and questions in other fields. But within the last few decades, the study of war at sea has seen a revival, as historians have followed the lead of their colleagues and moved beyond cannon and battle to explore new dimensions of naval history.

In *Modern Naval History*, Harding seeks to accomplish several objectives for readers inside and outside the field of naval history. For those whose research interests lay outside, or might be skeptical of naval history, Harding offers an objective and well-supported argument for its inclusion as a relevant field of study. For those who ply the waters of war at sea, Harding provides not only a framework within which naval historians might engage their skeptical colleagues but also the means to ensure that naval historians continue to develop the craft through more innovative scholarship.

Harding organizes his examination of modern naval history along three themes—sea power and international relations, sea power and politics and government, and the relationship between navies and societies. Although Harding provides a brief narrative in each chapter, his real purpose is to deliver an extensive bibliography associated with each theme but, more importantly, to point out the questions and issues in naval history that have either not been asked or have been ignored. For example, there is no question that the naval contest between Great Britain and France in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries shaped geopolitics for a century afterward. Historians may well understand how naval warfare contributed to the *Pax Britannia*, but, as Harding points out, they have not explored the ensuing hundred years of peace or of the development of smaller navies.

Similarly, Harding’s examination of the relationship of navies to politics and government offers further evidence that much is left to be studied in naval history. The increasing sophistication and cost of naval technology required not only a significant investment of revenue on the part of those nations who sought to exploit the sea but also the commensurate development of bureaucracies, logistical measures, and fiscal policies to keep ships ready and manned. Such questions, Harding argues, provide an opportunity for new interpretations as well as for new collaborations between naval historians and their colleagues in the social sciences, whose methodological approaches can enhance historical perspectives and help to sustain the revival of naval history.

The value of *Modern Naval History* cannot be understated. Naval historians can no longer rely merely on military officers and political leaders...
for their readership. If they are to reach broader audiences, they must ask broader questions that pique the interests of the larger academy. To do so, however, requires an understanding of naval history in its current state and of the questions that remain unexamined. Harding’s work may not be the pinnacle of achievement in the field, but it certainly can be a catalyst for naval historians to look for new questions and methodologies to explain to an increasingly disengaged world that history has not seen the end of war, nor of the means to wage it at sea.

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*Reformations: The Early Modern World, 1450–1650.* By Carlos M. N. Eire (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2016) 893 pp. $40.00

This may be a case of a qualified reviewer in the wrong journal, since this lengthy and thoughtful survey of early modern Christianity makes no effort to be interdisciplinary. Even when religion and politics seem “really inseparable,” Eire insists that “distinguishing between the process of self-definition and the enforcement of theological and ethical norms . . . is absolutely necessary” (564). Less than 2 percent of his text is devoted to “Christian soldiers,” and the Puritan Revolution receives more space than the Thirty Years’ War (548–561). Religion always remains dominant, pulling everything else into its orbit. Eire’s preface names three major features of this work, “the first . . . [being] the conviction that religion is a real factor in history.” “The chief overarching assumption of the entire book” is that “we cannot begin to comprehend what we are now as Westerners without first understanding the changes wrought by the Reformations” (xvii). His epilogue proposes to “consider an approach that crosses disciplinary boundaries . . ., and bundles as many perspectives as possible” (744), but it soon affirms that “religion is the axis from which these other aspects radiate” (746).

In addition to an award-winning memoir about his native Cuba, Eire brings a cross-confessional mix of scholarly credentials to this task; he has published a major research project about early Swiss Protestant iconoclasm and later an investigation of testaments in Philip II’s Madrid.¹ Suitably equipped, Eire examines each classical subfield of the history of Latin Christianity from 1450 to 1650—late-medieval Christendom, Protestantism, Catholic Reform, and a permanently religiously divided Europe—in considerable detail. His twenty-six chapters are divided into four nearly equal-sized parts, each introduced by a prelude in Rome with the dates 1450, 1510, 1564, and 1626.

¹ The reviewer possesses an autographed copy of Eire’s From Madrid to Purgatory (New York, 1995).
Eire’s reach is broad, but so is his grasp. At the book’s heart, his six chapters about Catholicism form a neater and more coherent package than his seven chapters about Protestantism. Probably unwittingly, his three chapters about Martin Luther reproduce the tripartite schema of ardent monk, cocksure disputant, and grumpy reactionary, first used in 1928 by Febvre, Luther’s outstanding French biographer, accompanied by contemporary woodcuts of each Luther iteration.\(^2\) Because of its historiographical emphasis, Eire’s chapter about the “Radical Reformation” differs from everything else; it retouches George H. Williams, “whose massive survey of the subject [The Radical Reformation (Philadelphia, 1962)] proved definitive” (253). Nothing else rates as “definitive” in these 750 pages, although occasional tirades appear. In the Catholic section, two pairs of chapters work together extremely well. Chapter 16, Eire’s exceptionally rich account of new Tridentine-era religious orders, precedes one about the Jesuits. His next pair of chapters about Catholic missions west and east of Europe also makes rewarding reading for any non-specialist.

Several memorable incidents enliven this account, beginning with two women fighting about the right to a particular pew in a fifteenth-century Castilian village (19). An ironic reflection about victorious Swiss Catholics burning Huldrych Zwingli’s corpse and scattering his ashes to prevent his followers from collecting relics overlooks that a more appropriate relic, Zwingli’s split-open helmet, has been preserved (247; illustration, 233). Later, a macabre thread places the unfortunate Saxon “Philippist” statesman Nicholas Krell, executed in 1601, into three consecutive chapters (568, 586–587; illustration, 618–619).

Eire’s Catholic vignettes are even richer. Two statues of St. Francis Xavier made for Jesuits c. 1700 remain in their original locations—one on a famous bridge in Prague and the other (a wooden replica of Xavier’s incorruptible body, which still remains in India) in a mission church near Tucson, Arizona (519–521). Eire’s sketch of a little-known (at least to this reviewer) teaching order, the Poor Clerks Regular of the Mother of God of the Pious Schools, “mercifully known as Piarists or Scolapians” (430–432), exemplifies some of the best and worst features of Tridentine Catholicism. Its founder, a future saint, was removed as its superior nine years after its official recognition. His successor, who supported Galileo against the Jesuits, was outed as a sexual predator heading a network of pederasts. He cost the Piarists their clerical status, but their free public schools remained useful. The order’s status was gradually restored over the course of fifty years. Ultimately, its pupils included Franz Joseph Haydn, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Francisco Goya, and Victor Hugo.

Eire’s summary weighs some of the significant long-term consequences of a Christendom permanently divided between Protestants and

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2 Unmentioned in Eire’s vast bibliography, Lucien Febvre’s Martin Luther (Paris, 1928) was translated into English in 1929 and is available online. It has the unusual distinction of two German translations, as well as Italian and Spanish versions.
Catholics. The efforts of the two Christian religions seem similar in such areas as intensive catechization or “social disciplining” but dramatically different in their attitudes toward begging and clerical marriage (704–717). In this context, he claims that “the question of success . . . misleads more than enlightens” (713), and asserts in his epilogue that “to ask whether the Reformations changed the world for better or for worse is . . . a legitimate question that most historians prefer to avoid” (757). An avoider, this reviewer prefers instead to praise Eire’s rich insights about “de-sacralization,” a far-reaching consequence of Protestantism, which should not be confused with “secularization,” an undeniable hallmark of modern Europe (747–754).

Given Eire’s relentlessly religion-centered model, it is not surprising that, apart from Urban VIII putting Descartes on the Index nineteen years after Urban’s death (661), the rare errors that have crept into this extremely long text usually concern political figures. Eire is untrustworthy on the Low Countries: He misnames a Burgundo-Habsburg prince as “Philip the Bold” (165), mistakenly asserts that Charles V inherited Alsace (166), and scrambles the Netherlands regents after Margaret of Austria (547). He also reports that Emperor Frederick II, who died in 1250, defeated Bohemian Protestants in 1620 (519), and invents the nonexistent French “town of Labourd” (646).

Eire’s enormous bibliography suffers from three drawbacks. It is relentlessly monoglot; linguistically, Europe has lost control of the European Reformations. It is top-heavy with recent titles, many of them unfamiliar to me. Most importantly, it offers readers no guidance about the relative importance of a title. Despite its length, it has a few surprising omissions, one being Bethencourt’s comparative survey of the major state inquisitions.3

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Europe’s Infrastructure Transition: Economy, War, Nature. By Per Högselius, Arne Kaijser, and Erik van der Vleuten (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) 454 pp. $90.00 cloth $29.95 paper

On May 6, 1994, Queen Elizabeth II of England and President François Mitterrand of France ceremonially inaugurated the Channel Tunnel—a highly expensive assemblage of underground and underwater passages and steel railroad tracks that promised to afford a new and deeper level of connectivity between the island nation of Great Britain and the continent of Europe. Barely twenty years later, in a referendum held on June 23, 2016, a majority of British voters determined that at least some aspects of this greater connectivity were not so desirable, voting to withdraw from the European Union.

This ambitious and wide-ranging survey of the development and use of European infrastructures from c. 1850 to 2000 takes as a central concern the tensions between their perceived promise for increasing wealth and for enhancing peaceful interchange among peoples and nations and the more complex ways in which these technological systems have actually been deployed. Topics discussed include the ways in which railroads, telegraphs, and other transport and communication technologies helped to shrink space and time and the actions taken by governments to channel and constrain this connectivity through such means as constructing border fences and reconfiguring railroad lines to run through only a few border-control points. East Germany even deployed devices to derail trains exiting the country without permission of authorities. The authors also address the evolution of infrastructure systems and the logistics of war; the relationships between basic infrastructure and system building in various industries (for example, communications infrastructure and the financial industry, coal gas manufacture, and the chemical industry); efforts to map and intensify the use of land, water, air, and electromagnetic resources; and initiatives to preserve natural ecosystems through urban green belts, linked systems of nature preserves, and other strategies.

In disciplinary terms, the book builds upon a strain of history of technology scholarship developed by Thomas P. Hughes (to whom the volume is dedicated) and others that is concerned with the “study . . . of large technical systems and their interaction with society” (xxiii). As such, the historical account is highly attentive to the social and political, as well as the material, elements of technological systems. The authors also explore the links between the history of different infrastructures and the shaping of such disciplines as meteorology, geodesy, and hydrography—for instance those between weather observatories and telegraph networks in the emergence of an increasingly sophisticated “meteorological knowledge system” starting in the nineteenth century (313).

The book features findings from a range of disciplines, including geography, business history, economic history, planning history, and social studies of science and technology, though sometimes in a superficial manner lacking in analytical bite. As a case in point, a promising geographical discussion of financial flows and stock exchanges would have benefited from a more systematic discussion of the relationships between specific financial and infrastructural developments. Moreover, a bibliographic essay would have afforded the means for a deeper engagement with the subjects discussed.

That said, this book is an impressive example of how scholarship that engages with a wide range of disciplines can present a richly textured account of how the world in which we all live, for good or for ill, came to be the way it is.

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This book is the second one that Hayhoe has devoted to the history of Burgundy in the eighteenth century. In the prior one, he scrutinized the seigneurial courts of justice, whereas in this one, he launches an inquiry into the mobility of villagers and into the ways in which communities of Northern Burgundy—currently the department of Côte d’Or—dealt with the issues created by migrations.¹

Hayhoe engages with the work of the entire community of historians focusing on migration, such as Croix, Collins, and especially Poussou, who defended the idea of a micro-mobile pattern—with distances shorter than 10 km—to characterize the nature of migration in old regime France.² Yet, Hayhoe provides a wide range of evidence that this society’s mobility was extensive in some sense. For instance, he underlines that two-fifths of the adult residents of rural communities did not live in their birthplace, and thanks to a few shrewd connections between sources, he estimates that nearly 5 percent of the adult population of villages moved to another community in any given year. Therefore, native-born dwellers generally formed only a slight majority in village communities. But Hayhoe also acknowledges that the numerous relocations that he detected, in the range of 10 to 15 km, are in line with Poussou’s distances.

By tempering the pattern of micro-mobile society, Hayhoe reshapes our understanding of village communities as social organisms open to the outside world and exposed “each year [to] the arrival of countless temporary and seasonal migrants” (184). His is definitely not the picture of a “village immobile,” with the exception of the small group that controlled the economic and political life of the community.

Another cornerstone of the book’s design—as revealed through sophisticated statistical analysis in the first two chapters and detailed discussions in the next five—is Hayhoe’s understanding of migration not as an isolated demographic fact but as a social phenomenon inextricably connected to other issues: exogamy; economic motivation; social class and gender of the migrant population; migrants’ geographical preferences; and the migratory policies implemented by local and provincial authorities, mainly through the prism of local taxes and access to common land. Thus, Hayhoe’s book represents the attempt to tell a complete story, even if, as he points out himself, he leaves aside “the issues of lineage and inheritance.”

¹ Hayhoe, Enlightened Feudalism: Seigneurial Justice and Local Society in Eighteenth-Century Northern Burgundy (Rochester, 2008).
Hayhoe’s creativity in this book should not go unnoticed. Like other historians, he had to face source materials with serious gaps—namely, the first census, dated as 1796. Yet he was able to link that census to an impressive database of 12,874 statements extracted from fifty-eight seigneurial courts between 1700 and 1790, supplying such essential information as places of residence and of birth. He also consulted sixty-nine records of guardianship assemblies, estate auctions, the Napoleonic inquiry of 1810, tax rolls, and parish registers—including the singular registers of departure from the city of Dijon, called “renonciations à l’incolat”—as well as such traditional administrative sources as the registers of Parliament and those of the General Estates of Burgundy. Hayhoe is always circumspect about the samples that he constructed from this “network of sources,” and he compares his results with other European data to place Burgundy in a wider context.

One of the main achievements of Hayhoe’s research is the timely reminder that migrations were hardly rare in people’s daily lives; they were, in Croix’s words, a “brilliant fact.” Furthermore, his finding that no local policies prohibited migrations and that provincial authorities attempted to make them as orderly as possible highlights the use of history to create a better understanding of the present.

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French Mediterraneans: Transnational and Imperial Histories. Edited by Patricia M. E. Lorcin and Todd Shepard (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2016) 426 pp. $65.00

The editors of this voluminous work, which spans a period from the end of the eighteenth century to decolonization in the mid-twentieth century, seek to explore the uniquely French contribution to the construction of the Mediterranean as a unified space—a view of the sea that was largely imposed on populations of its southern and eastern shores by western imperial powers. However, the majority of contributors to this volume were not trained as historians of France, the French empire, or European states. In bringing these scholars together, the editors were not so much interested in considering non-European actors or resistance to French colonialism but rather to bring the work of these historians, with their different historiographical concerns, into conversation with historians of France and the empire. The guiding idea is to convince all historians to take such work seriously in writing transnational and imperial histories that do not simply “export questions important to their national historiography beyond the usual borders” (3).

Although the editors, who were both trained in French history, see the limitations of national history and wish to embrace transnational and imperial perspectives in new ways, the focus on “French Mediterraneans” still seems to highlight one nation-state and to bring a nation-centered
view in through the back door. The Mediterranean was a contested space among colonial powers, including Britain and the Ottoman Empire (as well as Italy later). Although some of the contributors pay attention to the role that these powers played in the region, France and the French empire still stand at the center of this undertaking in a way that is never fully justified.

The book is divided into three parts. The first explores how to re-think the manner in which the Mediterranean was “mapped.” The second explores the question of migration across the Mediterranean, and the third examines “margins remade (by the Mediterranean).” Although a few of the contributions in each part directly address the relationship between France and the disparate parts of the Mediterranean, particularly in Part One, many of them appear to be “stand alone” pieces about topics that are interesting in their own right. The problem of coherence is one that is inherent in edited volumes of this kind, but in this case, it is exacerbated by the sheer number of contributions—twelve in all—and by the range of interests among the scholars represented.

Several chapters in the volume are noteworthy for their originality and interdisciplinary dexterity, as well as for taking into full account local populations and other states and empires in the Mediterranean alongside the French. To cite one example, Spencer Segalla’s history of the 1960 Agadir earthquake reveals how responses to the earthquake were enmeshed in relationships between the Moroccan South, a French (or European) Mediterranean, and an American-dominated Atlantic. Based on an impressive array of archival and secondary sources, Segalla presents an environmental, political, and cultural history of a natural catastrophe (and its consequences in terms of architectural and urban history) that serves as a lens through which to analyze the political and cultural shifts that shaped modern Agadir and the decolonization in French North Africa. The earthquake helped to pave the way for the decline of French influence in Morocco and introduce new forms of American aid and urban planning, even as French urban planners and architects tried to reassert their role in the town. Similarly, Mary Dewhurst Lewis’ chapter, “Europeans before Europe? The Mediterranean Prehistory of European Integration and Exclusion,” stresses European expansion in the Mediterranean as a competitive venture. It explores the juridical and political history of how France worked to create a “European” legal status in post 1880 Tunisia, even as it competed with other European states and the Ottoman Empire.

French Mediterraneans has much to recommend it. Whereas much of the recent modern work on the Mediterranean has focused on the early modern period, this volume moves into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, the introduction does not fully bridge the scholarship between the two periods. It might have helped to have a chapter that stressed how French scholars in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries helped to shape how the Mediterranean came to be conceived in intellectual, environmental, and economic terms.
This hypothetical chapter would certainly include a far more extended discussion of Fernand Braudel; of Émile-Félix Fautrier, who taught at the University of Algiers for thirty-five years and influenced Braudel’s the idea of Mediterranean unity, and of the many other scholars at the University of Algiers during this period; of Braudel’s engagement with the Belgian historian Henri Pirenne; and of the crucial debate concerning the historical and racial dimensions of the unity and disunity of the Mediterranean during the interwar era. This approach would provide a better sense of what the “French Mediterranean” actually signifies, guarding against the perception of this book as a return to national history in another form, despite the editor’s intentions to the contrary. Nonetheless, the editors should be commended for bringing together an impressive group of scholars of France and the French Empire, Ottomanists, and historians of Jews and Judaism, the Maghreb, and the Arab Levant, all of whose contributions reflect the diversity, richness, and vibrancy of current research on the modern Mediterranean.

Caroline Ford
University of California, Los Angeles

The Anxiety of Sameness in Early Modern Spain. By Christina H. Lee (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2016) 249 pp. $105.00

In this fascinating book, Lee presents a detailed analysis of the anxieties surrounding the usurpation of social and religious identities in early modern Spain. She examines the fear within the upper echelons of Spanish society that the lower orders of society would be able to mimic the physical appearance and manners of their aristocratic “betters” and the concern that the converted descendants of Jews or Muslims (known as conversos and Moriscos), whom they suspected of still practicing Judaism and Islam, would be able to pass as Christians. Scholars have tended to focus on religious identity or social identities, but Lee’s ambitious project is to conduct a study of social and religious identities in early modern Spain. To do so, she uses both documentary and literary sources to good effect throughout this work.

Lee notes that “the anxiety of sameness is a by-product of the anxiety of difference” (8). She shows the close similarities between the social and religious prejudices targeting conversos, Moriscos, and the “low-born” in the early modern Spain. Indeed, these three groups were equally subject to the notion that they were innately morally inferior and at greater risk of succumbing to criminal or heretical activity. The link appears to have been the medical notion that blood conveyed hereditary moral and religious traits from one generation to another and that all three groups were not only tainted by their “inferior” blood; they also risked tainting the Spanish ruling elite through intermarriage.
Lee offers a fascinating analysis of a society in crisis, seemingly prey to contradiction. Even as the aristocratic and ecclesiastical elite feared the consequences of identity usurpation by commoners, conversos, and Moriscos, imposing strict discriminatory statutes and laws to “keep them in their place,” they also embraced the belief that such successful dissembling was not possible due to the notion that “bad blood will out.” This conception is a recurrent theme in early modern Spanish literature. Characters who conceal their origins in order to ascend the social ladder—whether they are commoners, conversos, or Moriscos—can enjoy only temporary success; their “blood” inevitably dooms their dissemblance to failure.

The book is divided into three clearly defined chapters. The introduction offers background information that is necessary to understand the content. Chapter 1 (“The Usurpation of Nobility and Low-Born Passers”) focuses on the obsession with hidalguía (noble status) and how nobility was enacted by those who claimed (including dissemblers) to belong to it. Chapter 2 (“Conversos and the Threat of Sameness”) examines the acute fear after a first wave of forced conversions in 1391, which was exacerbated by a second wave in 1492, that converted Jews and their descendants could occupy positions of power and honor in Spanish society by merely pretending to be devout Christians. Such dissembling not only threatened the orthodoxy of the Church but placed the honor and purity of noble families at grave risk through mésalliances with upstart families. Chapter 3 (“Moriscos and the Reassurance of Difference”) follows the same thread but in relation to the Moriscos, revealing the surprising parallels with the two other groups. Lee finds that acculturated Moriscos were tolerated to a certain extent “as long as there were some undeniable, distinguishing traits, and as long as they did not threaten the established economic and social order” (15).

Each of the three chapters is divided into two sections. The first section examines how the groups concerned were perceived to represent a social/religious problem, and the second section focuses on the anxieties of identity usurpation caused by each group. The book’s brief conclusion sums up the points that Lee wishes to emphasize.

This fascinating work, the fruit of many years of research, will be of enormous interest to researchers and students. It might have included a little more analysis, in the form of a supplementary chapter, about the development of ideas regarding blood and heredity and their relationship to collective identities in early modern Spain, as well as more direct comparisons between commoners, conversos, and Moriscos. Nevertheless, Lee’s book is a welcome addition to the field of early modern studies in general and early modern Spanish history in particular.

François Soyer
University of Southampton
Americans have always been of two minds about credit. On one hand, they view the flip side of credit (debt) as useful when used sparingly by those who would not become so indebted as to become beholden to their creditors. Overused, misused, or abused, as every debtor from Thomas Jefferson to the modern suburbanite realizes too late, credit is as much bane as benefit. Jefferson rued his debt once he realized that “there can be no freedom or beauty about a home or life that depends on borrowing and debt.”¹ On the other hand, Americans treat credit as a necessary subsidiary to business and a thing to be cultivated and nurtured. Benjamin Franklin advised young men to inspire confidence in their creditors by letting them hear the sound of their hammers morning and night (14).

Olegario observes that the tension between Jefferson’s and Franklin’s sentiments has been evident at every critical juncture in U.S. history: The Age of Jackson, the Progressive Era, the Jazz Age, the New Deal, and the Reagan Revolution were all, in part, defined by changing attitudes toward credit. Andrew Jackson’s veto allowed free banking to take hold; the Progressives reined in John Pierpont Morgan and the money trust; the rise of consumer culture in the 1920s was facilitated by new forms of consumer installment credit; New Dealers instituted deposit insurance and the Glass–Steagall Act, which prevented banks from handling investments, later to be undone in the deregulatory push of the Carter–Reagan era. Each of these changes responded to contemporary attitudes toward the ease with which businesses and households might access credit and, in turn, changed the practice of lending as bankers labored to find profitable opportunities in changing regulatory environments.

Olegario is a fine writer and a master of the business-history craft, but her choices in composing this volume are problematical. Because she opts to develop her argument chronologically, the book is comprised of five substantive chapters that run from the colonial era to the present. Each chapter discusses five broad issues—commercial and bank credit, usury laws, household credit, bankruptcy, and credit reporting. The relative weight changes by chapter as the relative volume of existing scholarship for each factor rises and falls. The final product suffers for this choice, evincing a lack of continuity in the subject matter.

Two more substantive criticisms are possible. First, Olegario drops several “nuggets” along the way but fails to develop potentially valuable arguments about them. At one point, she depicts the nineteenth-century U.S. financial markets as a host of credit institutions from pawnbrokers to sales-finance companies to investment banks, each serving its own specialized clientele underserved by existing institutions. It is a commonplace in the literature that this inefficient patchwork of regulatory work-arounds

¹ Henrik Ibsen, A Doll’s House (London 1996).
is responsible for the recurrent panics. A reasonable alternative might be
that this market-based system was simply exploiting Adam Smith’s ideas
of specialization and the division of labor, driven by Chandler’s contention
that firms that succeed in solving one problem may not succeed in solving
another.  

Second, Olegario’s castigation of the banks for convincing house-
holds to take on excessive debt (another commonplace) would have
benefited from a serious consideration of Lunt’s observation that in a
“republic ever headed toward more democracy . . . the manipulation
and control of credit” responds to politics, which responds ultimately
to the voters’ will. Thus, it is not just that credit demand is endogenous;
credit supply is also endogenous and responsive to new demands. At
these and other junctures, the book would have been more valuable
had it offered more analysis and interpretation to complement the col-
clection of facts. Olegario’s earlier research has been provocative and
insightful, but this book often falls short in both dimensions.

Howard Bodenhorn
Clemson University

Press and Speech under Assault: The Early Supreme Court Justices, the Sedition
Act of 1798, and the Campaign against Dissent. By Wendell Bird (New York,
Oxford University Press, 2016) 522 pp. $74.00

An enduring controversy in the history of the First Amendment’s speech
and press clauses is the extent to which the people who wrote the Bill of
Rights believed that they were changing the law of free expression. Did
they intend only to protect press freedom to the extent required by
English common law—freedom from prior restraints but not subsequent
punishment—or something more expansive?

The controversy remains, to some extent because of the passage of
the Sedition Act of 1798, which criminalized criticism of the president,
Congress, and other institutions as part of a campaign to prepare for an
anticipated war with France. Supporters of the law argued that it was
consistent with the First Amendment, which was meant only to ban prior
restraints, though James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, among others,
argued that the Act violated the Constitution, which was meant to
override English common law on American shores.

Bird strides into this controversy armed with information that most
other historians of the Federalist era have overlooked or misinterpreted.
His work combines examinations of legal materials from the late eighteenth

2 Alfred D. Chandler, “Organizational Capabilities and the Economic History of the Industrial
3 Dudley C. Lunt, The Farmers Bank: An Historical Account of the President, Directors and Company
and early nineteenth centuries—including Supreme Court justices’ charges to grand juries while presiding over circuit courts and other materials rarely perused—with archival research into the public and private letters and papers of early Supreme Court justices.

To a large extent, Bird delivers on his promise to reveal things that we do not know about the Sedition Act controversy. For example, his research uncovered twice as many Sedition Act cases as had previously been acknowledged, in part because he found cases that combined charges or were vague about whether sedition was alleged. He also included cases in which people were indicted but never tried, were investigated but not indicted, or were acquitted. He also documented cases against more than eighty persons under Section One of the Act, which criminalized conspiracies to resist U.S. laws rather than critical speech.

Bird notes that Federalists were not united in their support for the Sedition Act, as evidenced by the close vote for passage in the House. He also uses both public and personal papers of the original six Supreme Court justices and their successors to demonstrate that most of them supported a free press. The relevance of some of this information is questionable, however, because nearly all of the original justices were dead or retired when the Sedition Act was passed. Their successors, though often also supportive of press freedom in the abstract before 1798, mostly favored the Sedition Act, either because they had changed their minds or succumbed to political expediency.

Bird sometimes oversells his material, as when he states that a lack of any substantive statement about free expression by a public figure means that he must have been a supporter, or at least not a foe, of the press. But overall, his book provides an important corrective to misinformation or missing information about this important period in First Amendment history.

Anthony L. Fargo
Indiana University

*Commons Democracy: Reading the Politics of Participation in the Early United States.*
By Dana D. Nelson (New York, Fordham University Press, 2016) 219 pp. $85.00 cloth $24.95 paper

From the viewpoint of political economy and environmental studies, *Commons Democracy* offers one more critique of Hardin’s famed “tragedy of the commons” thesis. From the perspective of political science, it contributes to debates about American democracy and poses “new questions about democratic possibilities not just in history but also in our own time (23).” For historians, it traces the prolonged contest between the “vernacular democracy” and popular “regulation” that helped to animate

the Revolution, and the formal, representative democracy that emerged under the Constitution. Nelson bases her argument on key literary works published between the 1780s and the 1840s. Conventional, “consensus” accounts, she suggests, have insufficiently acknowledged the friction entailed in the imposition of democratic liberalism on the informal, self-organized practices of early Americans, and readings of period literature have obscured the memory and significance of a robust, if sometimes unruly, popular politics.

Liberalism, capitalism, and the law, Nelson argues, proceeded from the Founders’ determination to establish legal norms that would uphold private property and curb the collective activities that they saw as threatening the survival of the republic. These norms were not responses to political exigency or geographical necessity so much as to elite efforts to secure political and economic advantages—as in the Washington administration’s overreaction to the whiskey excise protests of 1794, called a “regulation” by protesters but labeled a “rebellion” by government and now enshrined as such in memory. Nelson demonstrates how readings of literary works have similarly obscured our vision of a politics rooted in “customs of commoning” (49). J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur’s Letters from an American Farmer (London, 1782) and Eighteenth-Century Sketches: More “Letters from an American Farmer” (New Haven, 1925), for example, expressed not individualism but recognition of a collective culture based on neighborhood and shared obligation. Subsequently, Hugh Henry Brackenridge’s epic Modern Chivalry (Philadelphia, 1792–1816) mapped out a “middle way” between the turbulent democracy of revolutionary-era popular politics and the orderly, top-down governance of representative republicanism. Brackenridge celebrated “local practice” and the diversity that arose from political divisions that he saw as an essential characteristic of freedom (83).

At first, Nelson’s account seems to imply the rapid demise of a “commons” tradition. Her next text, James Fenimore Cooper’s The Pioneers (New York, 1823) tracks the privatization of land and of resources once open to all, culminating in the westward exile of Natty Bumppo, exponent of the old ways, in the face of modernization. Similarly, Robert Montgomery Bird’s Nick of the Woods (Philadelphia, 1837) and William Gilmore Simms’ Richard Hurdis: A Tale of Alabama (Philadelphia, 1838) confirm that advocacy of the commons became associated not only with the frontier margins of society but with “savagery” and criminality, in opposition to the rational prescriptions of “civilized” law and private property.

Yet as her argument builds to its conclusion, Nelson offers a message subtler than she initially signals. Caroline Kirkland’s A New Home, Who’ll Follow? (Boston, 1839), rather than a haughty condemnation of frontier ways presaging her family’s return to the East in 1843, inscribed its author’s embrace of collaborative practices that had at first repelled her. Even Cooper, whose series of novels known as the “Leatherstocking Tales” (1827–1841) had dissected the “commons” tradition in order
to condemn it, found more sympathy for the claims of New York Anti-Renters depicted in his Littlepage novels of the 1840s. In these late works, now little read or understood, Nelson finds evidence of the continuing validity of a popular democratic perspective that the Founders and their liberal successors never managed to suppress.

From Brackenridge’s advocacy of a “middle way” and Kirkland’s emerging sympathy with the vernacular, Commons Democracy draws out a robust reassessment of early American politics and political economy that has validity both for historiography and contemporary discussions of democracy.

Christopher Clark
University of Connecticut


311 pp. $40.00 cloth e-book $10.00 to $40.00

Why bother to join a formal organization, with rules, membership fees, and regular meetings to do something that could be done just as well alone or informally among friends? This question, Butterfield argues, sat at the center of the construction of voluntary associations across the early republic in the United States: How did the United States become a country of joiners in which voluntary associations proliferated in every direction to manage every interest, from the most important to the most mundane, in spite of the tremendous resistance to intermediary bodies in the wake of the Revolutionary War? Indeed, regardless of the extraordinary elaboration of civil society that Alexis de Tocqueville witnessed during his visit in the 1830s, attempts to form voluntary associations—from Freemasonry to the Society of Cincinnati—confronted a profound uneasiness in the early United States Republic.

The response, Butterfield argues, was to cultivate law-minded ways of forming and conducting voluntary associations. Elaborating a post-revolutionary disposition toward legal oversight and “procedural regularity,” Americans of the early republic established the foundations for the world that Tocqueville and his friend Gustave de Beaumont discovered on their trip to the United States. They had already demonstrated a spontaneous natural proclivity to joining. What actually forged American civil society at the time was an emphasis on procedural fairness, legalistic formality, and compliance with “constitutions,” as well as a law-minded push toward a detailed and rule-based mode of organization.

Investigating legal disputes, cases, and discourses about the formation of voluntary associations, the book opens with a discussion of the everyday experience of membership. Butterfield suggests that “law-minded” formalities and procedural regularities became a kind of cultural form that permeated far beyond the desire to cohere to some ideal or standard
imposed from above. Rather, it was precisely this “everyday constitution-alism” that allowed people to associate. But beyond a law-minded cultural form, the question of associative binding was also a deeply divisive issue. As the early debates between Federalists and Republicans took shape, the ways in which people were to socialize and join together became a political issue. According to Butterfield’s account, however, this disagreement actually reinforced the attachment to formal rule-making as the foundation for voluntarily joining associations; what brought people together increasingly in these groups was not their shared beliefs but precisely the rules that structured their group. The key issue became how members were to be treated and admitted instead of what they actually did or thought once they were members.

As formal procedure became the foundation for American associative life, the law became the primary vehicle for clearing out space for what was to become ubiquitous practice. Associations did not form *sui generis*; they were created, preserved and managed through the courts—through judges and juries. Thus was American civil society forged.

The ramifications of this legal construction were many. First, by the mid-nineteenth century, a few key decisions actually removed the court’s ability to intervene into the internal organization of associations; in spite of the means through which they were created, by the middle decades of the nineteenth century, they appeared to be semi-sovereign pluralist institutions outside the prying hands of the state. Alongside this transformation, the book shows how the legal discussions about voluntary associations were responsible for the peculiarities of profit-bearing corporations. The result was a massive transformation in corporate law from the early 1800s to something that by the 1830s largely resembled the corporate legal structure of today. Finally, the book reveals how a growing culture of formal proceduralism within the world of voluntary associations also spilled into the creation of labor and trade unions, making their legal existence possible in the middle decades of the nineteenth century.

This book provides an extremely useful corrective in history, political science, and sociology to the innocent story of modern civil society as something formed in opposition to the state. Alongside his dynamic revisionism concerning these questions, Butterfield shows that without a massive reliance on state and state-related institutions, like courts and municipalities, Americans’ penchant for joining would not have been possible. Indeed, far from a zero-sum game, state and civil society developed in coordination, side-by-side.

This tale is no doubt much closer to Tocqueville’s account than are many of the ideologically driven neo-Tocquevillian readings of recent decades that present civil society as a mere check on state power. It does, however, raise a more fundamental question suggested by the book’s title, which is avoided almost entirely in its content—the place of civil society, law, and the state in the construction of modern American democracy. The book hardly mentions democracy, preferring to focus on questions of American liberalism and republicanism. Yet, as we know,
Tocqueville’s famous discovery of American associationalism did not lead to a book entitled “Liberalism in America” or “Republicanism in America” but “Democracy in America.” Thus, the book, notwithstanding the importance of its solid contribution to our understanding of the legal and political foundations of American civil society, also suggests how much more we have to learn to come to grips with the role of modern democracy in the making of Tocqueville’s America.

Stephen W. Sawyer
American University of Paris


A noble purpose animates Foley’s detailed account of the historical failure of the American political system to develop and secure adequate mechanisms for the orderly resolution of disputed elections. Foley wants to use the ample evidence of history to prove that the absence of these mechanisms and institutions remains a telling indictment of the condition of American democracy. In proposing solutions for this problem, Foley is not a starry-eyed idealist. Probably the best solution we can plausibly attain, he concludes, is the establishment of “evenly balanced tribunal[s] with a neutral tiebreaker” to resolve the partisan divisions within the body politic that electoral or judicial review panels are likely to replicate (362).

To sustain this point, Foley patiently carries readers through a number of episodes, dating to the first congressional elections of 1789 and the New York gubernatorial election of 1792. Some familiar events receive especially careful treatment, notably including the 1876 Tilden–Hayes presidential controversy; Lyndon Johnson’s victory-wrenching maneuvers in the 1948 Texas Democratic senatorial primary; the presidential elections of 1960 and 2000; and the “Bloody Eighth” election of 1984, when Democrats in the House of Representatives played hardball to maintain a recently won seat in Indiana.

But other, now obscure, events merit equal importance. How many American historians today can recall the critical Kentucky gubernatorial election of 1899, when a Democratic legislature ensured the seemingly illicit victory of William Goebel, a state senator? Goebel was soon assassinated by a shot fired from the office of the Republican secretary of state. When Goebel’s running mate succeeded him as governor, the defeated Republican candidate filed suit, eventually carrying a Fourteenth Amendment claim to the U.S. Supreme Court. In its ensuing decision in Taylor v. Beckham, the Court kept the federal judiciary out of the election business, allowing the political–questions doctrine to restrict the judiciary’s ability to improve the workings of American democracy.
Foley offers a number of provocative judgments about particular episodes. At the outset, he contrasts the emphasis that James Madison placed on attaining a “fair count”—meaning awarding the victory to the candidate who genuinely received the most valid votes”—with Alexander Hamilton’s more pragmatic preference for taking a strategic view of the long-term political situation (23). Richard Nixon’s decision in 1960 not to challenge the election counts in Illinois and Texas thus qualifies as a moment of Hamiltonian genius. Nixon needed both states to win, and Foley indicates that the results in both states could have been fairly contested. Nixon instead played the long game.

By training, Foley is an election lawyer, and Ballot Battles is first and foremost an analysis of the legal mechanisms that have been available, in different states and at different moments, to resolve disputed elections. Like many legal scholars, he naturally writes as an advocate of a particular set of solutions to a recurring problem. Historians have no stake in deciding which of the solutions that Foley considers look best. However, they might want to pursue a comparative question that Foley leaves unexplored. How does American behavior compare with the electoral experience of other established liberal democracies? Are we an outlier (as one suspects), and if so, why is that the case? Foley’s engaging account should challenge historians to pursue those questions.

Jack Rakove
Stanford University


Since the end of the eighteenth-century, law and psychiatry have struggled to provide stable definitions of responsibility, freedom, self-hood, and capacity. Blumenthal’s Law and the Modern Mind examines these struggles as they shaped decisions in civil courts in nineteenth-century America. Following the problem of responsibility across a wide range of issues (inheritance, contracts, marriage, accidents, and aging), Blumenthal demonstrates that judges, jurors, legal theorists, and law makers were unable to establish a consistent standard of judgment for deciding when individual decisions, commitments, or promises were legally binding once personal ability was at issue. Out of these issues, and the commentaries that they spawned, the civil courts produced an increasingly complex system of categories and distinctions that complicated the establishment of any single standard of rights or any single definition of freedom.

Of particular interest to readers of this journal is the intrinsically interdisciplinary nature of Blumenthal’s undertaking. The core of her
story is the emergence of “medical jurisprudence” and its transformation of the law. Although scholars have traced the importance of medical jurisprudence in the criminal law—especially regarding the insanity defense—Blumenthal makes clear that the development of psychiatric notions were equally important in the civil realm. Through a deep examination of court transcripts and decisions, she discovers how early psychiatrists (known then as “alienists”) undermined the inherited notions of individual responsibility that underlay the common law and challenged ideas about a shared rationality among the citizenry. In taking seriously the intellectual history of nineteenth-century psychiatric and psychological thought, Blumenthal is able to show that the insertion of new notions of determinism altered and reshaped fundamental legal assumptions. Examining these developments not only as a battle of ideas but also in their actual effect on legal practice, Blumenthal brings together scientific and legal registers to reveal how formal discourses profoundly affected the fates of numerous litigants.

Blumenthal’s close look at medical jurisprudence also suggests that we need to rethink the relationship between law and capitalist society in the nineteenth century. Rather than seeing courts and judges as solidifying the power of property or enabling capitalist development through their decisions about human capability, Blumenthal reads the civil law as a site of intense anxiety. As courts grappled with the new psychiatric theories, they were forced into a wider debate about the uncertainties to self and society that accompanied the spread of market relations. Even when they rejected the more deterministic implications of the new psychiatry—and most often they did—they were asked to adjudicate the different emotional and material demands of litigants who were also confronting a social and legal world without firm foundations. The intersection of economic transformation and scientific understanding became part of the law and not merely an external influence. Thanks to Blumenthal, no simple division between law and society, or clear-cut relationship between law and economy, can be maintained analytically.

Put another way, Law and the Modern Mind reveals the instabilities that still haunt a legal structure that depends on individual responsibility but is unable to say what that responsibility actually is.

Michael Meranze
University of California, Los Angeles


Nathaniel Bowditch’s career does not conform well to the modern ideal of the mathematician. He was, rather, a skilled and exacting calculator,
and this ability sufficed to establish his mathematical reputation in the early United States. The connoisseur of lengthy subtitles, wanting to know in what manner this man “changed American life,” will discover that it has much to do with his devotion to numbers. His historic role had little to do with mathematical prowess, deriving instead from his commitment to strict, even pitiless, record keeping and, with it, to orderly budgets and regularized business practices.

This book comes in the guise of a biography. Indeed, it provides an excellent survey of Bowditch’s life, including his family background, childhood, marriage, and children, as well as the opportunities and choices that defined his career. Thornton takes a great interest in his reputation, which was indeed bound up with mathematics and science. As with Thomas Edison a century later, Americans could not distinguish his work from that of a mathematician or scientist (or “man of science”). European academies were willing to bend their customary standards in order to elect this notable figure from the New World as a foreign member. Few, if any, Americans of the early nineteenth century possessed better scientific qualifications. A man like Bowditch, self-educated in mathematics, had no opportunity to master modern analysis. The capstone of his mathematical career, his translation and annotation of four volumes of Pierre Simon de Laplace’s *Mécanique Céléste* (Paris, 1799–1827), failed to comprehend the mathematical spirit of the original. Even the work with which he first established a reputation, the *New American Practical Navigator* (Newburyport, 1802), was distinguished mainly by its care in the calculations and printing and its copious explanations of procedures for shipboard astronomical measurement. He claimed to correct 8,000 errors, but almost all of them were in the last digit, which had no practical significance.

Thornton suggests in her introduction that the rise of quantification had more to do with love of numbers than with capitalistic profit maximization or the pursuit of bureaucratic system. In the body of the book, she shows how Bowditch’s insistence on arithmetic order ran together with the deployment of accounts and statistics for organizational control. That orientation, indeed, is what makes this book into much more than a well-researched and engaging biography. In her early chapters, Thornton demonstrates how Bowditch’s work engaged with contemporary navigational and trading practices, and with the social mores of the trading town of Salem, Massachusetts, his family home. She beautifully integrates his laborious calculation of navigational tables with his subsequent dedication to standardized forms, meticulous records, and relentless business mores.

If the Laplace translation represents one culmination of his career, another appears in his systematization of accounts and financial practices in an insurance office and his application of the same principles to three leading American academic institutions. Elite bankers and business men were shocked when he insisted that they adhere to the letter of their contracts, as were the top administrators of Harvard University when
Bowditch, from the board of directors, rejected categorically their loose, gentlemanly financial practices. Bowditch stood for a new spirit of numbers. The tremors that he unleashed demonstrate the shocking unfamiliarity of these demands, and how they contributed to a sea change in American life.

Theodore M. Porter
University of California, Los Angeles


The core sources for this work are two German-language daily newspapers in St. Louis in which Anderson finds convincing evidence that German immigrants who arrived after the failed revolution of 1848 gave their political support to the free-soil wing of the Democratic Party. They first supported Senator Thomas Hart Benton until his death in 1858 and then became the rank and file of the city’s Republican Party. Deeply antagonistic toward Know Nothing nativism and eager to demonstrate their trustworthiness as voting citizens, St. Louis Germans aligned themselves with the platform of conservative Republican Frank Blair, who opposed the extension of slavery and linked future emancipation with the colonization abroad of African Americans. Anderson finds that German hostility toward slavery was pragmatic, without the moral imperative of abolitionism. Germans embraced Blair’s slogan of free soil for free white men and advanced their own interests by embracing whiteness not racial equality.

Part of this thesis is supported by the German newspapers. Clearly, Germans were free soilers not abolitionists; their conservative anti-slavery stance expressed an aspiration to be accepted as reliable participants in St. Louis civil society. But Anderson’s emphasis on whiteness as the pathway to social integration is not directly expressed in the German press. She offers one example of a German newspaper using minstrel-show Negro dialect to ridicule a gathering of free blacks. The dialect appeared in English, suggesting that Germans had internalized this aspect of antebellum popular culture. But whiteness itself did not emerge in the German press in any direct way. Germans struggled against “otherness” by aligning themselves with political leaders who rejected nativist bigotry and the aristocratic pretensions of slaveholders. Anderson demonstrates that St. Louis Germans were not crusaders for racial equality, but she does not demonstrate that they articulated an identity of whiteness. Nor does she make a strong case that the nineteenth-century sense of whiteness extended to Germans. In a source not utilized by Anderson, the daughter of St. Louis’ first mayor complained of the boisterousness of German beer gardens during the
war, lamenting that the “dutch and the darkies are the only free people here now.”¹

The Germans’ rejection of the Radical Republican policy of barring once disloyal whites from the polls after the Civil War provides Anderson with further evidence that Germans embraced white privilege and pursued acceptance and respectability as citizens in a nation reunited around themes of white supremacy. But Anderson neglects the more immediate antebellum context shaping German attitudes about slavery and race. Unmentioned is the 1836 lynching of the mulatto boatman Francis McIntosh and the subsequent murder of antislavery newspaper editor Elijah P. Lovejoy. Without this context, Anderson’s judgment that Germans accepted “that nothing could be done about slavery” overlooks the fact that no one in antebellum St. Louis openly advocated the immediate abolition of slavery (18). Given the reticence of even native-born Americans like Lovejoy and the Unitarian minister John Greenleaf Eliot (both with deep New England ties) about the topic of slavery, it would have been remarkable to find Germans embracing the language of moral abolitionism. Instead, in the context of Civil War St. Louis, Germans rallied to what southern whites denounced and derided as “black Republicanism.”

Louis S. Gerteis
University of Missouri, St. Louis


In a speech to citizens in Peoria, Illinois, in 1854 Abraham Lincoln criticized the recently passed Kansas-Nebraska Act for its dismantling of the decades-long legal prohibition against the spread of slavery west of Missouri. He said that thenceforth, Americans were to forge “new bonds of Union” based not on sectional compromises over slavery but on the principle of universal freedom (ix). As Ford notes, the phrase “bonds of Union” was primarily a religious one, referring to relations between believers and Christ, or among members of a Christian community. When Lincoln repeated the term “bonds of Union” in his famous 1858 debates with Stephen Douglas, he struck a theological chord in the festering debate about slavery and the nation’s future.

Ford’s latest book explores the substance and texture of these “bonds of Union” in one of the most contested regions of the country, the Ohio River Valley, from the 1820s through the end of the Civil War. In that region of the West—especially in Cincinnati and Louisville, its largest cities—ordinary people had forged a new identity that, in

Ford’s interpretation, had withstood and ultimately defeated the sectional antagonism coming from the South. At the heart of this project were efforts by Christians—Protestants and Catholics, both black and white—to imagine a society free from slavery and racial oppression, open to immigrants from across Europe and inclusive of peoples from the North and South.

Unlike most other works detailing the sectional interplay between antebellum Ohioans and Kentuckians, Ford’s is a superb work of interdisciplinary history that takes seriously the theological debates and literary tropes circulating in the Ohio Valley. Unlike many scholars who use church histories to tell social histories, Ford incorporates the social history of Baptist, Methodist and Catholic communities to assess the spiritual meaning of the Christian experience at this particular historical moment.

The first three chapters about relations between Catholics and Protestants are the most compelling methodologically. Ford notes that European Catholics (especially from Bavaria and Austria) settled in Cincinnati and Louisville in the 1840s at the very moment when Protestant evangelicals reinvigorated their own mission in the trans-Appalachian West. A collision was inevitable, often resulting in street riots between nativists and German and Irish immigrants. But as Ford deftly notes, the church communities actually borrowed from one another and engaged more in a friendly competition for souls than a vicious religious war resembling Reformation Europe.

For example, Austrian-based Catholic missionaries began circulating and encouraging the use of devotional and meditative poetry to allow the faithful to pray in private and family settings. Though much more common in Protestant practice, these devotionals became intensely popular among Catholics in the Ohio Valley. At the same time, ardent Protestants drew aesthetic inspiration from the sizable Catholic cathedrals under construction, as ornate Baptist and Methodist churches began to appear in the heart of Cincinnati and Louisville.

Ford connects the religious fervor to the question of race and slavery, demonstrating the power of evangelicals in Cincinnati in opposing the state’s anti-black laws and making the city a bulwark of abolitionism. At the same time, free black Baptists in Louisville rejected the pro-slavery Christianity of the state’s white Baptists after the famous sectional split of the 1840s; white Baptists argued that their church was essential to bring the gospel to slaves. Black Baptists who separated from the white Southern Baptist church embraced a vision of freedom and racial equality akin to what Cincinnati’s evangelicals (of both races and denominations) advanced. Ford’s remarks about the literary interventions from black and white writers alike make a strong case that many people in the Ohio Valley imagined “new bonds of Union” that could define the region’s and the nation’s future.

The book is less persuasive as an analysis of political Unionism along the Ohio River valley, mostly because of its heavy reliance on two unusual cities with populations that held opinions at odds with those in the rural sections of Kentucky and southern Ohio. But as a cultural history of a
contested Civil War borderland, it is a sophisticated, compelling, and imaginative work of scholarship.

Aaron Astor
Maryville College


Strains of nostalgia laced the _fin de siècle_ culture of late nineteenth-century America. In the 1890s, economic depression and political unrest cast a shadow over the future of the republic, but fond memories of a triumphal past offered solace and reassurance. And well they might. In less than a century earlier, the United States expanded across a large continent and maintained its nationhood despite the challenges of distance and a destructive Civil War. With expansion came the acquisition of the American West, the backdrop for _Epiphany in the Wilderness_—the storied saga of the hunt, the hunter, and the hunted. In parsing the performance and the drama, Jones argues that the recounting of hunting events assumes a time-honored cultural ritual in the narrative of American history, the making of “the West as site of personal and social memory.” She declares, “The nineteenth century was irrevocably shaped by westward expansion, and in that story the hunter stood center stage,” citing confirmation from Turner’s nostalgic and bravado-laden 1893 frontier thesis that artifacts of American identity included “the hunting shirt and the pioneer cabin” (5).1

_Epiphany in the Wilderness_ is a challenging and complicated work that employs theoretical underpinnings to highlight the importance of the hunting narrative to American cultural history. The seemingly straightforward story of the hunter type represented by the figure of Daniel Boone earlier in the trans-Appalachian West became much more complicated and laden with meaning in the trans-Mississippi West. Clearly the choice of the word “epiphany” in the title—something that transcends—signals theorized constructions to follow, with references to Derrida’s deconstruction theory and the “actor network theory” of Callon and Latour all in play.2

Hunters and hunting in the nineteenth century assume three modes—subsistence, market, and sport—all of which treated the landscape of the American West as one of “appropriation and conquest.” In the case of the marketers, the destruction of buffalo was on an industrial scale that

saw “the trans-Mississippi West as cornucopian landscape” and buffalo slaughter a milestone in the “winning of the West” (8). The hunting performance is also shaped by the “gaze.” Gaze occurs in a time lapse that imprints memory and ultimately influences, or even dictates, the recounted memory of the hunt; stalking, chase, kill, and celebration comprise the performance. The emerging stories shaped by the gaze and the telling of the performance from and in memory helps to assert a teleological narrative, or even an “allegorical sign” (336), in the grander stage of American history, particularly in an environment like the trans-Mississippi West, in all of its disconnected/connected variety.

Although the hunting drama and performance appear to constitute the province of white males, Jones backs away from that generalization, introducing “heterodoxy” to the story. Additional participants include women, Indians, and various representatives of the “subaltern” in the form of hunting guides. The camera also brings diversity in the hunt in its substitution of a captured image for a kill. According to this work and others, hunting culture and its validation as a profoundly important cultural experience through narrative lent momentum to the emerging conservation movement—for instance, the elitist members of the Boone and Crockett Club who worked to protect and restore once abundant wildlife in streams, forests, and plains. Curiously on the opposite end of the power spectrum, Jones makes an oblique reference to the Ghost Dance of the Plains Indians that envisioned the restoration of a bygone era when a hunting culture flourished on the abundance of animal capital.

Center stage in the conclusion is the entanglement of human society and ecology as expressed in the culture of the hunt, “rendering the West as a complicated landscape of subsistence, sport, profit, sacredness, belonging, and vitality.” Most importantly, the pace of environmental change in this hunter’s paradise “conspired to make conservation irrevocably western in design” (336). Note the term design rather than origin in this carefully worded sentence. Adventure stories of the hunt reinforced emerging romantic notions about wild nature’s role in restoring the human spirit and vitality amid an urbanizing America. The many-faceted inquiries of Jones’ work will provide grist for discussion for many years to come.

William D. Rowley
University of Nevada, Reno

Long Past Slavery: Representing Race in the Federal Writers’ Project. By Catherine A. Stewart (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2016) 372 pp. $29.95

For decades, the most cutting-edge monographs about enslavement have relied on a rich but controversial archive to tell the story of slavery from the bottom up. Comprised of interviews that were gathered in the late 1930s as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal, the archive, known as the “WPA (Works Progress Administration) Ex-Slave
Interviews,” includes more than 2,300 interviews of formerly enslaved African Americans across sixteen states. The debates surrounding the Ex-Slave Interviews stem from the fact that most of the interviewers were white workers for the Federal Writers’ Project (FWP) and their interviewees African Americans in the Jim Crow South during the Great Depression. Moreover, the African-American subjects were mostly poor, elderly, and disabled, many of them hoping that compliance and agreeability would give them access to government funds. Although these factors have made old-guard scholars doubt the authenticity of the archive, others view such skepticism as a symptom of the racism that undergirds the project of African-American history.

Entering this conversation with the most definitive and thorough telling of the politics, internal debates, and racism surrounding the development of the Ex-Slave Interviews, Stewart’s, Long Past Slavery proceeds partly through traditional historical methodology and partly through literary analysis. It is also a work that will quickly emerge as the central text for anyone hoping to engage with this archive. Not only does Stewart carefully read through the interviews themselves, but she also studies federal and state records, and, most fruitfully, the abundant correspondence between federal directors and state editors. Although scholars have long suggested that the Ex-Slave Interviews amplified what Stewart calls the “competing [racial] visions of the past of slavery,” her painstaking research illuminates this chasm (33). In one example, Stewart cites Myrtle Miles, Alabama’s white state director, lambasting Sterling Brown, the WPA’s director of Negro Affairs, the lone African American in a position of authority in the project, for what she perceived to be his racially biased editorial intervention. Despite the purpose of the project being to interview former slaves, Miles did not believe “that the picture [of Alabama] should be painted in black tones” (53). Like others in the state offices, the Alabama director believed that she “knew” her “Negroes” better than Brown or any other northerner did (44).

Stewart enters the interdisciplinary realm by offering a nuanced examination of how the fields of sociology, anthropology, history, and folklore intersected with New Deal politics and the development of this unusual archive. Her main objective of placing African-American experience at the forefront of her discussion makes her book the definitive history of the Negro Writers’ Units (NWU). The rich detail that includes such descriptions as how both segregated office space and heightened scrutiny hampered the work of black interviewers is of particular value.

As Stewart’s argument progresses, she relies heavily on African-American literary theory to make her case. After providing a compelling (though not particularly new) reading of the anthropological work of Zora Neale Hurston, who took part in Florida’s NWU, she uses Hurston as a foil to demonstrate the adherence of most NWU interviewers to respectability politics. Stewart argues that, unlike Hurston, most NWU workers emphasized respectability, shaping their interviews to show how black people were worthy of citizenship. In the last chapter, her
greatest foray into literary analysis, Stewart contends that former slaves were “signifying” during their interviews—in other words, that they were savvy enough to manipulate the moment for their own gains. For instance, she argues that many formerly enslaved people purposefully inverted notions of the master/slave relationship in their narratives. Thus, Mary Minus Biddie of Florida poignantly described her enslaver’s reaction to her emancipation: “Mr. Jamison . . . broke down and cried like a slave who was being lashed by his cruel master” (225–226).

The analysis in *Long Past Slavery* is most effective when it combines historical methodology and literary analysis, as in her chapter examining the use of black dialect by white interviewers. The book also functions as a strong indictment of the racism among FWP workers, as in the excellent chapter about folklorist John Lomax, the project’s first director, who had a troubled relationship with blues musician Huddie “Leadbelly” Ledbetter. Notwithstanding the first few chapters of the book, which at times become plodding in their intricate outline of the nuts and bolts of the New Deal and the FWP, *Long Past Slavery* emerges as essential reading for anyone hoping to make use of this complex archive.

Elizabeth Stordeur Pryor
Smith College


In *What is African American History?* Dagbovie offers a brief but thorough overview of the field of African-American history, starting from its beginnings in the nineteenth century through its development into a thriving subfield within American history today. In five succinct chapters, Dagbovie traces the movement of African-American history from the margins to the mainstream of the historical profession, the evolution of theoretical approaches and sub-specialties within the field throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the vitality and theoretical innovations of African-American women’s history, and the importance of history in the interdisciplinary field of Black Studies. Designed as an introductory text for advanced undergraduates or graduate students, this book provides a helpful overview of the most important works and debates in African-American history, past and present.

Dagbovie traces the beginnings of the field to the work of three early pioneers—George Washington Williams, the author of *History of the Negro Race* (New York, 1892); William E. B. DuBois, who earned a Ph.D. in History from Harvard in 1895 and produced seminal historical works such as *Black Reconstruction: An Essay toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860–1880* (New York, 1934); and Carter G. Woodson, the man most responsible for creating the infrastructure for the field by founding the Association for the Study of Negro Life
and History in 1915 (ASNLH). The ASNLH sponsored annual conventions on black history and launched the first major journal in the field, The Journal of Negro History, in 1916. It was primarily black scholar-activists, both professionally trained and amateurs, who studied, researched, and promoted black history in the years before the civil-rights movement. On the margins of the mainstream academy—the American Historical Association did not even have a panel devoted to African-American history until 1940—these scholars sought to challenge racist historical interpretations that ignored or demeaned black people. They saw the systematic study of black history as a way to foster black self-esteem and challenge white racism.

The field began to gain legitimacy in white-dominated institutions as a result of the civil-rights and Black Power movements, Dagbovie argues. But this entry of black history into the mainstream offered greater opportunities to white scholars than to black ones, since there were so few black professionals at predominantly white colleges or universities. Yet, black scholars remain prevalent in a field that has exploded since the 1970s as the number of works and doctorates have increased dramatically, and they remain committed to “a type of black history that centers the experiences, lives, and perspectives of black people” (28). Studies that focus primarily on what has been done to black people in the United States are not African-American history, Dagbovie insists.

Although Dagbovie’s work is more of a survey of the field than a thesis-driven analysis, he suggests that black historians who are committed to a political project of battling racism or building a positive group identity have had to grapple with the so-called “objectivity question” more than their white counterparts. In what might be the most controversial argument of the book, Dagbovie asserts that black historians’ commitment to social responsibility has declined in recent years, an argument that seems at odds with the great number of scholars of color who mentor students of color, battle racism in the academy, actively support the Black Lives Matter movement, and generally raise awareness about contemporary manifestations of racism. Even though black history has gained more credibility within the historical profession, African-American historians today remain as committed as ever to the goal of racial justice.

Renee Romano
Oberlin College


On the books since the incorporation of the United States, vagrancy laws were long considered indispensable to the power of the police to keep the public peace. In cases like Prigg v. Pennsylvania (1842), vagrancy laws were even identified as the benchmark against which the legitimacy of other police measures was to be determined. Even as other criminal regulations
were subject to scrutiny by courts at all levels, vagrancy statutes were considered to be self-evidently legitimate, giving the police the near-absolute discretion to detain and arrest anyone perceived as suspicious, dissolute, disorderly, threatening, immoral, or otherwise out of place.

This outlook changed quickly in the 1960s as these previously in-violate laws were subjected to ongoing legal challenges, culminating in Papachristou v. Jacksonville (1972), a case that concerned two white women and two black men arrested as vagrants while driving together in a car. Papachristou concluded with the Supreme Court striking the law in question as unconstitutionally vague, forcing police to find other means to justify summary on-the-street inquiries and misdemeanor arrests.

Goluboff tells the story of the de-legitimation of vagrancy laws in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s, starting with the landmark arrest of Isidore Edelman, a Communist-leaning soapbox speaker whose case was considered by the Supreme Court in 1949. Moving forward from Edelman, Goluboff proceeds to survey the legal challenges brought by a wide array of litigants—indigent persons, beatniks, and sexual non-conformists as well as civil rights, free speech, and anti-war protestors. Vagrant Nation is at once a study of constitutional change and a history of social movements. Rather than focusing exclusively on arguments made in higher courts, Goluboff begins with the challenges to routine arrests made by ordinary defendants, such as Sam Thompson, an African-American man repeatedly charged as a vagrant by the Louisville police despite the fact that he supported himself with odd jobs and stayed out of trouble. In vivid detail, Goluboff describes the situation of people like Thompson along with others, like the civil-liberties lawyer Louis Lusky, who helped Thompson advance his case in the courts. She combines this biographical method with formal analysis of the legal questions at issue in the cases, ranging from substantive and situational concerns (such as whether or not a loiterer was obstructing traffic) to basic points of constitutional interpretation (the fact that vagrancy criminalized a status, or a kind of person, rather than an action).

The book’s approach is both accessible and compelling, well suited to the material. It shows not only how social change led to a legal revolution but also how legal change helped to consolidate new social movements around constitutional questions about the right to assembly and free expression.

Bryan Wagner
University of California, Berkeley

Cold War Anthropology: The CIA, the Pentagon, and the Growth of Dual Use Anthropology. By David H. Price (Durham, Duke University Press, 2016) 452 pp. $29.95

For twenty years, Price has been honorably and doggedly trawling for evidence of the “weaponization” of anthropology in World War II and
the Cold War, making especially good use of the Freedom of Information Act but also performing the traditional functions of the good historian in archives, memoirs, oral histories, and the technical literature. Cold War Anthropology, his third book on the subject, is his magnum opus. It is not, and could not be, complete. The CIA still keeps too many secrets in various archives, and too much of its covert skullduggery has left little trace, having been performed off the books by private contract or with a wink and a nod. Nevertheless, Price’s range is encyclopedic and his reach very deep.

The book contains some familiar, perhaps over-familiar, stories: for instance, the CIA’s ties to Harvard’s Russian Research Center and to MIT’s Center for International Studies from their foundings in 1948 and 1952, respectively; Project Camelot, the Army’s attempt to infiltrate a counter-insurgency agenda into Latin American social science in 1964/5, the exposure of which led to an acute moral crisis about covert government funding of academia; and the Army’s sponsorship of counter-insurgency research in Thailand beginning in 1967, the revelation of which in 1970 ripped apart the American Anthropological Association (AAA). But it also contains many other, less familiar, and sometimes still elusive, stories: state-funded research in Sarawak, Guatemala, Egypt, Mongolia, Indonesia, and Afghanistan; front organizations like the Asia Foundation and the Human Ecology Fund; and a long sequence of counter-insurgency manuals informed wittingly and unwittingly by academic research. The only obvious omission is the regional work of anthropologists for various technical-assistance programs in the 1950s, which Price acknowledges only briefly and from the center rather than the periphery, where the work (and possibly the damage) was done.

Over the years, Price’s stance toward the implication of anthropology in state-sponsored activities has softened, acquiring nuance and greater penetration. In this book, he adopts a typology much like Gilman’s, recently enunciated in a review essay in Modern Intellectual History, which distinguishes between direct “first-order” contributions to the Cold War struggle, “second-order” fellow-traveling, and “third-order” exploitation of opportunities.1 Price is particularly interested in the “dual use” of anthropological research, which both serves pure academic interests and has the potential to inform national-security priorities. There is no doubt that funding opportunities in “area studies” pushed anthropologists into sensitive parts of the world that held interest for the U.S. government, though given the global scope of the Cold War, it is hard to imagine any “area” that might not have fallen under this rubric.

In 2016, however, the idea that “American anthropology has been slow to acknowledge” its links, overt or covert, witting or unwitting, to the national-security state is no longer viable (xvii). Apart from Price’s own twenty-year campaign to reveal these links, and the enormous literature

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that has amassed since the 1980s across the social sciences about the discipline’s Cold War misadventures, his research in this book reminds us how aware many anthropologists were of the moral and political challenges that they faced at the time, in the thick of the Cold War. The “‘critiques of area studies centers’ political alignments are almost as old as the programs themselves” (106), he points out, even if they were stonewalled by the professional establishment.

“Applied anthropology” acquired an ethics code in 1949; Price discusses it in one of his earlier books but not this one. New-Left agitation about Camelot and the Thai affair led to an AAA ethics code in 1971. As Price acknowledges in reference to these codes, and the constant battles over them, “War forced the discipline to grapple with these issues of identity and meaning” (362). Price’s heart is with the “essentially anarchist group” that seeks to use political critique of its profession as part of a wider critique of “American political economy,” “a growing military-industrial complex, neocolonial militarization, and expanding fears of terrorism” around the world (347, 363). Price is not always happy with the profession’s responses. For one thing, he considers the ethics codes to be insufficiently “political,” perhaps even deliberate distractions. But the failures are surely not due to amnesia within the discipline so much as to the politics of the discipline.

Peter Mandler
Gonville and Caius College
Cambridge University


In recent decades, scholars have debated about relations between the polities and peoples of East Asia prior to the twentieth century. One deeply ingrained but increasingly challenged approach is tributary relations, a hierarchical system that places China at its geopolitical and civilizational apex and arrays its neighbors in descending order, according to their relative acceptance of Chinese cultural norms, diplomatic protocols, and geopolitical agendas. Advocates of the tributary model suggest that it facilitated peaceful relations between China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam, because they all shared Confucian values, including a distinctively non-Westphalian embrace of inequality and hierarchy as a key to order and stability. The rise of nationalism (both political and cultural) and the rise of Chinese power have frequently intensified academic debates.

Deftly using both Chinese and Vietnamese primary sources and secondary scholarship, Baldanza instead argues that Sino–Viet relations from the thirteenth to seventeenth centuries are best understood as a process
of contestation, negotiation, and compromise rather than the result of clear, widely accepted borders and statuses. She draws imaginatively from the poetry, letters, and the lives of Chinese and Vietnamese men, usually officials and scholars, to explore illustrative moments when competing claims were aired, debated, and resolved, at least temporarily. Rather than search for mutually exclusive or monolithic Chinese and Vietnamese identities or objectives, Baldanza offers nuanced readings of edicts, policy papers, poems, novels, and illustrations to reveal the ambitions and anxieties, self-perceptions, and strivings of individuals. Sliding easily between history and literature, such sources yield their full significance only to those with sure knowledge of both Chinese and Vietnamese contexts. On a wide range of issues—to go to war or to engage in diplomatic negotiation, to recognize a ruler or to back an “insurgent” leader, to highlight cultural commonality or to insist on unbridgeable difference—Baldanza shows that fierce debate blazed not only across the border (that is, Chinese versus Vietnamese) but on either side of the border, that is, among compatriots.

A central question running throughout the book is the relationship of the past to present. The identity of educated men in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam derived in part from their deep familiarity with the written classical tradition that first originated in China. Although they all spoke different languages, they read the same texts in the original language and claimed to embody the highest classical standards of personal morality, literary grace, and cultural accomplishment. Not only did individuals make such claims; so did states. Baldanza proposes that Vietnamese use of the classical tradition in general and certain claims in particular (calling its ruler emperor rather than king, declaring possession of the Mandate of Heaven, etc.) threatened China’s “very ideological coherence” (6). However, it is more accurate to distinguish the two outlooks, Vietnam’s being primarily a cultural claim and China’s a political one. Such tensions will be familiar to students of Parhae/Bohai, Khitan, Jurchen, Korean, and Japanese history. Baldanza sheds welcome light on how this fascinating dimension of diplomatic, intellectual, and cultural history unfolded between China and Vietnam.

David Robinson
Colgate University


The author’s family, colleagues, and former students collaborated to produce this book, which lays out the major study on which she was working before her death in 2011. Haboush analyzes texts to trace the
early seventeenth-century Korean “discourse of nation” produced during and after the 1592–1598 Japanese invasion and the Manchu invasions of 1627 and 1636/7. “Letters of exhortation” were first issued in 1592 by local elites, the yangban, who organized volunteers to resist the invaders when the royal army collapsed. Addressed to patriots in other villages, these letters appeal to love of native place, express pride in Korea’s cultural heritage, and voice outrage against the brutal killing, raping, and looting of the “barbarians.” Breaking the state’s monopoly on coercive violence, this spontaneous grassroots patriotic movement, sparked by national crisis, peaked in the anxious months before Ming intervention in early 1593 shifted the military balance against Japan. The desire to disseminate these messages broadly caused some writers to use the vernacular and write in the Korean alphabet, Han’gul (a fifteenth-century invention), instead of in literary Chinese, the prestige language and official writing style.

Attitudes toward the Japanese invasion changed after Korea’s forcible subjugation at the hands of the Manchus. Haboush examines three early seventeenth-century narratives in the “records of dream journeys” (mongyurok) genre. Two of them focus on the unburied male dead of the 1590s. The third one focuses on the corpses of court women who committed suicide to escape capture by Manchu troops. The first uses the Japanese invasion to invoke a form of closure, praising the exploits of specifically identified “national heroes,” and the second echoes the Daoist reminder that death ends all concerns, including those of the unburied (or unburiable) dead. In the third narrative, Dream Journey to Kanghwa Island, the women’s ghosts bitterly attack the ineptitude, cowardice, and hypocrisy of the men who failed to protect their families and the state. Compared with the Manchu debacle, Korean writers could look back on the Japanese invasion with “a nostalgic halo of victory” (151).

Commemoration of the war dead in the 1590s and 1630s was the vehicle for perpetuating the national discourse into the late nineteenth century, when modern nationalism emerged in Korea. Haboush explored other elite responses to the Manchu invasions in her earlier publications (a complete list is in this book), and would probably have expanded on the post-1637 discourse had she lived. This provocative book reminds us of her signal contributions to the history of early modern Korea.

Evelyn S. Rawski
University of Pittsburgh

Rationalizing Korea: The Rise of the Modern State, 1895–1945. By Kyung Moon Hwang (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2016) 395 pp. $75.00 cloth $34.95 paper

A hotly debated issue in Korean modern history is the point at which South Korea’s modernization originated. One side argues that this
development commenced during Japan’s occupation of the Korean peninsula and the other that it occurred prior to this time. Hwang’s *Rationalizing Korea* suggests a third option—Korean modernization covering a time period from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century when rationalizing peninsula administrations “underwent extensive diversification and growth in its regulatory, extractive, and symbolic capacities” (147). Japanese colonization extended a process begun in prior reform movements, particularly the Gabo Reforms (1894–1895), during which various governments extended their influence into the lives of the Korean people.

Hwang offers a number of areas in which Korean administrations employed a system that Foucault identifies as governmentality, including religion, public schooling, registration and classification, and biopolitics (both health and hygiene). Changes in regulations and classification (Chapter 7) were introduced as a means of correcting irregularities in the system that ostracized a large percentage of the population due to the literati yangban being permitted to keep slaves. Reforms introduced by the Gabo cabinet sought to end public slavery and secure a fairer distribution of the tax code. The new system also sought to incorporate information traditionally carried in the family registration (*hojok*) into a new registration system, but it dug deeper into the privacy of the incorporated families to “account for every household and every person at all times” (202). A “civil registration law” (1909) extended this initiative by expanding the boundaries of households to obtain information about members of extended families not currently living under the same roof (202). The Japanese colonial government advanced registration and classification further, particularly during the war years when the Koreans were “encouraged” to adopt the Japanese system. This reform ensured that all members of a household—including females, who traditionally kept their maiden names even after marriage—would be registered under a single household (as opposed to clan) system. More importantly, this strategy made it easier to mobilize everyone to contribute to Japan’s war efforts.

One administrative aim shared in the above example of “state rationalization” (as well as others) that Hwang presents is the intent to make the “people and social structure more visible to the state” (109). Hwang, who sees *Rationalizing Korea* as a sequel to his first book, which addressed social status in traditional and modern Korea, ends his discussion with Korean liberation in 1945. His discussion, however, also touches on Korea’s post-liberation dictatorships and even the “democratization” that began during the late 1980s. He correctly suggests that the either-or arguments regarding Korean modernization are incomplete, implying

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that the two sides would be better served by collaborating with, rather than competing against, each other.

Mark E. Caprio
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Building on scholarship about intimacy, sexuality, and empire—territory mapped by Foucault and expanded by Stoler and others—Metroimperial Intimacies focuses on the particular case of United States’ governance of its Philippine colony during the long decade after the Treaty of Paris.1 For Mendoza, the apparatuses of military occupation and colonial administration operated in tandem with the management of life in the islands, producing a kind of national hallucination or fantasy that drove the colonial project. To “zero . . . in on the intimacies that try to give the state the slip,” Mendoza unfolds a queer-of-color critique that allows for a mode of reading and archival work that locates the emerging categories of abjection and the perverse as constituted and constitutive of, but also exceeding, the colonial order of things (11).

The challenge for projects that propose to examine the genealogies of intimacy—and specifically same-sex intimacy—is the sparseness and obliqueness of the historical record with regard to the subject. One of Mendoza’s most notable contributions is his assemblage of a disparate set of texts that begin to constitute an archive of U.S. racial-sexual governance and Filipino counter-narratives of racial-sexual subjectivity. Ranging from handbooks on conduct, punitive legal ordinances concerning sex and race, a court-martial case, political cartoons, a musical comedy by a Midwestern American, and the writings of early Philippine pensionadas/os in the U.S. metropole, Metroimperial Intimacies demonstrates the multifaceted ways in which the United States attempted to manage the chaotic categories of race and sex in the new colony. Although not the first scholar to examine political cartoons and pensionado writing, Mendoza treads new ground in his attention to how male same-sex intimacy registered in these genres, enlarging our understanding of how colonial anxieties about race and sex shaped the social, legal, and cultural spaces of U.S.–Philippine relations.

One chapter deserves special mention because of the archival treasure that Mendoza uncovers—the case of United States v. Boss Reese (1911), the court-martial trial of an Army captain accused of sexual abuse. In examining the media coverage, the legal record, and the high-level

correspondence generated around the case, Mendoza illuminates the discursive and legal acrobatics that the military court and the colonial administrators performed in establishing the procedure of law around sodomy in the colony, while also starkly defining its racial limits. In this small glimpse into the rape of Filipino soldiers by their American supervisor and its legal aftermath, Mendoza reveals not only a state contending with the management of the intimate but also of colonized people perversely insisting on becoming emergent subjects.

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*Selling Empire: India in the Making of Britain and America, 1600–1830.* By Jonathan Eacott (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2016) 455 pp. $45.00

Eacott’s *Selling Empire* endeavors to join together, through an examination of the British Empire, the now fashionable arenas of the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean “worlds.” Furthermore, along with the usual discussion of trade, manufactures, and politics, Eacott incorporates consumption, taste, aesthetics, and cultural assumptions more generally into an account of an extended period of about 200 years. His central argument is that India was “essential to the making of the British Empire in America, and, to a lesser extent, America the empire in India” (3). Although in such an ambitious undertaking, comprising eight richly detailed chapters, some of Eacott’s discussion inevitably covers familiar ground, much of it is suggestive and original.

Eacott argues that the English initially envisaged India as a source from which Asian goods, such as spices and fine textiles, could be transferred to, and cultivated in, the American colonies, thus facilitating the integrated empire imagined by the Navigation Acts. Since such schemes were not practicable, however, a direct trade developed between India and England during the 1670s, especially in printed calicos, to meet a growing demand for luxury goods. As is well known, such trade involved the shipment to India of bullion that undercut the mercantilist order, antagonized English woolen weavers, and, according to moralists, created a debauched effeminate society. The result, discussed in Chapter 2, was the enactment of the Calico Acts to prohibit the import of Indian textiles into England. This prohibition, however, was not extended to the American colonies, which were left free to import Indian goods. As Eacott points out, the colonists were allowed to enjoy “dangerous Indian luxuries” but not to trade with India or to secure these goods from any source other than the East India Company. Subordinated to British interests, they were the “ultimate imperial consumers” (116–117).

Eacott makes the strikingly original argument that in the run-up to the American Revolution, the East India Company played a visible and
disturbing role. In his view, Americans’ awareness of the Company’s conquests in India, and the establishment of an authoritarian government there, evoked the fear of a shared place for Indians and Americans in a corrupt and “despotically” empire (207, 219). Following the Revolution, America’s connection with India paradoxically expanded, as reflected in part by the continuing appeal of Indian consumer fashions. Much of it, however, arose fortuitously out of the extended British wars with France from 1794 onward; as a neutral power, the United States was well situated to take advantage of trading opportunities denied to others. By 1806, India had contributed 4 percent of U.S. imports, and Americans commanded much of the Continental European market for Indian goods.

Skillfully deploying the private papers of several Philadelphia merchants, Eacott provides an intimate sense of how this mercantile system functioned. With the rise of Manchester, and the ending of European wars after 1815, America’s overseas ties inevitably underwent a process of “refashioning” (333). By the 1820s, the British were “making Asian goods in Britain using raw materials from America and Asia” (381). The book’s final chapter stitches together, not altogether satisfactorily, changing consumption practices, the growth of evangelicalism, and Britain’s displacement of Indian textiles and American traders. In short, in place of “colonial rule in America and trade with an independent India,” what emerged was an empire constructed from “an independent America and colonial rule in India” (436).

Selling Empire is a work of extraordinary scope based upon a remarkable amount of archival and library research. Rarely does one encounter a work in comparative international history of such force. The volume’s strength, however, is in part also a shortcoming. It contains too much information, and too much that is well known. Confronted with accounts that roam from trade to politics to consumption and aesthetics, from decade to decade throughout the better part of two centuries, readers can easily become overwhelmed by detail and lose track of the main argument. Nonetheless, the larger argument remains compelling, revealing fresh ways of thinking about the growth of the international economy, as well as the interconnected histories of Britain, India, and the United States. As Eacott reminds us on the last page, this subject matters because India “is becoming globally powerful again” (444).

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Lascars were south Asian sailors who could be hired for a single voyage or for longer service, aboard country trade ships (commerce between
Indian ports and other ports in Southeast Asia and China) as well as East India Company vessels sailing from England to India and China. They constituted a source of shipboard laborers for British and Asian ship owners to fill the ranks of seamen handling the lowliest jobs on these commercial vessels. This study is largely confined to vessels commanded by British masters.

Jaffer’s book stays close to the topic of his doctoral dissertation, emphasizing the mutinous aspect of lascars’ shipboard experiences more than other social and economic aspects of their lives.¹ In that respect, it deals with the most dramatic element of their “wooden world.” A useful appendix provides summary accounts of thirty-eight shipboard uprisings involving lascar crews.

The greatest virtue of this monograph is the extent of its research. Jaffer has made good use of records and papers at the India Office Library in London, as well as personal accounts held at the National Marine Museum in Greenwich and archival resources in India, Australia, and the Netherlands. Records of judicial proceedings in England and India, in combination with personal testimonies and newspaper accounts, have helped him to reconstruct numerous mutinous events. The book is scrupulously documented, and Jaffer is careful to avoid unwarranted generalizations from evidence that might come from a single episode.

By the yardstick of interdisciplinary history, Lascars and Indian Ocean Seafaring conveys a good deal of sociological history about shipboard life, as well as studies of revolts and threatened revolts that will be useful to criminologists. Not all mutinous unrest led to violent seizures of ships; negotiating a resolution was possible in numerous instances. In that respect, Jaffer has opened a window on labor history in the maritime context.

Jaffer devotes considerable attention to the shipboard hierarchy among lascars. The highest rank of lascar was the “serang,” which was something like an elevated type of boatswain. Below the serang would be one or more “tindals,” who held a status approximating boatswain’s mate. These leaders often functioned as intermediaries between the ship’s senior officers and the lascar members of the crew. Communication was a problem aboard many vessels, since many of the lascars had little or no facility with spoken English. The serangs and tindals were often the only people on board capable of bridging the language gulf between English officers and lascars. Serangs had enough influence to quiet mutinous unrest, but they could also choose to encourage agitation.

Jaffer’s decision to plunge almost immediately into the historiography of his subject is a questionable strategy. Much of the introduction

explores what various authors have written about lascars and their work. Not a lively beginning to the text, it might discourage a general readership. Some editorial advice about placing this material in an appendix would have been a kindness to the author. That said, this monograph will be valuable to scholars in the field of South Asian maritime commerce in the age of sail. Jaffer is careful in his judgments and trustworthy in the use of his sources, and he has been industrious in seeking out widely dispersed primary materials.

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