Review Of "State, Peasant, And Merchant In Qing Manchuria, 1644-1862" By C. M. Isett

Lillian M. Li
Swarthmore College, lli1@swarthmore.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://works.swarthmore.edu/fac-history

Part of the History Commons

Let us know how access to these works benefits you

Recommended Citation
https://works.swarthmore.edu/fac-history/295
Regimes and Repertoires is a work of remarkable scope and insight, demonstrating once again why Tilly has long been one of our best interdisciplinary scholars of contentious politics. Its essential task is to analyze closely the interplay between types of regimes and varying repertoires of contention. Tilly’s approach is that of a social scientist deeply rooted in history.

In early separate chapters, Tilly explores the concepts of regimes and repertoires, refocusing his own considerable prior contributions in these areas for the purposes at hand. Consulting literary sources from Aristotle’s *Politics* to works by Moore and Dahl, he claims the key dimensions for specifying regime types to be capacity and democracy. He creates a four-fold typology that allows him “to ask this book’s main question: how do change and variation in regimes interact with change and variation in the character of contentious politics?” (29).

As much as anyone, Tilly is responsible for our appreciation of the central role of repertoires in contentious politics. As he explains, “When people make collective claims they innovate with limits set by the repertoire already established for their place, time, and pair [of claimant-object]” (35)—be they bread riots, sit-ins, or suicide-bombings. He then hypothesizes that changes in repertoires will vary for claimants and powerholders, notably when regime instability increases. Then, powerholders will move “toward rigid repertoires and challengers toward more flexible repertories” (44), including innovations more dramatic than the incremental ones that might occur during more stable times.

To make this argument, Tilly introduces variations in another set of concepts with which he has long worked, the political-opportunity structure. The model developed in the book involves interactions between regimes, repertoires, and the political-opportunity structure. The trajectory of change that Tilly finds confirms neither accounts that emphasize top-down dynamics nor those that work from the bottom-up (113–115). He explores the interactions at the center of his model in separate chapters on collective violence, revolutions, and social movements and concludes with a chapter that summarizes his findings. The chapter on revolution is particularly provocative, challenging foundational assumptions about what does and does not constitute a revolution (hint: Rwanda does).


2 See Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow, and Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention* (New York, 2001). In the preface, Tilly traces the origins of *Regimes and Repertoires* to regime-related material “extrude[d]” from *Dynamics* (vii).
Some of the analytical sections of the book might seem overly abstract. However, part of the joy of *Regimes* is the amazing scope of concrete case material on which Tilly draws—from France (1598 to 2003) and Great Britain (1750 to 1830) to contemporary India, Peru, and South Africa, as well as the collapse of the Soviet Union and the genocide in Rwanda—with a reassuring competence to develop his hypotheses and to illustrate his arguments.

Charles D. Brockett

Sewanee: The University of the South

---

*Naval Blockades in Peace and War: An Economic History Since 1750.* By Lance E. Davis and Stanley L. Engerman (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2006) 453 pp. $91.00

Economic warfare is an important, but usually neglected, part of modern war. Davis and Engerman have written a stimulating book that shows how an understanding of economics can enrich legal and military history. They provide a series of detailed case studies of naval blockades, from the American War of Independence through 1812 and the Civil War to the two World Wars of the twentieth century. In each case, they examine the role of productive power, as well as of technology and of military practices. Generally, the blockade breakers had the upper hand in this story. Even in the Civil War, in which the South had a clear economic inferiority that was sharpened by the effects of a blockade, the substitution of steam for sail allowed for a continuation of blockade “running” by the Confederacy.

The authors also show how important convoys were in breaking the German blockade during the twentieth-century wars, as well as how long it took the United States in World War II to relearn this simple lesson from World War I. The overall theme that emerges is that defensive anti-blockade measures are effective in modern warfare. The power of the blockade—and of economic warfare in general—is something of an illusion, often promoted by decision makers who want to try to minimize the costs of the conflicts that they are proposing.

It would be interesting to develop this theme beyond the naval area into the context of land blockades—that of the Allied powers against Germany and its allies in the two World Wars, or that of the NATO blockade of Serbia in the 1990s. How much less effective were land blockades, in which technology plays less of a role than politics? That story would complement the fascinating analysis already given by Davis and Engerman.

Harold James

Princeton University

This book is a major, pathbreaking piece of scholarship about global migration in recent world history. Building on their earlier work, The Age of Mass Migration: Causes and Economic Impact (New York, 1998), Hatton and Williamson compare global migration in the so-called first era of globalization during the late nineteenth century with global migration today. In addition to being a major scholarly work, the authors seek to apply the insights of history and economics to contemporary debates.

Their arguments are straightforward and backed by solid evidence. Migration, they argue, is the single most effective way to lessen poverty in developing countries. Absent war and political upheaval, it tends to raise the welfare of everyone in the home country. Migrants almost always gain by migrating, but so does the home country through remittances, lower unemployment, and the encouragement to acquire skills. Economic growth in the home country initially increases, rather than decreases, the possible stock of migrants. The truly poor can rarely migrate far. Economic growth enables the poor to travel and usually creates new transportation systems for migrating. Migrants lower wages in host countries and increase inequality. The more skilled the migrant population is, however, the more immigration tends to help the whole economy of the host country.

Globalization does not mean a world without borders. Policies have a huge impact on outcomes. Yet, wages determine where migrants go more than welfare does. Host countries would benefit by enacting policies that select migrants with better skills; thus would they stimulate migration worldwide. Because illegal migrants tend to be unskilled, they often attract hostility and encourage inequality. Unfortunately, because of fears about migration, the level of mass migration needed to lower developing countries’ poverty is unlikely to occur.

Hatton and Williamson maintain that the high cost of transportation and various restrictions inhibited mass migration in the world before the nineteenth century. Hence, migration in the Atlantic world was either coerced or subsidized—via slavery, indenture, contract, government policy, or private expense. The fall in transportation costs, peace, and new laissez-faire government policies opened up the floodgates in Europe (31–49). Even in the early nineteenth century, migration began to feed on itself. Earlier migrants helped to support new ones with funds and information—what the authors call the “friends-and-neighbors effect.” Emigration from Europe did not fall in proportion to rising incomes as the nineteenth century progressed. A persistence effect created by rising incomes allowing new groups among the poor to migrate, the impact of demographic transitions lagging for a generation, and the “friends-and-neighbors” effect meant that migration continued to be high until the early twentieth century.
Using evidence from the United States, the authors argue that pre-1914 immigrants, controlling for their level of skill, literacy, and savings, did extraordinarily well economically by migrating, even though migrants tended to concentrate in the slowest-growing parts of the economy (95–96). Building on their previous work, Hatton and Williamson show that migration was more responsible than any other single factor—such as trade or investment—for the most extensive convergence of living standards in the Atlantic world before 1914, perhaps the most striking case of convergence in world history (105–121).

The success of migration for the migrants, their home countries, and employers in host countries was matched by the negative reaction to migration by workers in the host countries. New World and Oceanic governments acted to protect unskilled voters because their jobs were most threatened by immigrants (175). The rising tide of immigration restrictions, especially in the United States and the British dominions, represented a backlash against globalization. When migration contracted after World War I, all of the workers in these countries saw their real wages rise during the mid-twentieth century. Falling immigration led to falling inequality (193).

Despite the long break in migration history between 1914 and the 1960s and the vast differences between a laissez-faire economy and the modern welfare state, Hatton and Williamson argue for continuity in migration history. “The same fundamentals that drove mass migration in the late nineteenth century also help explain world migration more recently, especially its changing composition by source” (211). Migrants from other countries emerge as the wages in older emigrant countries rise, relative to host countries, and as incomes and transportation links increase enough in new emigrant countries to encourage migration.

Migration, however, may not be able to bring convergence in living standards again. In this context, the authors’ comparisons between the two eras of globalization are especially illuminating. “New World real wages were double those in western Europe in the late nineteenth century, while today, real wages in the OECD are five to ten times those in the Third World” (215). Even with rising incomes in Asia and Latin America, Africa remains a huge source of migrants. Economic growth in Africa would increase its potential migration flows to the industrialized world even more by making the trip more affordable (260–264). Because distance raises migration costs, the United States tends to attract better-educated, skilled migrants from Africa, relative to those left behind there, than it does from Mexico and Central America (319–327).

Hatton and Williamson argue that Asian migration in the nineteenth century, though large, was radically different from European migration. Return migration was much higher; migration did not lead to convergence; and migration declined more for policy reasons than economic ones (145–150). However, Chinese and Indian migration in the nineteenth century is still too clouded to permit any definitive explanation of why it behaved so differently from European migration.
The authors also argue that the decline in migration to the New World in the mid-twentieth century was destined to happen regardless of the circumstances. The natural cycle of industrialization and demographic transition would have lessened the emigration pressure from southern and eastern Europe (199–200). This proposition seems at variance with their own evidence that Latin America, Africa, and Asia were poised to provide migrants to industrialized countries when the caesura of the world wars and depression ended the first global era.

It is odd that a book so replete with data and tables would present nineteenth-century Belgium as a high-wage economy exporting migrants to a low-wage France (55–56). This kind of unexplained anomaly, which differs from what other economists have found, advises caution about some of the underlying data.

Despite these few quibbles, however, Hatton and Williamson have written a superb book, which both historians and economists can use to keep up with the best literature in the field, to find thoughtful answers to major questions, and to mine its scholarship to address current policy debates.

Carl Strikwerda
College of William and Mary


Bubonic plague, often associated in the popular imagination with the fourteenth-century “Black Death,” returned to the news in 2007 when news organizations reported the death of a capuchin monkey held at the Denver Zoo.1 Journalistic accounts of the unfortunate primate’s demise noted that bubonic plague frequently occurs in Colorado among prairie dogs, tree squirrels, and other wild animals. They did not, however, mention the fact that the permanent reservoirs of bubonic plague now found in the Rockies are the lingering legacy of a pandemic that encircled the globe at the end of the nineteenth century. The world-wide impact of that pandemic is the subject of this fine comparative history of bubonic plague.

This book focuses on the initial outbreak of the disease in ten diverse “plague ports” situated on five different continents between 1894 and 1901. These cities are paired roughly by geography but also by the date that plague first appeared: Hong Kong (1894) and Bombay/Mumbai (1896), Alexandria (1899) and Porto (1899), Buenos Aires (1900) and Rio de Janeiro (1900), Honolulu (1899/1900) and San Francisco (1900/1901), and Sydney (1900) and Cape Town (1901). The

history of plague in each of these seaports has already been written by others. Indeed, Echenberg relies heavily on the existing secondary literature to reconstruct the local history of the epidemic in each case. Nonetheless, his is the first monograph that attempts to move beyond national or regional boundaries to provide a history of the modern plague pandemic in transnational perspective.

As the author points out, turn-of-the-century plague was not only global in its effect; it also brought about similar reactions and responses in each of the cities that it touched. Echenberg’s comparative approach, which stresses the commonality of experience during each epidemic—including the control measures established, the social and racial prejudices incited, the resistance attempted by subalterns, the achievements of local and international scientists in unraveling plague’s epidemiological mysteries, and the creation of permanent plague reservoirs in such rural hinterlands as the Rocky Mountains—is thus a significant contribution to the history of the modern pandemic.

Although these comparative themes are threaded throughout each chapter and neatly summarized in the conclusion, the author misses an opportunity to highlight the intersections of power, culture, and science that connected these plague ports within a global web of late nineteenth-century imperialism and industrial capitalism. The commonality of experience in each city’s encounter with bubonic plague was largely a product of the medicine of empire then being exported around the world by a transnational cadre of Western-trained scientific elites. Echenberg provides ample evidence of this process, but he fails to draw analytical conclusions about the interconnectivity of local responses to global plague.

The same investigators and public health officers—William Simpson, James Lowson, L. F. Barker, and others—followed the disease around the world as it made its circuit from one British (or, in the case of Honolulu, American) colonial port to another. Less peripatetic actors in cities not directly controlled by imperial powers invariably received their medical training at one or the other of the premier bacteriology institutes in Europe. Because the men in charge of managing the local epidemics shared certain assumptions about its origins and its epidemiology—that Asians and Africans, for example, were more susceptible to the infection than were Euro-Americans—they tended to utilize similar plague-control measures in each instance. The professional ties that linked the personnel involved and their shared scientific, medical, and political worldview—rooted in late nineteenth-century currents of thought—go a long way toward explaining why, for example, racially based cordon sanitaire were established in many of the cities where plague occurred. Echenberg addresses the theme of racial discrimination in each specific instance where it occurred, but he never pulls these disparate strands together to show the extent to which the globally circulating discourses of Social Darwinism, eugenics, and Orientalism unified the modern world’s response to plague.
Although *Plague Ports* brings together for the first time distinct historical narratives of ten different bubonic plague outbreaks, in the end, the book replicates the national and regional histories that it seeks to replace because it fails to situate these local experiences within the proper global geopolitical and ideological contexts.

Carol Benedict
Georgetown University


Even specialists in intellectual property tend to regard copyright as the dismal step-sister of patent rights. Hence, the more casual reader should view with indulgence this title’s alliterative and swashbuckling claims of its kinship with black flags and buccaneers. Instead, Seville has produced a meticulous and clearly written work that distinguishes itself from its predecessors by its comprehensive scope and depth.

Seville’s monograph does not treat history (or the reading process) as evolution. The four primary sections discuss the Berne Convention, colonial (read Canadian) copyrights, international copyright in the United States, and British domestic laws. Chapter 2 presents a summary of each of these regions, and subsequent chapters elaborate on the same topics; this arrangement leads to repetition and an occasional sense of incoherence.

Chapter 3 highlights the well-known steps that led to the ratification of the Berne Convention. France took the lead in a series of bilateral treaties with its trading partners, and Germany and Britain later played key roles. As in all matters of international copyright, the United States lagged behind other major countries and, indeed, failed to qualify for entry to the Convention until 1988. Britain was not unequivocal, because it realized that Berne would fail to resolve the problems posed by its colonies and the United States.

Chapter 4 outlines the challenges for international copyrights that the reprint book trade in Canada presented. The Canadian account is especially illuminating, because of its status as a British colony that confronted the same economic incentives regarding international copyrights as its American neighbors. The historical narrative concludes in Chapter 6 with a rendering of domestic copyright law in Britain through 1911.

International copyright debates during this era were ensnared in the “American question,” which occupies fully a third of this book. Seville states that American copyright piracy hurt publishers and retarded domestic literature, which begs the question of why legislators supported such strategies for over a century. Congress was not “indifferent” to grants of international copyright (320); it was actively opposed. In Seville’s view, the U.S. reforms of 1891 occurred because “eventually
National self-confidence grew to the point where copyright could be conceded to everyone” (146). It is difficult to imagine that buccaneers of any stripe are motivated by a lack of self-confidence.

Copyright has always comprised a morass of confused case law within a thicket of overly general and outdated statutes. Seville herself characterizes British law as “slow, fragmented and troublesome” (294). It is therefore surprising to find her enthusiastic about the “extraordinary depth, strength and flexibility” of copyright law and its ability to adapt to the digital age (40). Her rationale that “market behaviour and market forces are sufficiently constant that historical parallels can offer valuable precedents” is sound (319). But, alas, because the rest of the book completely ignores market forces, the poetically titled final chapter, “The Colours of Cyberspace,” will likely prove to be the least satisfactory for those who read history to extract lessons that might help to resolve the dilemmas of the twenty-first century.

B. Zorina Khan
Bowdoin College


This contribution to political science tackles a much-neglected but important topic—the interactions between technological and political systems and their consequences for international relations. Herrera chooses to deal with them through two extended case studies, the railroad and nuclear weapons, and he discusses the implications of his findings through the briefer discussion of a third case, the emerging digital information technologies at the end of the twentieth century.

The intellectual context of this work is international systems theory. Herrera prefaces his cases with a useful discussion of basic models for explaining systemic changes in international relations, adding his own account of the basic ways in which scholars talk about technological change. A central point is that theoretical discussions of international relations typically acknowledge the role that technological change can have in altering international systems, but they almost never incorporate an understanding that such change itself takes place within (and is shaped by) social, economic, and political contexts that are themselves aspects of the relations between nations.

Herrera’s two case studies are not, in fact, stitched together very well. The railroad is introduced in general terms as a product of British industrialization, but its origins and initial development are not examined. Most of the discussion is about Germany’s adoption of railroads and the role of the Prussian state—particularly the army—an interesting subject in its own right, and Herrera synthesizes the scholarship on it
well. Much more abbreviated is his discussion of colonial railroads, a subject of substantial interest and complexity. Uppermost in his treatment are the military functions of railroads and the means by which European powers explored them. Although not unreasonable, this focus may not do justice to the subtler but arguably more profound effects on the international system of railroads as instruments of economic and cultural power.

Herrera’s second case study, the development of the atomic bomb, is a much less convincing venue for developing his argument. Much of the study deals with descriptions of the German educational system, the place of physics within that system, and the variety of influences that led to a decline of physics in Germany at the expense of its rise in the United States, particularly in the period from 1920 to 1940. Although this well-known story is certainly worth retelling in the context of international politics, it does not well illustrate the more fundamental linkages between technological and international change. The realignment of power that ensued with the introduction of atomic weapons is a well-worn subject, only briefly summarized by Herrera. The exceptional nature of these weapons makes the case seem less pertinent, rather than more, for supporting his overall case. Finally, the discussion of contemporary information technologies is so cursory and sketchy that the skeptical reader will not find much to support Herrera’s larger case, and the sympathetic reader will probably find little that is original.

Robert Friedel
University of Maryland

526 pp. $80.00 cloth $34.99 paper

Institutions and the Path to the Modern Economy should encourage a healthy dialogue between social scientists and historians. Indeed, Greif’s primary intention in this erudite but dense book is to demonstrate how “historical and social scientific modes of analysis” can be brought together to explain historical change (xiv). The principal thesis of the book is that “institutions are the engine of history” (379). The author draws on both theory and empirical research regarding the expansion of medieval trade between 1050 and 1350 in Europe and the Magrib to explain why European traders after 1350 rose to world economic prominence while their Muslim counterparts fell behind.

Critical of the “institutions-as-rules” approach adopted by many economists, Greif also rejects the view that institutions are shaped by culture, as sociologists sometimes suggest. He argues instead that institutions, which are neither monolithic nor determinate but constantly changing and shifting, are best studied comparatively within the specific historical context of their development and that the differing approaches
that economists and sociologists take toward institutions should be bridged and synthesized. Drawing on the legacy of Durkheim and the perspectives of modern game theory, the author sees institutions as “self-re-enforcing,” “systems of social factors that conjointly generate a regularity of behavior” (151, 30).1 Examining both Genoa and Venice, Greif concludes that European institutions in the later Middle Ages (1050–1350) eliminated the predominant role of tribal and clan associations in economic behavior. In its place, they promoted and encouraged “the cultural beliefs and norms associated with individualism and corporatism” (393). Because such a transcendence of kin-based economic associations never occurred in the Magrib, Muslim traders later fell behind their Western counterparts in the early modern period. Greif’s five-part comparative analysis maintains that the tradition of “individualism and corporatism” embedded in Western institutional culture, not the role of a “centralized state,” was crucial to the West’s economic advantage (388).

Although no one factor can account for the rise of European economic hegemony, and the case studies of Genoa and Venice are certainly not typical of other European cities, Greif’s argument seems plausible and convincing. Yet, historians may find such words as “mechanism,” “system,” or “equilibrium phenomenon”—which recur often in this study—as overly deterministic. Greif seems to have been influenced by Colin Morris’ The Discovery of the Individual, 1050–1200 (London, 1972), but he makes no mention of Jacob Burckhardt’s The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy (New York, 2002; orig. pub. 1860). Greif’s book could have benefited from a review of the counter-arguments in the extensive and critical literature about his particular approach to the origins of modernity. Although his study appropriately draws upon some of the outstanding work of S. A. Epstein, Herlihy, and S. R. Epstein on late medieval Italy, it could also have profited from the influential scholarship of Jones, Muir, and Chittolini (and the later work of Herlihy) that treats the state, family, and economy. Much of that work stresses the ongoing importance of both extensive kinship networks and landed interests in the development of Italian politics and the economy.2

Greif’s comparative approach, and his provocative conclusions regarding the centrality of institutions, are worth serious consideration. Terms like “institution”—which historians often use without much critical reflection—require careful and precise use, with close attention to the theoretical literature associated with them.

George Dameron
Saint Michael’s College


What role did religion play in the fertility decline during the last two centuries? In eleven chapters, scholars from such different disciplines as history, sociology, geography, anthropology, economics, and demography try to provide an answer. The analytical tools are similar throughout the articles. The authors make use of micro-level data on family and family size, and they use comparable statistical methods suited for these kinds of data. Their chapters share a clear theoretical approach. The introduction presents an overview of the research on the fertility decline during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and discusses issues surrounding the European Fertility Project, in which cultural influences were often ignored in favor of different socioeconomic hypotheses and explanations.

In the first chapter, Katherine A. Lynch focuses on different theoretical and analytical approaches to religious beliefs during the first period of fertility transition. Lynch discusses the dichotomy between traditional and modern forms of birth control within marriage. Her results show that families practiced birth control before the modernization process started. The other chapters compare the demographic behavior within and without different religious groups—Catholics, Jews, Muslims, and Protestants—which varied according to historical settings and socioeconomic circumstances.

According to Jona Schellekens and van Poppel in their study of The Hague, Jews were not forerunners in the marital-fertility transition. Calvin Goldschieder’s essay on modern Israel reveals that Jews and Christian Arabs had lower fertility levels than Israeli Muslims. Derosas finds that Jews who lived outside the Venetian ghetto during the mid-nineteenth century adopted birth control, whereas Jews living in the ghetto had higher fertility than the Catholic majority. On the basis of life-course data, Jan Kok and Jan van Bavel show that the reduction of family size first occurred among liberal Protestants in the Netherlands, and a similar pattern is evident in Kevin McQuillon’s study of Alsace.

Ernest Benz challenges the traditional view that orthodox Roman Catholicism was an obstacle to contraception. Using local genealogies,
he concludes that the impact of religion on fertility goes beyond religious doctrines. Anne-Françoise Praz’s study of two cantons in Switzerland indicates that Protestants, because of increasing schooling costs, started to practice birth control and that Catholics avoided educational costs by not letting their daughters attend school. Patricia Thornton and Sherry Olson report that the fertility decline in nineteenth-century Canada differed between Catholics and Protestants, arguing that language and origin must be included in the analysis. Based on nominal data, Danielle Gauvreau shows that Catholics of French origin were less affected by the fertility decline than Catholics of Irish origin. David Kertzer summarizes the preceding chapters. He argues that the role of religion on reproductive behavior and the family contributes new insights to the study of demography.

Tom Ericsson
Umeå University

*Food and Conflict in Europe in the Age of the Two World Wars.* Edited by Frank Trentmann and Flemming Just (London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) 296 pp. $74.95

War and revolution returned large parts of Europe to a “culture of hunger” in the first half of the twentieth century, a culture usually associated with undeveloped, subsistence economies. The editors of this collection are interested in the dynamics of conflict about food. Their intention is to open new perspectives by moving beyond the traditional historical attention to nutrition and state policy and exploring how consumers and civil society influenced policy, consumption, and claims to entitlement, as well as how social groups conceived of food problems and mobilized to make their claims. Competition for access to food, the editors contend, “produced a legacy of new domestic and global visions of solidarity, rights, and cooperation” (10).

The one essay sustaining this argument is Trentmann’s overview of the development of global food networks and the conceptualization of solutions to shortages. He describes the integration of the global food economy during the late nineteenth century, a “historic breakthrough,” via the sharp decline in transport costs. War in 1914 produced a severe shock to this new economy, disrupting international supply networks, imposing widespread rationing, provoking a re-conceptualization of social identity, and challenging state legitimacy in individual countries. Trentmann’s survey is suggestive about the role of provisioning in social solidarity and state legitimacy.

Thierry Bonzon, writing of the French experience from 1914 to 1918, emphasizes the revival of a language of moral economy to demand state controls on food distribution and profit making, highlighting equity of access and affordability and thus a genuinely shared sacrifice in a “new social contract.” Thimo de Nijs details state efforts to control food
distribution in the Netherlands, where public demand for state intervention and cooperative efforts between the state and the retailing sector provided adequate provisions. The outcome, however, was greater polarization. Groups emerged to defend consumers’ interests after the war, and retailers’ associations resisted greater government control.

Trentmann argues that a new community developed after World War I, advocating global solutions to food crises in recognition that global interdependency required the conceptualization of global solutions, probably via global governance. The League of Nations made slight progress. Trentmann claims a reconceptualization of global food policy after 1945, though whether problems and institutions were reconceived or simply recast because of interwar failures and greater wartime distress is not clear.

The remaining essays follow national experience in preparing for and surviving the next war, often with a focus on the very issues of policy and nutrition that the editors had aspired to transcend. Alexander Nützenadel provides a generous, positive reappraisal of Fascist agricultural policy, particularly the battle for wheat, claiming significant accomplishment until 1935 but conceding failure in its medium-term objective of preparing Italy for self-sufficiency in war. Uwe Spiekermann compares German and British efforts to promote the consumption of wholemeal breads. Ralf Futselaar analyzes high Dutch mortality during the war, concluding that although rations supplied sufficient calories to avoid starvation, low meat rations failed to provide the micronutrients necessary for resistance to infectious diseases. Mark B. Trauger sifts through Joseph Stalin’s published views on the peasantry and agriculture to argue for Stalin’s sympathy for Soviet peasants, and the rationality of Soviet collectivization as a means to modernize agriculture. Some traditional policy analysis looking at the timing and nature of actual collectivization and its results would have been helpful in an essay remarkably detached from the appalling methods and impact of collectivization. Mogens R. Nissen’s study of policy in Denmark provides helpful contrast to European experience with German policy elsewhere. The use of price incentives rather than controls and coercion yielded higher output and fewer market distortions.

The contributors to the volume who explore the important role of consumers and the demands made by civil society present results that advance the editors’ agenda. In addition to the Bonzon and de Nijs essays already mentioned, Mark Roodhouse examines the ways in which participants in Britain’s black market rationalized their activities as compensation for personal sacrifices, thereby making them compatible with the “fair shares” justification for British rationing. He also offers interesting comment on the intensity of black-market activity in Britain and the unreliability of statistical evidence for understanding consumer behavior.

Although uneven in quality and in the degree to which they conform to the program set by the editors, these essays make a compelling case for closer attention to the social and political dimensions of conflict.
about food. The importance of food-supply management to social cohe-
sion, marketplace behavior, and state legitimacy is clear. Hence, it would
have been interesting to see essays covering the handling of food crises in
other countries: Germany during World War I; Spain during its civil
war; France, Belgium, Germany, and Eastern Europe during World
War II; and the Soviet Union during the revolution in 1917, during
World War I, and during and after World War II.

Kenneth Mouré
University of California, Santa Barbara

North-East England, 1569–1625: Governance, Culture and Identity. By Diana
Newton (Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2006) 214 pp. $85.00

Northeast England, the modern region comprising the historic counties
of Northumberland and Durham and the city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne,
is commonly regarded as having a peculiarly strong regional identity.
Accordingly, it was the first English region to be granted (November
2004) a referendum on the establishment of a regional assembly with de-
volved powers. In this pithy study, Newton examines the historical an-
tecedents of that assumed identity, focusing on the elites of the area—the
county gentry, the higher clergy of the diocese of Durham, and the lead-
ing citizens of Newcastle—and upon the generations on either side of a
pivotal event, the regnal union of England and Scotland in 1603.

The strong thematic coherence of the book is established with an
opening discussion of the theory and historiography of local and regional
identity, emphasizing the complex relationships between physical geog-
raphy, social space, and symbolic boundaries. Thereafter, in a series of
chapters combining the growing secondary literature with extensive
original research, Newton explores the size and composition of the
northeast’s elites; marital endogamy; landholding; the structure and dy-
namics of local government, with particular reference to the problems of
border administration; the allegedly “uncivil” nature of the area; elite
sociability and education; religious allegiances; and the forms of cultural
identity fostered by the cult of St. Cuthbert, the border ballad tradition,
and the growth of antiquarian study of the region’s past.

Newton covers all of this material deftly and economically, and her
conclusions emerge strongly. In the perceptions of both its inhabitants
and of a nervous central government, the northeast was part of a generic
“north,” posing particular problems of governance, and its local rulers
were happy to play on that reputation when it suited them. But it was
neither backward nor “uncivil.” Its elites engaged with one another as
neighbors but were not especially tightly bound by regional, as distinct
from county, ties. They perceived themselves as part of a larger national
elite, albeit conscious of deriving their place from their position in the
social and political structures of particular areas and concerned to consol-
idate that standing. Their political activity was focused on their county, city, or the border marches, rather than the region as such. They were not notably conservative in religion, and neither the Catholic recusant nor radical Protestant minorities formed homogeneous groupings. Cultural traditions and historical awareness were subregional in nature rather than elements of an enduring, or emergent, regional consciousness.

Notwithstanding a few quibbles, Newton provides a persuasive argument that the northeast at this date is best envisaged as a “mosaic of sub-regions” (65). Its larger regional identity was a later creation, albeit stirring already in the precocious industrial development of Tyneside and the growing economic power of Newcastle. But, as she argues, “people adopt or embrace different identities, at different times, for different purposes” (6); identities are “multi-layered and shifting” (8). This study of a period before the “North East” as we know (or think we know) it existed, raises the questions of how far the dominant image of the modern region ever displaced the many subregional and, indeed, supraregional loyalties and identities that Newton detects among its Elizabethan and Jacobean elites, and indeed how long that image will endure. In 2004 the regional electorate voted overwhelmingly against the creation of a regional assembly.

Keith Wrightson
Yale University


*Cabinets for the Curious* discusses the role of objects in the making of knowledge, primarily in seventeenth-century England, while also exploring what early modern collecting practices have to offer contemporary museology. Arnold identifies three traditions that governed English museums in the later 1600s—the narrative, the functional, and the taxonomic. Connoisseurs enmeshed their objects in webs of tale telling and anecdote; curiosity collectors were drawn to exotic tools through their interest in crafts, trades, and materials; and naturalists strove to make philosophical order out of seemingly desultory accumulations. Central is the familiar program of Baconian natural history, which entailed gathering empirical information, specimens, and objects into repositories (often specifically through the creation of museums) for reforming natural knowledge.

Arnold discusses Tradescant’s Ark, the founding of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, the Repository of the Royal Society, numismatics and historical evidence, and ethnographic and medicinal collections. Such projects, he argues, produced an “energized bond between words and things” (53), animated by the desire to transform knowledge from a
cavalcade of surprising wonders into a disciplined order of useful facts. The final chapters examine early modern museums both as memory theaters and as sites for constructing universal taxonomies of natural kinds and a truly natural language. Although Swift later satirized those who sought to replace ambiguous words with a language using only objects, Arnold shows how this ideal was indeed inspirational yet frustrating for post-Restoration naturalists.1

Interspersed with these historical chapters are broad-ranging discussions of contemporary museological issues raised by looking at the seventeenth century. Many important issues are broached: the ubiquitous relation between words and objects, the emergence of souvenirs as commercial memory triggers, the rise and fall of functionalism in anthropological museums, and the recurrent role of wonder as the controversial yet seemingly quintessential museum experience. Arnold quotes and discusses many theorists at length, including Pomian, Foucault, and Baudrillard.2 The result is a valuable and stimulating survey of important theories of collecting, based on extensive knowledge and understanding, and a judicious primer in ongoing debates about current museology.

These chapters, however, are not fully integrated with Arnold’s historical survey of the seventeenth century to form a coherent whole. Arnold has more to say about Boas’ ideas about arranging anthropological objects than about the ideas of any early modern collector.3 Moreover, the issue of context is problematical throughout the book; Arnold’s tight focus on museum science neglects broader social, cultural, and political relationships. For example, the information that a Mr. Crispe donated a Gambian ivory horn to the Royal Society’s Repository in 1676 raises a series of fascinating questions about what both enabled and motivated such exchanges. Without more fully engaging the historiographies of the public sphere, consumerism, commerce, and colonialism, however, Arnold cannot make a larger argument about what the movement and manipulation of such objects meant in the early modern period.

Finally, Arnold echoes recent calls for museums to return to the “refined sense of wonder” that he finds in the seventeenth century—not the theatrical bafflement that fosters otherness but an experience of curious surprise that seeks illumination (257). But do Arnold’s early museum builders provide such a good model for this return? Arnold is impas-

1 Jonathan Swift, Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World, in Four Parts, By Lemuel Gulliver (London, 1726).
sioned and persuasive in discussing objects’ capacity to inspire complex thoughts and emotions in those who visit museums. Think of Marcel Proust’s *petite madeleine* in *Swann’s Way* (Paris, 1912) as an obscure object of intense desire, pregnant with enormous powers of sentimental cognition. Then contrast it with the seventeenth-century project that Arnold himself describes—that of more tight-lipped taxonomists trying to place objects under utilitarian and profitable control rather than to release their various personal meanings. Arnold’s account suggests that whereas early modern England’s museological *zeitgeist* often expressed itself as anxiety about oddity and multiplicity, we now often recast this anxiety as desire, through the filter of a romantic postmodernism that yearns for a wonder now lost.

James Delbourgo  
McGill University

*British Weather and the Climate of Enlightenment.* By Jan Golinski (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2007) 284 pp. $35.00

In this engagingly written book, Golinski’s subject is the widespread attention that the weather received during the Enlightenment in private conversation, diaries, public philosophical discourse, international correspondence, and instrumentation. In Britain, the weather was an ever-present topic of conversation both because of its changeability and because of the view that however variable, Britain’s temperate climes reflected, even influenced, the country’s largely equable political and economic climate. However understood, either as the focus of systematic study or as a topic consistently evoked in historical and geographical discussion, the weather “was recognized as a material influence on human health and welfare that significantly affected the development of the world’s peoples” (xiii). Nonetheless, given its extremes and its unpredictability, the weather refused to succumb to the Enlightenment’s bias for rationality and utility.

This book should interest scholars in several different fields. Golinski apprises social and cultural historians, particularly, of the connections between weather, climate, social well-being, and bodily deportment in eighteenth-century Britain. His attention to an anonymous diarist’s account of the Great Storm of 1703 will appeal to literary scholars interested in epistolary conventions. His account of how practitioners cultivated a formal language for correspondence about, and the scientific recording of, the weather—a rhetoric of precision, in thermometry and barometry especially—will prove instructive to historical meteorologists.

Historians of science and of technology will benefit from Golinski’s engagement with the social context of instrumentation. In this regard, a useful companion volume would be Hasok Chang’s discussion of the social and institutional history of chemical thermometry in Enlightenment

Most significantly, Golinski supplements that now more commonplace view of Enlightenment history not as the preserve of urbane *philosophes* debating among themselves but as a social history of lived experiences and quotidian practices. Precisely because of this excellent study of weather and of climate in the Enlightenment, the forecast for Enlightenment studies in general is now brighter.

Charles W. J. Withers
University of Edinburgh

*At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World.* Edited by Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2006) 338 pp. $75.00 cloth $29.99 paper

One aspect of the “new imperial history” has been an emphasis on reciprocal relationships between Britain and its overseas empire—on seeing colonies as major contributors to changes in British culture and society, not just recipients of British influences. Some historians of empire have disparaged this tendency, citing evidence that the preponderance of influence flowed outward from the metropole. Either way, the issue reflects the peculiar “balance of empire” formulation of interpretive questions that for many years dominated imperial historiography and that derived mainly from ideological debates about colonialism.

The book under review is a fascinating, somewhat disorderly, but largely successful contribution to an effort not only to argue for reciprocal influence but also to change radically the terms in which the colonial relationship is understood. Its primary objective is the partial dissolution of the conceptual boundary between “home” and “empire” on which most interpretations of modern colonialism have depended. It explores a wide range of ways in which colonial elements were embedded in British domestic contexts between the late eighteenth and late twentieth centuries.

The contributions are many and varied. Some of them deal with the construction of the categorical distinction between colony and metropole. Hall’s essay shows Thomas Babington Macaulay at work on it in his *History of England* (London, 1848), although the discussion is incomplete because it does not cover Macaulay’s close involvement with India and with colonial issues generally. Hall’s forthcoming book may have more to say on the subject.
Several contributions—those of Laura Tabili, Philippa Levine, and Cora Kaplan—explicitly connect the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to contemporary Britain with regard to the involvement of immigrants in the constitution of “home.” Among other things, they complicate in interesting ways the distinction between “colonial” and “postcolonial.”

Feminist perspectives are found in most chapters. Clare Midgely, for example, gives an interpretive overview of women’s imperial activism. Midgely’s citations, like those of several other contributors, provide a catalog of the impressively large amount of work that has been published recently on topics related to the theme of the book.

Politics is not neglected. Chapters by Antoinette Burton and Keith McClelland and Rose propose significant revisions to standard narratives of British politics and the formation of the concept of British citizenship. Susan Thorne points out the fallacy of representing religion and politics as separate, usually competing, factors in British colonialism. Although contributors occasionally make reference to parallel studies of colonial history in other countries, the book as a whole would have been even more useful if they had been asked to do so on a systematic basis.

All of the contributions are, in one sense or another, interdisciplinary. In fact, so interdisciplinary has the kind of research manifested in this book become that its interdisciplinarity does not stand out; it is simply taken for granted. Several of the authors overtly challenge the boundaries even of interdisciplinary fields (as Thorne does with regard to religious studies.) Kaplan is the only contributor who discusses interdisciplinary issues and methodologies at any length. She makes a convincing argument that historians using literary sources should acquaint themselves with, as well as employ, the methods of literary criticism (a theme, perhaps, for a future issue of this journal?).

Woodruff D. Smith  
University of Massachusetts, Boston

Poison Detection and the Victorian Imagination. By Ian Burney (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2006) 193 pp. $59.00

The ordinary reader’s pulse is unlikely to be set racing by a history of the emergence of nineteenth-century toxicology, but in this slim, well-written, and well-researched study, Burney has produced a page-turner. He shrewdly hangs his account of the scientific detection of poisons on the infamous murder trial of William Palmer, thereby opening his study to a variety of fascinating topics that should interest many students of Victorian culture.

Building on his earlier work on the English inquest, Burney surveys the range of cultural preoccupations of the 1830s, 1840s and 1850s that framed the discussion of poisonings. He is particularly interested in the
ways in which toxicologists sought to establish their professional credibility. Accordingly, he provides an insightful account of the scientific challenges that they faced. At the same time, Burney demonstrates that in courtrooms, scientific facts and legal fictions were not easily demarcated. Scientific tests were themselves theatrical.

In essence, this book is a chronicling of the attempts made to tame and discipline poisons. Those who made such efforts included both medical scientists, such as Robert Christison and Alfred Swaine Taylor, and novelists such as Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins. Inspired by Welsh’s work on circumstantial evidence, Burney skillfully uses poison trials to recast our notions of Victorian discussions of proof and evidence. Moreover, he traces the host of social anxieties that the public’s discussion of poisons exposed. Such worries related to contemporary evidence of both brutishness—burial clubs and misogyny—and over-civilization—secrecy, gambling, and life insurance, to name only a few. Like many fine microhistories, Burney’s engaging study reveals how, in the right hands, apparently arcane and unpromising material can be exploited to cast a fresh light on the past.

There is no shortage of studies of famous nineteenth-century murders, but this book is unique; it has no obvious competitors. As noted above, Burney’s book is indebted to the earlier work of Welsh on circumstantial evidence, but Welsh is primarily interested in literature. Walkowitz and Hartman’s investigation of murder stories deal largely with gender, highlighting the one key theme that Burney curiously slights. His book jacket nevertheless boasts Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s beautiful portrayal of Lucrezia Borgia.

This brief original study should appeal to students of history, history of medicine, history of science, law, English, and Victorian studies. It is well organized, clearly written, and jargon free.

Angus McLaren
University of Victoria


States of Inquiry is an analysis of the roles of authorized state investigations and print culture during the growth period of two nations with representative forms of government. Frankel’s effort examines the official so-

1 Alexander Welsh, Strong Representations: Narrative and Circumstantial Evidence in England (Baltimore, 1995).
cial inquiries and scientific explorations financed by the British and American governments of that time. He discusses the forces that drove the investigations; the processes of collecting, publishing, and distributing this information; and how the information, once in the public sphere, engaged positive and negative political discourse between the government and its citizens or subjects. Frankel coins the term “print statism” to describe “this field of communication between the state and its constituencies” (2).

Although the British investigations into child labor, poverty, and factory and mining work seem slightly disparate from the American reports of the explorer John Fremont, the investigations of southern slavery and freedmen, and two early ethnological studies of the Iroquois Indians, Frankel blends each example into an insightful narrative. He analyzes how and why the inquiries were authorized by their respective governments to bring to light hidden or unknown aspects of society, science, or geography through the publication of their findings. These official reports were published, sometimes in huge quantities, and re-published in the private sector to be distributed widely among legislators, colleges, libraries, and the electorate.

Frankel writes a keen analysis of the many facets of print statism. The work is divided into three parts. Part I studies the role of print culture in the government, the enormous expense and time utilized to create the reports generated by the inquiries, the politics of favoritism, the reporting authors’ internal conflicts with government and competing authors, and the state’s role as a publisher of large, sometimes elegant, volumes. Part II looks at social investigations (several British investigations and the American Freedmen’s Inquiry), revealing why they were initiated, how they were structured, and the reactions from both the government and the subjects of the inquiry. Frankel notes that these investigations expanded the electorate of both nations beyond the mere right to vote by giving voice to the dis-enfranchised—women, children, the poor, and minorities. Part III is an interesting study of Henry Schoolcraft’s and Lewis Henry Morgan’s different approaches to compiling ethnographic material about American Indians, focusing primarily on their research about the Iroquois. It examines the government’s role in supporting the projects; how the information was accumulated, presented, and validated; the degree of Indian complicity in the gathering of information; and the role of these inquiries in the government’s removal policy.

States of Inquiry is based on the meticulous examination of many official reports from both nations, archival research of private and official correspondence, and government documents. Frankel also draws upon the current debates about knowledge, print culture, and the state, referencing those studies frequently. He briefly refers to similar investigations in other Western countries, but a more thorough discussion of these examples would have been useful. Nonetheless, Frankel’s work is a
significant contribution to the understanding of the evolution of two representative governments and their societies during the nineteenth century.

Robert Mullen
Missouri Historical Society


How did Charles Darwin present his theory of natural selection visually? Why did he use the images that he did? These are not the usual questions about Darwin, whose masterwork, The Origin of Species (1859), contains only a single illustration. But for Smith, this very lack of visual content in The Origin becomes a point of departure for understanding the contested role of the image in nineteenth-century scientific debate, and, more broadly, for assessing how such imagery resonated in the wider culture.

Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture is a rich, compelling study that reflects a growing interest across disciplines in the imagery of science. In recent decades, Rudwick and others have addressed the visual component of scientific writing, and in art history and cultural studies, science illustration has begun to receive attention as an important part of an era’s visual culture. Smith’s book is a major contribution to this growing sub-field, not just for its subject but for its approach to the imagery. Science illustration is too often treated as background, Smith argues, as merely illustrative of the theory; he aims to rescue science illustration from this ancillary status, seeing the visual as a place of content rather than just a “re-packaging” of “textual statements” (34). The book is much concerned with the relationship of the visual to the textual, and the way that words and images function together to produce meaning.

 Appropriately, Smith’s focus is not the Origin but rather those of Darwin’s writings that rely heavily on illustration: his Monograph (a massive two-part study on barnacles published 1851–1854), his botanical books, and The Expression of the Emotions (1871), for example. The chapters are arranged according to the different lifeforms that Darwin investigated throughout his career: barnacles, birds, plants, faces, and worms. Smith describes how these lifeforms were key to Darwin’s articulation of his theories before turning to a discussion of Darwin’s struggle with the imagery. How, he asks, could Darwin begin to illustrate a theory for which no visual language existed?

Importantly, in answering this question, Smith does not treat Darwin’s imagery in isolation but as part of a larger, complex visual network comprised of cartoons, exhibitions, photography, fine art, and natural-
his primary interest is Darwin’s negotiation of this enormous semiotic network, his skillful tweaking of conventions—particularly those of science illustration, which came loaded with pre-existing meanings. Darwin’s illustrations do not descend like an avalanche crushing everything in its wake, suddenly and entirely transforming the imagery of science; they are much more subtle, the product of the rigid systems within which Darwin was working.

Smith shifts lenses frequently within each chapter, moving from the narrowly scientific meanings of various illustrations to their broader resonances within the wider culture. He approaches science illustrations as saturated with culturally bound notions, particularly about gender and sexuality. One fascinating chapter reveals what is at stake, culturally, when Darwin illustrates the sexual anatomy of barnacles; another, on Darwin’s bird illustrations, deconstructs the relationship between images of male plumage display and Victorian sexual politics.

Smith’s attempt to measure Darwin’s effect on Victorian visual culture is slightly uneven. In some chapters, painting has either absorbed or rejected Darwinian ideas; in others, aesthetic theory (he looks closely at the writings of John Ruskin) or caricatures of Darwin himself. Taken individually, these analyses have much to offer—the discussions of Ruskin in particular—but as a whole, they are too incongruent to form an overall picture of Darwin’s influence on Victorian visual culture and tend to dilute Smith’s argument. In the end, the strength of Smith’s book lies not in its discussion of Darwin’s effect on visual culture, but in its careful examination of Darwin’s place in visual culture—how he negotiated the realm of the image during an explosively visual nineteenth century.

Martha Lucy
The Barnes Foundation

Birth Control, Sex, and Marriage in Great Britain, 1918–1960. By Kate Fisher (New York, Oxford University Press, 2006) 304 pp. $90.00

The paper wrapper for this monograph effectively anticipates its challenging argument. A Welsh miner and his adolescent son, covered in coal dust after a shift in the mine, hold two dimpled infants, who appear to be healthy and well nurtured. No mother is visible in this picture. Fisher mounts a convincing case that male agency needs to be restored to our narratives of family formation and fertility decline. Her version of the demographic transition, based upon lengthy interviews with 193 mostly working-class men and women from South Wales, Oxford, Hertfordshire, and Blackburn, who married in the mid- to late 1930s, depicts husbands securely in charge of sexual decision making.

Wives expected and welcomed male assumption of responsibility for initiating contraceptive practice because men had become more at ease in dealing with sexuality and had greater access to information, and women “preferred birth control methods which did not place them
in the position of having to negotiate, anticipate, or prepare for sexual activity” (12). Fisher’s subjects sometimes experimented with the “modern” methods of contraception that were recommended in birth-control clinics and publicized by the feminist leaders of the birth-control movement, but they generally preferred withdrawal and condoms to female-controlled occlusive methods. In their experience, the old methods worked as well as the newer ones, but husbands and wives agreed that they could not and should not expect to control precisely the number and timing of pregnancies. Their contraceptive practice, reinforced by sexual repression and abortion, worked well enough to limit family size, and their use of withdrawal and condoms preserved their expectations concerning appropriate gender roles and the essential contingency of human existence.

Fisher’s fresh look at the British fertility decline challenges major trends in social history. First, her “qualitative” approach rejects the case for random samples that has been persistently raised by generations of social scientists since the publication of Alfred Kinsey’s *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (Philadelphia, 1948). Like Kinsey, Fisher has enormous confidence in the value of face-to-face conversations about sexual experience with subjects recruited opportunistically. She is meticulous in her description of the construction of her data, and her conclusions fit well with the recent “ethnographic turn” in historical demography, which reveals similar patterns of fertility control and gender expectations in other European populations.¹ In Fisher’s hands, 193 loosely structured interviews yield rich insights that challenge the reigning narratives about modernity, social change, and fertility decline. Her work strengthens the case for the ethnographic approach and exposes the limits of what we learn from serial data and rigorous quantitative methods.

Second, Fisher’s descriptions of working-class men who took pride in assuming the burden of contraceptive practice runs counter to the prominent feminist animus in social history since the 1970s, which sought and found female initiative, as well as male sexual exploitation of women. Fisher’s male subjects were critical of men who did not consider the needs and feelings of their wives. Her female informants assumed that most men knew their duty and generally behaved well in the marriage bed, although a few insensitive men served as a negative reference against whom their own spouses were favorably measured. Fisher’s working-class voices challenge us to refine our histories of demographic transition and marital politics. Fisher’s book deserves to be widely read.

James W. Reed
Rutgers University

This book presents a well-documented but selective account of how a succession of French governments from the late Ancien Régime (1780s) to the Bourbon Restoration (1815–1830) attempted to promote domestic industry. Although the book contains some discussion of iron, steel, and the arms industry, its focus is mainly on the textile industry and how it was affected by the vicissitudes of trade policy and by the battles over control of workers and the workplace.

Horn consistently argues that France’s path to industrialization differed from Britain’s, but exactly how it differed seems to change as the book progresses. At the outset, Horn strongly endorses O’Brien and Keyder’s thesis that the key difference between the two lay in France’s commitment to small-scale artisanal production. But later Horn concedes (rightly) that by the 1830s large-scale mechanized production had become the order of the day in France as well as in Britain (at least in textiles), leaving the book to focus on how events from 1789 to 1815 delayed, but did not prevent, France following Britain’s lead. Hence, “the path not taken” refers not so much to a different kind of industrialization as to a different institutional framework for industrialization. Indeed, Horn’s signal contribution is to show how, amid the upheavals of the Revolution and Napoleonic Empire, the French worked out a unique blend of laissez-faire and statist policies to promote industrialization. Horn dubs this blend “Chaptalian” for the role that Jean-Antoine Chaptal, Napoleon’s minister of the interior from 1800 to 1804, played in formulating it.

The most original and controversial sections of the book deal with the role of labor militancy in determining industrial policy in France. Horn provocatively argues that the main reason that France did not adopt the “liberal” industrial policies of the British was the power of French workers and the fear of worker revolt in the aftermath of the Revolution. Apparently, British industrialists could count on the “weak” British state to keep workers in their place, but French industrialists could not similarly count on the “strong” French state. Not everyone will find this explanation convincing.

Methodologically, this is very much a historian’s book. In addition to a wide range of secondary sources, Horn draws heavily on materials in various French archives, especially reports and memoranda by government officials. The emphasis throughout is on qualitative rather than quantitative evidence. Although the metaphor of a path of development is at the heart of the book, Horn makes little explicit reference to, or discussion of, path-dependency theory. Theoretically and quantitatively oriented economic historians may find this absence troubling. However,
the exposition is clear and free of social-science jargon. In the end, the book makes a positive contribution to the comparative study of French and British industrialization. It will serve, in the words of the liner notes, to “stir debate among historians, economists, and political scientists.”

Michael S. Smith
University of South Carolina


Schweber examines the history of “discipline” formation for what became the fields of vital statistics and demography in the mid-nineteenth century in Britain and France. She organizes the book as a comparison of the processes in the two countries, using that counterpoint to illustrate the similarities and differences between the two nations. Her work adds to a growing body of literature about the origins of the new social sciences in the nineteenth century, and their relationship to other sciences, the state, and public-policy formation.

“Statistics” is a remarkably slippery discipline to examine historically since the boundaries of the field reach from mathematics and astronomy to accounting, social welfare, and public policy. Moreover, like the emergence of other social and natural sciences in the nineteenth century, the development of the field or fields took place in many countries, involving many different languages, educational systems, and forms of scientific organization. Schweber’s close reading and analysis of the British and French cases therefore is a significant contribution to the histories of the two nations, to the history of the social sciences, and to the study of knowledge formation in general.

The work is a closely argued, careful, and detailed reading of the organizational forms, intellectual debates, and scientific practices created by the men who defined, literally named, and built the new population sciences. As Schweber notes, what looks at first blush to be similar processes in the two nations are actually remarkably different trajectories of development. To pick just one thread of her argument, although the British state was fundamentally stable and prosperous at the time because of rapid industrialization, Victorian society was confronting horrific problems of poverty. Vital statistics was about “public health”; the debates and institutions focused on developing and deploying data and methods to deal with infant mortality, cholera epidemics, and class differences in living standards. In France, the July Monarchy gave way to the 1848 Revolutions and the Second Republic, the Second Empire, the Franco Prussian War and the Commune, and the Third Republic. Within this political turmoil, demography was concerned with how to conceptualize a “population”—as a “body,” an aggregation of individual parts, or something in between—and how to understand the problem
of “depopulation” and the health of the nation. Nor surprisingly, the “disciplines” of “statistics” acquired different understandings and organizations in the two nations.

Schweber has a good deal to say about the literature about discipline formation, boundary work, and the history of statistics more generally. She provides careful reviews and analysis of the relevant secondary literature, acknowledging her debts to Hacking, Porter, Desrosieres, and Stigler, to name just a few of her predecessors, while also trying to clarify and sharpen a perspective on discipline formation and the history of science. Finally, she uses the nine meetings of the International Statistical Congress between 1853 and 1886 and the emergence of the International Statistical Institute (in 1886) to examine how vital statisticians and demographers in the two nations, along with “statisticians” from other fields and other nations, confronted the construction of a unified international “discipline.” That very worthy and difficult enterprise continues, and so do the debates that Schweber chronicles.

Margo J. Anderson
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

Beyond Papillon: The French Overseas Penal Colonies, 1852–1954. By Stephen A. Toth (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2006) 212 pp. $35.00

France established its first durable penal colony in 1854, just as Britain was preparing to abandon its own experiment with overseas transportation of convicts. The British experience provoked Robert Hughes’s best-selling volume, The Fatal Shore: The Epic of Australia’s Founding (New York, 1986). The prison colonies in French Guiana and New Caledonia may have inspired a few shocking tales, such as the romanticized novel mentioned in Toth’s title (but not discussed in his text), but their story hardly merits the appellation “epic.” Indeed, the question that remains at the end of Toth’s work is exactly what his confusing conflation of institutional, medical, and cultural history reveals. Toth himself asks, “Does the history of the bagne lie beyond our intelligibility?” The answer suggested by his book is inconclusive (151).

Ignoring the French Directory’s shipment of political prisoners to French Guiana during the 1790s, Toth starts his study with the establish-

ment of a penal colony for common-law criminals there in 1854; deportations to New Caledonia began in 1864. As in the case of the British settlement at Botany Bay, overseas penal colonies were envisaged as a humane alternative to the death penalty and a mechanism for regenerating criminals by transplanting them from a corrupting urban environment to a natural setting where they could both redeem themselves through agricultural labor and contribute to national strength by creating prosperous French settlements. French penologists envisaged something like Foucault’s panoptical institution, wherein the prisoners were continuously under the surveillance of inflexible and determined guardians.¹ The reality was something else, although Toth finds it hard to capture it precisely. Prisoner mortality was so high during the early years of the French Guianese establishment that deportation was virtually a death sentence; in 1867, the government decided to send prisoners only to the healthier environment of the Pacific (Toth does not say when this decision was reversed).

In response to alternating surges in domestic public opinion, prisoners were sometimes treated with horrifying brutality, giving rise to scandals that led to efforts to make conditions more humane but also threatened to undermine discipline. By the 1880s, when the notion that criminality had a genetic basis took hold, hope of rehabilitating the prisoners had largely been abandoned. In any event, the underpaid and poorly trained guards were never able to exert effective control over the inmates, who developed their own “pervasive culture of prisoner resistance” marked by defiant tattoos, gambling, violence, and rampant homosexuality (58). Prison doctors tried to improve health conditions by applying new findings about tropical diseases gained after the 1880s, but they faced stubborn resistance from penal administrators; living conditions in the bagnes did not improve significantly until the 1930s.

Periodic journalistic exposés affected France’s image around the world, but often had little to do with reality. The remote penal colonies occasionally occupied a large place in French debates, but the number of prisoners was always small (Toth does not give comprehensive statistics, but he estimates that 100,000 convicts were deported over the century of the colonies’ existence). The penal colonies’ existence exposed certain contradictions in the Third Republic’s ostensibly democratic and progressive project, but Toth ends without explaining what they tell us about the larger French society of their day.

Jeremy D. Popkin
University of Kentucky

MacCormack provides a stunning and imaginative reconstruction of the way in which sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish and Peruvian historians perceived the history of the Inca world. She also shows how these historians assimilated Inca history to that of Europe, and how their work eventually shaped the Peruvian sense of national identity.

The key to MacCormack’s study is Rowe’s observation that the Renaissance revival of classical Roman learning paradoxically made the Roman world “infinitely more distant and harder to understand than it had been previously” (12). As the past could no longer be assumed to be like the present, the new learning led to the development of a new way of approaching it—the past as Other. Spanish writers were then able to apply the same analytical techniques to the history of the Inca people, the contemporary Other, relating it to the Roman imperial world and, ultimately, to the Christian providential conception of history. The Spanish saw the Inca Empire playing a historical role similar to that of the Roman and Spanish empires. As the Romans had civilized the peoples of their world and paved the way for Christianity, so did the Inca exert a civilizing influence in the Americas, preparing the way for the Gospel brought by the Spanish Empire.

The core of the book is an analysis of the historical works that the conquest of Peru generated—for example, by the Spaniards Oviedo, Cieza, and Zárate and by the Incan scholar Garcilaso de la Vega. All of these writers shared a common intellectual perspective shaped by the study of the now-distant Roman world and by the Christian notion of providential history. One important consequence of employing a Roman historical framework is that it provided a basis for criticizing the activities of the Spaniards in the Americas to the extent that they resembled the evils committed by the Romans in their imperial expansion. At the same time, the Spaniards could also admire the positive qualities of the Incas as they admired the positive qualities of the pagan Romans.

Finally, MacCormack demonstrates that any attempt to create a history of Inca Peru free of Spanish intellectual influences is doomed to fail. The only available materials about that world came through the Roman-Christian lens, because there is “no such thing as an uncontaminated Andean text” (xvi).

Secrets of Women is a fascinating interdisciplinary study of men’s efforts in Italy to unravel women’s secrets by learning about female anatomy, sexuality, and fertility through the lens of human dissection. The book furthers our understanding of a wide range of developments from the mid-thirteenth through the mid-sixteenth centuries, including religious culture, anatomy and women’s health, notions of family and kinship, and visual representation.

Park develops the theme of unlocking secrets through a series of highly interesting case studies of women whose bodies underwent post-mortem dissection. Among the deceased subjects opened for viewing were a criminal who received the death penalty, an abbess, a lactating virgin, and a number of patrician wives and mothers who expired as a consequence of child birth. In the first chapter, medieval clergy tracking holy women for sanctity sought and found sacred relics in their prospective candidates’ cadavers, including stones impressed with images of the holy family and the holy spirit, and a heart where Christ had planted his cross. The clerics understood the body as a place to authenticate internal signs of sanctity. In following their quest, Park debunks the historiographical myth that medieval religious taboos effectively repressed the practice of human dissection.

The second chapter examines how learned physicians writing public anatomical discourse attempted to understand the secrets of human generation. Whereas childbirth was almost exclusively the domain of women—especially midwives—obstetrics and gynecology were male spheres of knowledge, increasingly developed through exploration of the uterus. Again, Park adjusts prevalent historiographical theses that situated male participation in women’s gynecological health several centuries later in history.

The third chapter finds bereaving patrician husbands whose wives had undergone multiple pregnancies engaging physicians to solve the mysteries of death from childbirth. Park sheds light on contemporary values regarding kinship and lineage, and she reconstructs the ideal templates of mother and wife. Family patriarchs saw themselves as the creators of lineages, and they ascribed their wives’ responsibility for the birth and nurturance of their heirs. The nature of the uterus was critical to this process; it determined the bodily shape of the fetus as well as its disposition.

The last two chapters contrast sixteenth-century developments with the preceding period. The century witnessed important transformations in both the medical and ecclesiastical spheres. Physicians acquired greater authority as the fields of natural philosophy and medicine claimed higher stature in the universities. The professionalization of anatomical study challenged earlier notions of sanctity as evidenced through stigmata, lactation, or the internal generation of holy objects. Moreover,
holy anatomy was no longer associated exclusively with women but also with male bodies. These changes in medical opinion blended well with the evolving attitudes of the clergy, who were becoming increasingly suspicious of visionary women. The book concludes with Vesalius, the renowned natural philosopher, revealing his own professional aims to increase his reputation as the founder of a reformed anatomy. Vesalius courted the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V in hopes of becoming an imperial physician. His attempt to win imperial patronage thus served as a catalyst for scientific change.

Park draws on a variety of sources to substantiate her conclusions, including not only prescriptive and medical writings but also a substantial body of wood cuts, bas reliefs, and paintings, which she analyzes with professional acumen. She concludes that representations of the self were increasingly expressed in anatomical terms throughout the sixteenth century, as vernacular treatises on health and the body multiplied. This process of viewing the self through the body had begun centuries before with the desire to know about women’s internal anatomy in general and the uterus in particular. Park’s book will be fascinating reading for historians of science and medicine, religious culture, and gender and the body.

Joanne M. Ferraro
San Diego State University

At the Centre of the Old World: Trade and Manufacturing in Venice and the Venetian Mainland, 1400–1800. Edited by Paola Lanaro (Toronto, Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies, 2006) 412 pp. $32.00

This collection of essays seeks to “disprove old historiographic myths and open new comparative vistas” (21). The main myth is the long-debated decline of Venice as an international trading and naval power of the first rank. This problem has become entangled with other areas of research. Venice was a rich state in northeastern Italy, including fertile agricultural lands in the Po valley and important manufacturing towns like Verona and Bergamo. Prosperous local farming and handicraft production, both in Venice and on the terraferma, might have compensated for colonial losses and increased competition in Mediterranean luxury trades. Braudel and Lane were among the first to postpone the alleged decline of commercial Venice into the later seventeenth century. Students of manufacturing in Venice (eventually including Braudel) and on the mainland have been researching the glass, silk, wool, and ceramics industries for signs of economic vibrancy.

The authors of these essays are not interested in agriculture but doubt that it was the engine for Venetian economic prosperity during

these centuries. If Europe were to have witnessed an industrial revolution during the fifteenth century, Venice, with its patent and copyright laws, famous Arsenal, access to capital and markets, sophisticated banking networks, and more, might have led the way. It did not happen, however, and the common aim of these scholars is to explain how various local industries ran out of steam.

This book consists of an introduction to Venetian economic history by Lanaro, four essays on manufacturing in Venice, five essays on mainland industries, and some astute conclusions by Maurice Aymard. Gaps are developing among the ways in which Italian, English, and Dutch economic historians pose major questions in their fields and then try to answer them. What they have in common is a rich archival base on which to generate statistical information, and a common access to recent theoretical work seeking to enrich economic history through game theory and other models derived from political science and psychology (to name two of the many disciplines from which economic historians are currently learning).

No reader of early modern English economic history can be unfamiliar with debates swirling around the chronology and pace of industrialization, and the effects of this development on the standard of living of those people who lived through the economic changes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Modeling industrialization has depended on increasingly sophisticated data bases and econometrics used to explore connections and even to consider counterfactual models that illuminate various paths to development. These debates and issues concerning the wealth and poverty of nations and peoples, as well as the effects of colonial trade and protectionism, resulted from an interdisciplinary approach.

Some readers may lament the passing of an older style of economic history that relied on impression and anecdote, with no statistics and tables—indeed, no equation in sight. This volume will feed that nostalgia for a simpler past. Half of the essays contain no tables of any kind, and the other five essays supply eighteen tables that simply record numbers of looms, people, textile production, or other bare facts. None of these essays notes a regression analysis, Gini coefficient, or even estimates of prevailing wage rates or the cost of living in the Veneto.

Steven A. Epstein
University of Kansas


In her preface, Volkov avers that this book makes no pretense of comprehensiveness, or even of dealing with issues in a systematic, chronological way. Her purpose is “to dwell on some of the questions this story has raised for me, from my own personal point of view.” Although she is
an internationally known scholar, the prologue’s title suggests the unusual relevance of her personal background: “My Father Leaves His German Homeland.” The book might be liable to the criticism that it is a self-indulgent collection of disparate essays, ranging from free-flowing memoir to highly focused and finely nuanced scholarly exegeses, but each of the chapters is attractive in its own way.

The intended audience of the fourteen chapters is primarily scholars but also those Jewish readers—particularly Israelis—who have wrestled for many years with the history of Jews in Germany. For those not intimately conversant with the bewildering paradoxes of this history (or its tiresome clichés), these essays may not be the ideal introduction, since Volkov tends to assume a scholarly, or at least an insider’s, awareness that is likely to leave some readers scratching their heads. These problems may be, in part, a product of the minefields of translation and transliteration, but the puzzlingly large number of glaring typos in the text do not reflect well about the care with which the English version of these essays was prepared (for example, fin-de-siècle, Sham und Peinlichkeit, Mendelsshon, and petit bourgeoisie, along with doubled words [and and], careless punctuation, and passages that make no sense whatsoever).

Nonetheless, these gaffes do not substantially detract from the impressive intellectual content of the volume. Volkov demonstrates a mastery of the scholarly literature, both historical and social-scientific, and an ability to offer fresh and sensible—if necessarily also often highly nuanced—observations about matters concerning which dogma and polemic have traditionally prevailed. The remarkably unrestrained praise that the book has attracted is largely deserved.

The convoluted nature of the issues addressed in this book render brevity and critical evaluation hopelessly incompatible goals. Volkov takes a forthright stand in regard to one prominent issue—the alleged blindness of Germany’s Jews to the rise of modern antisemitism. She describes their situation as genuinely complex, obscure, and multidimensional, thus worthy of a historian’s sympathetic understanding, in contrast to the commonly encountered attitude of retrospective mockery. On a related and even more contentious matter—the role of Jewish separateness in the genesis of Gentile hostility—Volkov takes on Arendt, Bauman, and, implicitly, Herzl, the last of whom considered Jewish “abnormalities,” produced by centuries of exile, to be an explanation for not only hatred of Jews by non-Jews but also hatred by Jews for themselves. Against all three Volkov insists that “antisemitism . . . is mainly the story of the non-Jews . . . including but not exclusively the antissemites among them” and not Jews themselves (xi).

Volkov’s struggle to convey her father’s reaction to the rise of Nazism can serve as symbolic of the nuances (and problems) of the ensuing essays. In going through his letters after his death, she was astonished to find that what he wrote as a young man “did not support the story we

---

1 See, for example, Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism (New York, 1966; orig. pub. 1950); Zygmunt Bauman, Modernity and the Holocaust (New York, 1989); Theodor Herzl, Tagebücher, 1894–1904 (Berlin, 1922–1923).
had been telling ourselves” about his Zionist convictions. Readers might wish for a clearer presentation of that story, or at least why the story emerging from the letters was so unbearably painful to those close to him. Was it because of his bizarre admiration for, and even optimism about, the Nazi revolution? As noted above, no brief account can begin to do justice to the complexity and jarring paradoxes of Volkov’s book.

Albert S. Lindemann
University of California, Santa Barbara

_Sweeping the German Nation: Domesticity and National Identity in Germany, 1870–1945._ By Nancy R. Reagin (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2007) 247 pp. $75.00

Reagin writes that when Germany became a nation, it had no national anthem, no flag, and no postal system, among other markers or symbols of nationhood. It did, however, have a nation of hardworking housewives, who, in turn, had three (often embroidered) rallying cries: Cleanliness! Order! Thrift!

Reagin does not contend that German women “really did keep cleaner houses than their counterparts in other nations: we only know that many thought that they did so” (21). She does contend that private cleanliness became public Germanness.

In this impressive work, Reagin shows how German housewives comprised an “imagined community”—she credits Benedict Anderson, _Imagined Communities_ (New York, 1983) for the phrase—strangers who did not know one another, yet felt connected. The tethers included a plethora of housewives’ organizations and women’s magazines, the latter including “endless embroidery and craft patterns, articles on how to pose children in photographs” that set standards by which a family could attain proper social status (hint: snow white linens are a must) (32).

Reagin notes that in general (pre–Third Reich), housewife groups and periodicals included bourgeois Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish women in their stern embrace, but excluded one group, rural women, who worked sixteen-hour days, apparently caring more about their fields than their parlors.

Amid the research, culled from English and German book sources, the aforementioned periodicals, and German archives, are some stunners. Late nineteenth-century advice manuals suggested that “a housewife should empty out and clean all shelves and cabinets at least once every eight days” (39). Why eight?

With guides about every domestic chore imaginable (there is only one proper way to hang up socks to dry, although we do not learn what it is), Germans could draw on family life and domesticity, and its symbols and practices, writes Reagin, “to sustain the national community under successive political regimes” while things like geographical boundaries were swept clean away (15).
The main sweepers, of course, were the National Socialists, whose supporters not infrequently were leaders within the housewives groups. *Sweeping the German Nation* contains tale after tale of how the Nazis cynically co-opted the housewives (willing or not), pushing them to eat, not to eat, buy, not to buy, wear, and not to wear, whatever healthy or shoddy product was in great or short supply. Many notions of thrift, admittedly, were downright ecological, if extreme (hair in hairbrushes was collected and used for felt manufacturing). Meanwhile, the women were encouraged to procreate, and keep house.

Multiple offspring were not the sole criteria for winning the famous Mother’s Cross. Recipients had to keep an orderly home; no fecund slattern need apply. One woman was even denied a cross in part because “her sister is not a good housekeeper” (134). The Nazis’ most bizarre cleanliness was good German manifestation must have been Hashude, a camp in Bremen. Behind a barbed-wire fence stood little houses where untidy Hausfrauen (and their families) were sent to live under a kind of Haus-arrest until they literally cleaned up their act.

To the Nazis, there was no cleansing like ethnic cleansing. Reagin’s final chapter involves the “macabre sort of terrain” that was Poland. After displacing or murdering Poland’s Jewish and other undesired populations, the Nazis replaced them with presumed “Volksdeutschen,” people from conquered eastern territories who may have had “German blood,” did not necessarily speak German, nor necessarily want to learn how to make German preserves or stitch German samplers. Legions of young German women assigned such tasks within the “Germanization” of Poland were often self-righteous but sometimes baffled. A Polish woman had the temerity to tell one of them, “So what if her children were dirty? They would still grow up.” The scornful phrase “Polish management” (polnische Wirtschaft) arose then.

*Sweeping the German Nation* has a few minor editorial and compositional problems (for example, Reagin mentions Sedan Day five times before explaining it, and the index is too brief), but Reagin’s scholarship is stunning, her findings chilling, and her warning implicit: Be aware of the “intricate minuet” making up the “public” and “private” in any political system.

Alison Owings
Mill Valley, California

*From Nurturing the Nation to Purifying the Volk: Weimar and Nazi Family Policy, 1918–1945.* By Michelle Mouton (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2007) 310 pp. $70.00

Mouton’s book traces German family policy from the Weimar Republic through the Third Reich. As one of the few studies to bridge the 1933 divide, Mouton’s work makes clear that although state attempts to man-
age reproduction with the goal of rejuvenating the nation began during Weimar, the Nazis made a clear break with Weimar when they commandeered family policy as an instrument for their racial agenda. But policy is not the whole story: Mouton’s focus on implementation reveals that certain interactions served to dilute the Nazis’ goal of a radical transformation of the family. Indeed, many women were able to “challenge, negotiate, manipulate, or, most frequently, evade Nazi policy altogether” (281).

Chapters on marriage policy, divorce, pronatalist initiatives, policy toward single mothers and their children, and adoption and foster care portray an increasingly interventionist state after 1918. Both Weimar and Nazi Germany supported marriage and encouraged women to bear more, healthier children. Weimar progressives envisioned preemptive intervention to improve family health and mitigate suffering, but conservative and religious forces thwarted it in the name of family independence. The Nazis brought their own agenda of radical intervention but in the name of “purifying the Volk” by preventing “undesirable” births and encouraging reproduction among “healthy” women, married and unmarried. Yet the Nazi state failed to raise birth rates significantly; women—whose behavior was the main object of policy—took advantage of incentives to bear children only when it was in their own interest.

Methodologically, Mouton moves seamlessly between the national level of policy and law to the vagaries of local implementation. Her use of individual stories drawn from Westphalian case files makes compelling reading. Each chapter opens with the stories of those who were the subjects of policy directives, non-Jewish Germans who negotiated the maze of measures that grew starkly more coercive after 1933 (Mouton rightly stresses the lack of options for Jewish Germans). She also portrays judges, bureaucrats, and mayors striving to implement mandates while simultaneously working to preserve their own interests. Mouton emphasizes how such mundane factors as workload, limited funding, and, later, wartime exigencies routinely diluted state goals; overtaxed doctors and social workers applied their own definitions of who was “worthy” of aid, while religious institutions attempted to shield many labeled “unworthy.” Although Nazi policy aspired to be monolithic, the reality differed, though not necessarily because of conscious resistance. Many of the people involved believed in Nazi ideology and worked to implement it. Those who evaded it seemingly acted in a compartmentalized fashion compatible with selective compliance in other areas.

Mouton does not offer a radically new interpretation of German family policy, but she bolsters the case for discontinuity between the Weimar and Nazi states. Her portrait of the interplay between state directives and their actual implementation offers a compelling reminder of the limits of social engineering, making it required reading for anyone interested in the operations of daily life under various modern regimes.

Julia Sneeringer
City University of New York
Liberal Reform in an Illiberal Regime: The Creation of Private Property in Russia, 1906–1915. By Stephen K. Williams (Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, 2006) 320 pp. $15.00

Williams sets out to test North’s theory regarding the impossibility of liberal reform in an illiberal regime from the perspective of the modern law and economics movement. As his case study, he has chosen the Stolypin agrarian reforms, which he sees as a government attempt to establish a private-property regime in Russia, and which, if true, would, according to theory, provide the basis for the development of a liberal, democratic society. Meantime, in the course of this work, Williams destroys, with a precision appropriate for one trained in the law, some of the most enduring myths of late imperial Russian history, with special reference to the peasantry. In particular, he rejects the long-prevailing consensus that Russian peasants lived in a closed and more or less autarkic and egalitarian society and opposed the changes associated with the market in the interest of preserving its traditional culture. Rather, and joining with an emerging historiography, he adopts a less deterministic view that regards the peasantry as open to change, adaptable to new opportunities, and willing to participate in the developing money economy. Of particular note is his close analysis of the reform legislation and his conclusion that not only did the government show little coercive intent; “no absolutely neutral resolution [of the conflicting interests] was possible” (223).

The one weakness of this work is its over-reliance on theory and its oversimplification of the importance of deeply embedded cultural assumptions within Russia’s elites and the imperatives of the bureaucratic political process. Contrary to his claim, the establishment of a private-property regime as a solution to Russia’s peasant/agrarian problem was never among the government’s goals. Rather, what the imperial government sought, as it had since at least the time of Peter the Great, was to stimulate and encourage the population to assume more responsibility for their own social and economic affairs and to become more deeply involved in matters of local administration—that is, the creation of a civil society, though not necessarily based on private property.

In the end, however, although Williams does not consider the reforms to be an exception to North’s theory, in that no relinquishment of power took place, he views them as economically successful (though, in this reviewer’s opinion, five years was too short a time span to permit definitive conclusions) and finds that they had potential for encouraging the development of a liberal-democratic society. Thus, his conclusions, perhaps inadvertently, undermine any necessary or causal link between the ownership of private property and liberal democracy. The volume concludes with a brief analysis of Russia’s current agrarian reforms, which seem considerably worse than their predecessors a century ago.

though, in this case, a private-property regime was the goal of the “Washington consensus” rather than of the Russian government.

This work is not based on original research, but it utilizes a wide range of secondary studies in both English and Russian. Notwithstanding the inevitable dryness of analyses of legislation, it is a well written contribution to the field and both easy and enjoyable to read.

David A. J. Macey
Middlebury College

Stalin: A New History. Edited by Sarah Davies and James Harris (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2005) 295 pp. $75.00 cloth $32.99 paper

The “archival revolution” following the collapse of the Soviet Union has made possible a reevaluation of Joseph Stalin’s life and politics and resulted in a flood of new work on Stalinism. In the introduction to this volume, the editors declare their intention to “reinvigorate scholarly interest in Stalin, his ideas, and the nature of his power” and to contribute to a “renewed interest in political history” of the Soviet Union made possible by the new archival evidence (5). They place the work of the contributors in a clear historiographical context helpful to non-specialists. Studies of the nature and exercise of Stalin’s power comprise the first part of the book; the second part covers the relationship between ideology and politics.

Alfred Rieber’s essay, “Stalin as Georgian,” finds the roots of Stalin’s revolutionary persona in the multiethnic frontier society of his native Georgia, where he remained caught between his Georgian, Russian, and proletarian identities. Jeremy Smith’s chapter examines an under-researched period of Stalin’s political activity in the Revolution and Civil War, when he was Commissar for Nationalities Affairs; Smith argues that this period shaped his future policies toward the non-Russian nationalities more than has been previously understood.

In his contribution about Stalin’s activities as General Secretary of the Communist Party in the 1920s, Harris seeks to debunk the notion that Stalin achieved power by using the Secretariat’s prerogative to appoint regional party leaders. The Secretariat was too much of a “blunt instrument” to achieve this goal; rather, local party leaders supported Stalin because his opponents’ call for intra-Party democracy threatened their positions.

J. Arch Getty’s provocative chapter likewise challenges the commonplace that Stalin was an autocrat; instead, Stalin “functioned rather like a Prime Minister” (105). Getty’s effort to compare Stalin’s power to that of prime ministers in liberal democracies may not be entirely convincing, but it represents one of the more methodologically innovative pieces in the volume. Oleg Khlevniuk’s chapter, “Stalin as Dictator,”
provides an excellent summary of how Stalin’s personal direction of terror secured his temporary victory over the tendencies toward oligarchic “departmentalism” in the system. Valuable chapters by Robert W. Davies about agricultural policy and by Rieber about foreign policy complete this first part of the volume.

The second part of the book, primarily about ideology, begins with Erik van Ree’s effort to refute the argument that Stalin “Russified” Marxism. Many of Stalin’s alleged ideological innovations—revolution from above, socialism in one country, the intensification of class struggle as socialism is achieved—have their roots in German and Austrian Marxism of the late nineteenth century.

David Priestland’s chapter, “Stalin as a Bolshevik Romantic,” argues that Stalin shared a confidence in scientific reason with his Bolshevik colleagues, but one tempered by a voluntaristic romanticism. Davies’ interesting chapter tells the story of Stalin’s growing role as patron of the cinema during the mid-1930s as his interest in the medium grew, though its limited scope cannot answer why the kinds of films Stalin championed in the 1930s (entertaining, popular) were no longer being made by the late 1940s. William Chase’s chapter emphasizes the ideological importance of show trials as “mobilizational narratives.” Next, relying on materials surrounding the production of popular biographies of Stalin, David Brandenberger demonstrates convincingly that Stalin understood his cult to be necessary for the legitimacy of the regime. Finally, Ethan Pollock’s important chapter on Stalin’s role in post-war scientific debates reveals him to have been “more concerned with ideology and science than was previously known” (286). Stalin took science seriously, but, unsurprisingly, his interventions on behalf of open scientific discussion rarely served that purpose.

The editors rightly conclude that the new archival materials “do not paint a black-and-white picture of either an unbridled tyrant in the unprincipled pursuit of power or an embattled leader reacting to uncontrollable forces” (17). By and large, the contributions offer nuanced interpretations, though with little evidence of the innovative theoretical and methodological work that has emerged in the study of the Stalin era in recent years. Grappling with the consequences of the “cultural” turn, the field has seen rich and vibrant debate on such questions as the nature of Soviet subjectivity and socialist modernity, the possibilities for resistance by ordinary people, and the ways in which archival sources from a totalitarian regime can and should be used. The biographical focus of this collection, however, may preclude such an engagement. In any event, the developing “new political history” of Stalinism would do well ultimately to complement its judicious empiricism with theoretical innovation.

Peter A. Blitstein
Lawrence University
Disenchanted with the way in which nationalists have manipulated and mythologized history to serve their contemporary political aims, Fine uses his expertise as a Balkan medievalist to tackle the modern question of how people conceived of identity and belonging before the invention of the nation. His premise—that elites co-opted and politicized ethnic consciousness in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in order to construct national identities—is one that most scholars now take for granted. But his approach is refreshingly new. Using an impressive array of sources in various languages and dialects from the medieval era to the eighteenth-century, he draws an intricate picture of how people who lived in the present-day country of Croatia identified themselves and their neighbors. By analyzing the gradual shifts in local identity that occurred throughout the centuries, he reveals the process of identity formation and transformation in the western Balkans that eventually led to the construction of the Croatian nation.

One of the book’s great strengths is Fine’s analysis of premodern “ethnic” identity, which he convincingly demonstrates to have existed, though in different forms, as it does today (165–170, 272–273). His focus is not on religious or familial ties but on the various forms of secular identity that served as the predecessors of the national unit, such as tribal, civic, regional, and city bonds. Fine contends that few of his subjects felt part of a “Croat” collective. Instead, most of them viewed themselves as members of a smaller, often more fluid, unit based loosely on their Slavic roots and a regional connection. Moreover, the meanings of the terms that they used to describe themselves varied by region and period. “Serb” and “Vlach” sometimes differentiated class or occupation rather than ethnicity. “Croat” and “Dalmatian” acquired legal, territorial, and political meanings when new rulers came to power. Fine persuasively argues that today’s “Croats” could have formed part of a larger national body (South Slavs) or divided themselves into even smaller ethno-national units (for instance, Dalmatians and Slavonians).

Fine is aware that his argument will provoke controversy in the western Balkans, but he is content to let his documents speak for themselves. In an almost encyclopedic style, he systematically reviews sources region by region and century by century, revealing the protracted intellectual battle about identity labels. Some readers will find his style tedious and wish for a more cohesive historical narrative. Others, especially those with a deep interest in the region (as opposed to the theme of ethnicity), will appreciate Fine’s exhaustive footnotes and descriptive summaries. Especially valuable to the contemporary social scientist is Fine’s compelling analysis of the character and durability of
regional identities. His work offers new insight into modern political dynamics, such as why Dalmatians became major advocates of Yugoslavism at the turn of the twentieth century and why Istrians repeatedly rejected the agenda of nationalist Croat president Franjo Tudjman in the 1990s.

Like many foreigners who fell in love with Yugoslavia, Fine is overtly disappointed and angry that radical nationalists rose to power there and that Yugoslavia—both the country and the idea—collapsed amid a bloody conflict in the 1990s. However, if he had investigated how other groups living in the region (Orthodox Serbs, Latins/Italians, and Muslims) conceived of themselves, and engaged more with the literature about nationalism, instead of ranting at contemporary nationalists, he might have broadened his argument and reached a larger audience. His blatant hostility toward Croat nationalists seriously detracts from the book’s laudable empirical contribution. Nonetheless, readers who focus on Fine’s descriptions of the evolution of ethnic consciousness will be rewarded with an innovative glimpse into the study of identity before ethnicity mattered.

Emily Greble Balić
Harvard University


The approach to nationhood and nationalism taken by Brubaker and his co-authors offers new perspectives on a familiar subject and, best of all, stirs thought. They use the perspectives and methods of historians and sociologists as they probe ethnicity, guided by Hobsbawm’s dictum that although nationhood and nationalism are constructed from above, an understanding of these phenomena requires an analysis from below.\(^1\) Politics, especially nationalist politics, and the role that it plays in manifestations of ethnicity, is the pervasive theme. It could not be otherwise given Transylvania as the locus for testing hypotheses. Long a borderland of ethnicities, it is an inspired choice. So is the authors’ focus on Cluj, the modern capital of Transylvania, as a laboratory where the workings of ethnicity can be uncovered and the consequences analyzed.

The authors have divided their investigation into two parts. The first looks at nationhood and nationalism historically from above, examining the discourses of intellectuals and activists and placing the contemporary scene in a longer-term perspective. Brubaker and company are concerned mainly with developments since the beginning of the nineteenth century, when nationhood and nationalism began to dominate Transylvanian public life, and they describe successive contexts: the

---

Habsburg Monarchy, Transylvania until the year 1918, Greater Romania between the World Wars, and the new nationalism of the Romanian Communist regime and of its successors after 1989. They are fair and balanced in their judgments of events and the motives of elites. Of particular interest are the chapters on Cluj between 1918 and the present, which trace its transition from a predominantly Hungarian city to one that was 80 percent Romanian.

Part 2 is a case study of ethnicity at the daily level, an inquiry into the nature of nationhood and nationalism from below, from the perspective of ordinary people. Such an approach, the authors argue, avoids the distortions created when nationalist politics are observed from above and when the ideas and pronouncements of elites are taken as true expressions of the whole community. To understand how ethnicity works, they treat it as a “perspective on the world” and as a “way of acting in the world” rather than as a “thing in the world.” Their primary sources of data are the ordinary residents of Cluj (Clujeni), and their topics are habitual preoccupations, language, institutions, and interactions between Hungarians and Romanians (as individuals, not as categories). Their favored procedure is observation rather than the imposition of structured discussions and formal questionnaires on their Hungarian and Romanian hosts. They conclude that ethnicity is irrelevant most of the time in the day-to-day existence of Clujeni.

In the final chapter, which returns to the starting point of politics, they reach a similar conclusion: Clujeni in their everyday lives are little interested in politics, let alone nationalist politics. Such a finding raises fundamental questions about the strength of ethnicity generally outside elite circles. It will require scholars concerned with earlier periods to re-examine the development of national consciousness and national movements.

This book is an indispensable contribution to the study of modern nationalism to which theorists, researchers, historians, and social scientists will have to refer. If the authors had chosen another Transylvanian city or a city elsewhere for scrutiny, the results might have been different in the details. But the prime importance of their undertaking lies in an illuminating approach to ethnicity with the widest possible application.

Keith Hitchins
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America 1492–1830. By John H. Elliott (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2006) 546 pp. $50.00 cloth $22.00 paper

In the introduction, Elliott makes his overarching goal clear, stating that “by constantly comparing, juxtaposing, and interweaving the two stories, I have sought to reassemble a fragmentary history, and display the
development of these two great New World civilizations” (xviii). He succeeded in this aim; *Empires of the Atlantic World* stands as an impressive achievement. Elliott’s ability to hold English America in the same analytical frame as Spanish America is the result of prodigious reading in two allied but distinct sub-disciplines. The text is informed by recent ethnohistorical, political, social, and art-historical scholarship, effectively synthesizing a large body of material.

Developing the insightful morphological approach that Elliott deployed in the 1994 Stenton lecture at Reading University, the chapters in *Empires of the Atlantic World* are thematically arranged. They explore the processes of exploration and contact, the occupation of space, the consolidation of imperial structures, and the management of dissent. The book is organized into three parts, titled “Occupation,” “Consolidation,” and “Emancipation.” Each part is comprised of four chapters, which break the large processes of the imperial life span into more manageable topics of investigation.

In the first part, Elliott compares the processes of intrusion—the justifications and activities of occupation of space, conversion, coexistence, and segregation in Euro-indigenous interactions. In the second part, he treats the structural frameworks of the empires, the emergence of local elites, religious developments, and the formation of trans-Atlantic cultural communities.

By the time Elliott turns his attention to Part III, his chronologies and morphologies are more or less synchronized, the two empires’ interactions with each other having attained similar levels of colonial maturity during the 1760s. The last part of the book deals with population growth and the movement of peoples in the Americas, the Seven Years’ War, the imperial crises, and the emancipation of America.

Looking at the Spanish and British imperial experiences in the Americas through the lens of Elliott’s sustained comparison dispels the arguments made by early modern Britons regarding their nation’s exceptionalism. Although coming a century after Spanish activities in the New World, England’s early activities in the Chesapeake and Caribbean during the founding era appear similar to the early steps taken by the Spaniards. In an Epilogue, Elliott states the conclusion in clear terms: “As the fate of the indigenous peoples and imported Africans makes all too clear, the records of New World colonization by both Britons and Spaniards are stained by innumerable horrors” (405).

Elliott’s comparison, however, does much more than make the two empires clones of one another, as if the English merely re-played Spanish imperial history 100 years later. The book does not homogenize the two experiences; in fact, it allows for the differences between the two to stand out in sharper relief. Even though one of the messages of the text is that neither the Spanish nor the English experiences were entirely exceptional, and even though (especially in the early stages) the two countries took similar paths, Elliott is careful to note the ways in which the
empires, the people in them, and the polities that emerged in their do-

mains were distinct. Political development, cultural self-definition, Eu-

ropean–indigenous interactions, and the emergence of local hierarchies

and structures of power emerged as distinct processes in the Anglophone

and the Spanish realms.

One quibble with the book—more like a matter of questionable

emphasis—concerns the narrative’s directionality: Once Elliott’s chro-

nologies come into a rough alignment after the English Glorious Revo-

lution and the eighteenth century, a subtle note of end-point driven ex-

planation enters the work in an attempt to anticipate the rupture that

will engulf the First British Empire in the 1770s, and the Spanish empire

soon thereafter. Elliott stresses and comments upon discordant notes in

British imperial development as straws that might eventually break the

camel’s back, while slightly downplaying elements of imperial adminis-

trative, political, and cultural integration that occurred in concert with

the process of British national integration. This series of discordant

events (a fractious New York legislature, increasingly independent town

meetings in New England, and the inability of the British colonies to

field militia forces that might act in concert), need not have been adding

up to an inevitable imperial rupture. In fact they might have been local

expressions of politics and competition among local elites within the

larger framework of an increasingly integrating empire.

Another quibble arises from Elliott’s treatment of first contact and

the early encounters between indigenous leaders and Europeans. He ac-

cepts the mediated transcriptions of what historical figures like Mocte-

zuma and Powhatan said and thought at face value without a deeper ex-

ploration of early colonial sources. The (sometimes quite small) body of

sources on which we must rely for the utterances and opinions of indig-

enous leaders during this crucial period of contact history may well de-

mand more scrutiny than Elliott affords them.

These minor points do not seriously detract from Elliott’s Empires of

the Atlantic World. Scholars engaged in research on the comparative his-

tory of the Americas can profitably engage with it to explore how Elliott

answers key questions, how he makes his comparisons, and how he syn-

thesizes a broad range of scholarship and integrates it into an ambitious

argument.

Ignacio Gallup-Diaz

Bryn Mawr College

Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550–1700. By Jorge


$60.00 cloth $24.95 paper

Puritan Conquistadors presents an imaginative, comparative history of

ideas focused on early colonial religious themes in Spanish and British
America. The subtitle announces the author’s objective to demonstrate the formative role of Iberian artistic themes and literary tropes for the early modern Atlantic world. Cañizares-Esguerra argues strenuously against the biases that assume the intellectual initiative of Anglophone ideas and literary references and the derivative quality of Hispanic artistic and literary representations in the period of empire building that spanned the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. His thesis creates parallel typologies for Hapsburg Spain and Elizabethan England, mirrored in Spanish America and the Puritan colony of New England, to demonstrate that both the Protestant Reformation and the Tridentine Counter-Reformation targeted the New World colonies as spaces in need of spiritual purification.

_Puritan Conquistadors_ uses interdisciplinary methods drawn from literary criticism, art, and history. The author reads the images like texts, but he does not analyze their aesthetic qualities or contextualize them from the point of view of art history. The book is richly illustrated with fifty-five figures, explicated with detailed citations and notes, representing the religious artwork—paintings, woodcuts, and book illustrations—that circulated in the Spanish American and British colonies. Cañizares-Esguerra’s descriptive analysis shows that conquerors and colonists actively embraced the idea that their worldly exploits were favored by spiritual armies engaged in cosmic battles with Satan’s dominions in the New World. He constructs the intellectual genealogy of texts and images to establish the primacy of Iberian works in creating the religious and political ethos of the early modern Atlantic world. Cañizares-Esguerra does not place the sources that he has chosen in historical context; rather, he uses them to “reconstruct the logical structure, the grammar, of a discourse” that emerges through the typologies of demonology and gardening to convey the European sense of Satan’s power among the Amerindian peoples and the divine destiny of their conquests (17).

Cañizares-Esguerra builds a complex history of ideas, following their movements through different literary texts and art works in the two principal viceroyalties of Spanish America and through the British, French, and Dutch colonies of the New World. He begins this study by juxtaposing the seventeenth-century extirpation campaigns of Peru—exemplified by Archbishop Pedro de Villagómez of Lima and the Cuzco School (anonymous) painting of _The Conquest of Peru_—with Edward Johnson’s “True Narrative” of Puritan New England (Wonder-Working Providences of Zion’s Saviour in New England), written in 1654. Similarly, he compares the cult of the Virgin Mary, enshrined in the Mexican image of Guadalupe, with Elizabethan images of their Virgin Queen and analyzes William Shakespeare’s _Tempest_ (1610 or 1611) and John Milton’s _Paradise Lost_ (1667) in reference to the Iberian satanic epic.

The final chapter, “Toward a ‘Pan-American’ Atlantic,” departs from the chronological and thematic sequence of _Puritan Conquistadors_, reading more like a stand-alone essay in which Cañizares-Esguerra ap-
plies his interpretation of the colonial histories of British and Spanish America to modern historical production. Reiterating his critique that U.S. historians have interpreted their colonial past in teleological terms, focused on the nation-state, and that Latin American(ist) historians have juxtaposed histories of failure in the southern continent with those of economic success and political power in the north, Cañizares-Esguerra challenges scholars in both fields to transcend these intellectual boundaries through paradigms that go beyond the global and the transnational in their understanding of the cultures of colonial America. The essay is forceful, but repetitive, leaving unclear what these new paradigms may be and how to weave together the colonial and postcolonial continental developments that both unite and divide the nations and peoples of the Americas.

Cynthia Radding
University of New Mexico


Innovation should not be the hallmark of historical accomplishment. The copious historical record requires some understanding before any postulation about its rationale. *The Forging of Races* is a carefully crafted contribution to the history of such textual commentary. It is the translation of the discursive thread within Western letters devoted to the pernicious scriptural justification of racial categorization. Kidd’s classificatory focus is on the many ways in which Biblical interpreters have used scripture to develop theories of race and ethnicity. More significantly, Kidd profiles how colonial encounter and cross-cultural knowledge threatened the grip of Christendom, eliciting elaborate and eccentric theories of race to save Protestantism from pluralist interlopers.

At his most adamant, Kidd states that scripture has been “the primary cultural influence on the forging of races” (19). Since the evidentiary weight of the volume is that of Biblical interpretation, Kidd cannot prove such an exclusive claim in any comparative way. But he does and can demand that “the construction of race has been significantly restricted in its articulation and meanings by theological imperatives” (25). Historians of the last five centuries would find *The Forging of Races* indispensable reading, particularly if their scope includes the interpretation of racial politics, colonial justification, and Protestant progress into modernity. For those writers, Kidd has done the labor of accumulating and categorizing a vast swath of dense intellectual treatises devoted to racial taxonomy. This band of merry theologians, natural scientists, and philosophers is an impressively creative troop, including such figures as
Etienne Serres, a French scientist (1786–1868) who constructed a hierarchical racial taxonomy based on variations in the position of the navel and umbilical cord in the embryos of different human types. Kidd demonstrates definitively the complete conjure of racial profiling, showing that race exists as “a property of our minds, not of their bodies” (18).

Kidd’s secondary claim is that our minds are largely the domain of theology, the field that produced not only the most activist interpretive tendencies but also had a heavy hand in the emergence of medical science, natural history, and anthropology. The post-Reformation success of Christianity required an explanation for the concurrent contestations to Biblical truth, such as the discovery of the New World and the awareness of global monotheisms and polytheisms seemingly uninterested in a risen savior. The expansion of European empire goaded men like Friedrich Gesenius (1786–1842), a German Biblical scholar, James Cowles Prichard (1786–1848), a British ethnologist, and John W. Draper (1811–1882), an American rationalist, to reconcile Biblical information with empirical contestation. Sacred histories, sacred geographies, and sacred geologies were written to make scientific the archetypal descriptions of Genesis, Exodus, and Paul’s letters. Was Jesus, Adam, Cain, Ham, or the bride of Moses black? The racial schema developed within Enlightenment philosophies, early natural histories, and abolitionist literature dramatized this phenotypic problem into a grand postulation. Kidd observes raptly the finest versions of this drama, as intellectuals struggled to shoehorn Anglo-Protestantism into ancient Biblical paradigms and plots. If Adam were not white, then how could we be so sure of our election? If Ham were white, then how can we keep these slaves?

Kidd offers no overarching mechanism to explain why such acrobatics were performed on behalf of racial superiority. “There is, it transpires, no simple or reductive way of categorizing a person’s racialist sentiments on the basis of his or her doctrinal preferences,” he writes. “Nevertheless, doctrinal preference was a crucial determinant of racial attitudes, albeit not in any simple or straightforward way” (272). Kidd’s role is largely that of the archivist, itemizing for other scholars the massive documentary effort to make scripture of cultural difference. As Kidd shows, the Enlightenment offered a secular scientific racism and a carefully classified racial portrait to endorse Christian missions. Likewise, the Bible seemed to offer an endorsement of slavery alongside endorsements of the unity and brotherhood of all races.

Scholars of religion will most appreciate Chapter 6, which illustrates the Aryan underpinnings of early religious studies. Weaker are Kidd’s final two chapters, in which he switches from intellectual historian to cultural observer. In those essays, he offers abbreviated descriptions of Mormons, Theosophists, and participants in the Christian Identity movement, discerning in these groups a racialist consciousness inherited from his earlier expositors. Spending the first three-quarters of the book
on close readings does not prepare for such a shift to sociological processes. Nonetheless, as he turns to religious practice and black counter-theologies, Kidd invites subsequent scholars to consider the ways in which an entrenched racial imaginary made the religious subject racially conscious. Any such investigator would be grateful for the critical assemblage recorded in *The Forging of Races*.

Kathryn Lofton
Indiana University, Bloomington


How should historians evaluate the famously anti-slavery rhetoric of some of the leading Virginia slaveholders in the early republic? Answers to this question have ranged from applause to critical sympathy to denunciations of hypocrisy.¹ Wolf’s *Race and Liberty* enters this fray by examining manumission in Virginia “with both zoom and wide-angle lenses” (43). Wolf aims the zoom lens at samples of manumission documents (mainly deeds that conveyed freedom to individuals), many of which included detailed provisions and justifications. She aims the wide-angle lens at political debates in the legislature, courts, conventions, pamphlets, and newspapers. Her most striking argument is quantitative—that fewer slaves were freed through manumission in early-republican Virginia than historians have supposed—and her chief conclusion is that white Virginians were “profoundly ambivalent” about slavery and the presence of free people of color.

To historians still interested in the old questions about personal motives, Wolf offers the new evidence that she has culled from the manumission documents. More interesting, however, is what Wolf offers to scholars interested in more contemporary questions about social and political results. Under a relatively liberal manumission regime that lasted from 1782 to 1806 (“liberal” in that it did not banish free people of color from the state), religious and secular anti-slavery commitments in the 1790s gave way to more complex uses of manumission. The early manu-

mitters were more likely to free all of their slaves, free them immediately, and make broad anti-slavery statements. The later manumitters tended to free only certain slaves, delay effective dates of emancipation (often for many years), and describe the personal qualities (generally of subservience) that somehow made individuals “deserving” of freedom. Wolf analyzes cases in which free people of color used this system to free family members after buying them and cases in which slaves struck deals with masters promising good work in exchange for future liberation. She sees the latter situation as a road not taken. Other slave societies deployed the hope for freedom as a “safety valve,” but this practice existed only briefly in Virginia. By the 1820s, laws and court rulings identified race (white/black) with status (free/slave) more consistently than before.

Wolf interprets her evidence cautiously. She samples intelligently and counts where she can, but she is also interested in parsing the cultural ramifications of practice and rhetoric. She concludes that the 10,000 slaves manumitted in revolutionary-era Virginia (earlier estimates as high as 30,000 were extrapolated improperly from census data) did not weaken slavery. “What Virginians’ experience with manumission did challenge was white Virginians’ construction of race as a marker of slave or free status” (47). White Virginians met this challenge, surmounted their “ambivalence,” and limited the freedom of free people of color. The non-slaveholders who attacked slavery for degrading white political rights (in the 1829/30 constitutional convention and 1831/32 slavery debate) did nothing to help black Virginians.

Written clearly and accessibly, Race and Liberty in the New Nation should spark discussions of important matters.

Robin L. Einhorn
University of California, Berkeley


In this provocative book, Rucker argues forcefully that transplantation to North America did not deracinate African slaves. Slaves brought with them values and practices that long continued to exert influence on their thinking and behavior as they adapted to their new environment. In America, slave resistance galvanized the blending of African cultures and the eventual forging of African-American identity. According to Rucker, this process proceeded in two stages. Before the ending of the African slave trade to the United States in 1808, cultural mixing occurred on the regional level, where the imprint of distinctive African cultures remained strong. After 1808, as fewer and fewer slaves from Africa appeared, and the slave population became more widely dispersed,
slave folklore based on African folk tales became the vehicle through which a common outlook on the world was fabricated.

Rucker advances these propositions not in the abstract but by revisiting the six most famous episodes of collective resistance in early America—the 1712 rebellion and the 1741 conspiracy in New York, the Stono rebellion (1739) and Denmark Vesey’s conspiracy (1822) in South Carolina, and Gabriel’s plot (1800) and Nat Turner’s revolt (1831) in Virginia. In each instance, he assembles evidence of African influences on the conspirators or others in the area who engaged in resistive behavior. With the entire Atlantic world as his canvas, he employs a variety of methods to build his case. To demonstrate continuity between the continents, he combs anthropological and archaeological studies of African peoples who were transported across the ocean in large numbers for information about practices reproduced in the Americas and the material objects associated with them. To bring fragmentary evidence from New York and Virginia into sharper relief, he draws parallels with slave societies in Brazil and various islands of the West Indies. Examining such familiar documentary sources as trial records and correspondence with the eyes of someone sensitive to West African cultures, Rucker discerns telling details that hint of African beliefs.

Rucker’s reinterpretation of each of these major events will surely interest specialists, but his overarching thesis is bound to spark debate. He contends that the formation of African-American identity involved a process of cultural amalgamation among people of African descent, accomplished through “cultural bridges—conjurers, animal tricksters, martial dancing, burial customs, and beliefs associated with ironworking—that promoted collective action and collaboration between African ethnic groups” (7). But this approach minimizes the significance of the cultural interplay between Africans and EuroAmericans, calling into question the conclusions of a galaxy of historians who have been far less sanguine than he about the persistence of African values in the American slave community. Given the sparseness of evidence concerning African elements in early American life, Rucker necessarily resorts to conjecture at times. Even more problematical is his resolve to foreclose the possibility that people of African descent might, at certain junctures, have deemed it wiser or more practical to appropriate elements of European culture for their own purposes. His single-minded adherence to one line of argument weakens a study that otherwise complicates our understanding of the genesis of African-American culture in fruitful ways.

Joyce D. Goodfriend
University of Denver
Inescapable Ecologies: A History of Environment, Disease, and Knowledge. By Linda Nash (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2006) 346 pp. $60.00 cloth $24.95 paper

This history of California’s Central Valley spans its inhabitation and transformation by Native Americans, colonists, settlers, laborers, engineers, and agricultural producers, as well as its emergence as a bountiful but toxic place. Nash argues that people and places remade each other over time because bodies were “intermixed with their environments” (149). Nash also explains how shifting understandings of disease reordered perceptions of, and interactions involving, this relationship. Nineteenth-century immigrants to California believed that their health depended, in part, on establishing balances between their bodies and surroundings. In contrast, twentieth-century public-health officials, sanitary engineers, and scientists attempted to cleanse the valley by purifying the bodies of, and identifying the genetic and behavioral imperfections among, its heterogeneous populations. Reworking the region’s lands and waters as well as combating disease with programs based on the germ theory undermined widely held conceptions of, and scientific interest in, how the larger environment shaped people’s health. However, the production and perpetuation of sickness, especially in poor and non-white bodies, revealed the persistence of what Nash labels an ecological sense of health.

Nash primarily relies on cultural analysis to elaborate how scientists produced knowledge but also occasionally borrows findings from environmental and health sciences to explain past events. Works from the philosophy and sociology of science and medicine, especially those of Latour and Mol, guide Nash’s scrutiny of medical topography, public health, sanitary engineering, industrial hygiene, epidemiology, and toxicogenomics.¹ Lefebvre’s writings on the production of space inform Nash’s location of the consequences of environmental change and contamination in the human bodies living and working in and moving through the region.² Organophosphate pesticide poisoning and cancer clusters are two controversies that Nash examines to show the divergence of scientists’ knowledge of disease and space and local populations’ sensitivity to their health and environments. Central Valley ecologies were inescapable because scientists were unable to emancipate human bodies from diseases and illnesses—not because scientists determined how particular environments encompassed and penetrated the body and incontrovertibly caused sicknesses.

Nash’s elaboration of the ambiguities and contradictions of various

1 See, for example, Bruno Latour (trans. Alan Sheridan), The Pasteurization of France (Cambridge, Mass., 1988); Annemarie Mol, The Body Multiple: Ontology in Medical Practice (Durham, 2002).
professional groups’ and communities’ understandings of the relationship of place and health demonstrates the interdisciplinary challenges that historians face when they study nonhuman nature’s contribution to the past and incorporate scientific evidence to do so. Viewing bodies and environments as inseparable permits Nash to critique the practice of isolating microorganisms, chemicals, and genes as etiological agents. Nash finds that analyzing particular organisms, substances, and processes was not completely effective because such knowledge neglected or could not account for the myriad connections of bodies and environments. In some passages, this skepticism of reducing the environment to what it consists of aggregates and blurs everything nonhuman as the environment. Yet, Nash’s efforts to address such complexities in Inescapable Ecologies will interest readers committed to recovering and articulating past comprehensions of environment and health, to following and applying the advances in the environmental and health sciences to the study of the past, and to developing intermixtures of cultural and material perspectives that are compelling historical explanations and narratives.

Zachary J. S. Falck
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The Limits of Sovereignty: Property Conscation in the Union and the Confederacy during the Civil War. By Daniel W. Hamilton (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2007) 200 pp. $39.00

The engaging centerpiece of Hamilton’s book is a dissection of debates in the 37th Congress about the Second Conscation Act. In Hamilton’s persuasive account, the debates turned on issues of higher legality; the legal cases reflected competing republican and liberal ideologies of private property in relation to the state; and the denouement, including judicial responses to the resulting legislation, marks a telling step toward the triumph of the liberal ideology.

On what constitutional or other lawful basis could the U.S. Congress provide for legislative conscations of property owned by supporters of the Confederacy—meaning seizures by officials of assets apparently owned by legislatively defined classes of persons, unattended by individualized determinations of liability in judicial proceedings meeting normal due-process standards? For Southerners supporting parallel legislation in the Confederacy, the answer was simple: The international law of war (on a contested but supportable view) left property at risk of seizure during wartime by an enemy government into whose power it happened to fall.

For Northerners, though, the question was complicated by the prevailing Unionist doctrine of the legal nullity of secession and the consequent status of adherents to the Confederacy as insurrectionary U.S. citizens, not enemy aliens. On liberal readings of the Due Process and
Attainder clauses, forfeiture of citizen property could be justified only as punishment for crime, requiring individualized trials and convictions, and, in any event (so went the argument), it could not neglect the claims of presumptively innocent heirs to land. Congressional radicals wishing to avoid these barriers to vigorous confiscation found support in Revolutionary-era precedents basing legislative confiscations on a republican view of property rights, oddly commingled with feudal ideas about tenures conditioned on fealty to the lord. This view perceived property rights as conditionally granted by the commonwealth for the commonwealth’s purposes and, accordingly, as legislatively modifiable to safeguard justice and the public weal (which, for Civil War Congressional radicals, included not only demotivation and impedance of rebellion but also freeing slaves and acquiring southern lands for distribution to freedmen).

Hamilton deftly suggests how the republican/liberal ideological polarity in the debates relates to others in the history of American constitutional ideas, such as formalist versus antiformalist views of the Constitution’s cogency as law. He is silent, however, on one major conceptual axis, American federalism. The Revolutionary precedents invoked by the radicals were confiscations by state governments, not the Congresses of those days. The prevailing view today is that property relations in the United States are the business of state, not federal, law. It would be interesting to know whether, and how, the radicals felt comfortable moving from the state-law Revolutionary precedents to the idea that Congress is the locus of republican guardianship, or common will, in the field of property (might “republicanism” in this case have been merging into a more modern idea of a higher, implicit constitutional law of necessity, of which we have recently heard a good deal?).

Hamilton’s is mainly a work in the history of American political ideas, presented through a close and alert reading of a major Congressional debate and, in a separate chapter, of a set of judicial opinions (treated with high technical facility) dealing with the constitutionality and application of the resulting Confiscation Act. Hamilton includes an interesting but digressive, more sociohistorical chapter about the workings of the Confederacy’s Sequestration Act, based on courthouse archives.

Frank I. Michelman
Harvard University

Explorers in Eden: Pueblo Indians and the Promised Land. By Jerold S. Auerbach (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 2006) 205 pp. $34.95

In this work, Auerbach focuses on how Eastern intellectuals, artists, and adventurers appropriated Pueblo Indian landscapes, cultures, and images in the name of “geopiety”—finding their own “Holy Land” in an American landscape torn by the forces of industrialization and social
alienation between the 1870s and the 1930s. Using a diverse and well-known cast of characters, including ethnographer Frank Hamilton Cushing, tourism entrepreneur Fred Harvey, cultural critic Mabel Dodge Luhan, photographer Edward S. Curtis, and anthropologist Franz Boas’ cohort of female graduate students, Auerbach argues that these travelers venerated Pueblo Indians as a means of rediscovering a Middle Eastern-style “Holy Land” in America. He attributes this attraction to white Americans’ quest for a unique identity in a wilderness that had the potential to be another Eden, but was failing to meet that standard in the Gilded Age. The Pueblo Southwest pacified this longing for several generations of Eastern elites around the turn of the twentieth century.

Written in an accessible style, the book is a synthesis of recent scholarship about the American appropriation of Pueblo cultures. Auerbach’s background in diverse subject areas gives him many tools with which to analyze the wide range of evidence available to discuss the Southwest during this period. The analysis prominently features photographs and images, but biography, psychohistory, gender history, and cultural history are all woven together to examine American “geopiety.” The historical figures’ references to Biblical images appear throughout the book, but Auerbach also features gender as a prominent analytical tool for understanding the impact that the Pueblos had on the identities of these Americans. The first section dwells on male adventurers and their search for a premodern masculinity and individuality in the Southwest. The second section turns to female ascendancy in the region’s appropriation, following World War I. According to Auerbach, women found reprieve from the restrictions of Victorian mores in the Pueblos, and found their own place for liberated self-expression.

The book’s heavy focus on image analysis and biography leaves much about the American Southwest’s development as a kind of “Mecca” unexplained. The political, economic, or social motivations behind the appropriation of Pueblo peoples have no place in the book, even though such factors likely contributed more to the appropriation of Pueblo symbols and images than a desire to rediscover an American Eden. For example, the expropriation of Pueblo lands by mining companies and the erosion of Pueblo sovereignty by state and federal governments receive no attention, but these processes were crucial to the creation of an American identity and the availability of the Pueblos for American tourists, artists, and researchers. Auerbach actually challenges contemporary critics who claim that whites’ obsession with the Pueblos was driven by capitalism, paternalism, and “Orientalism.” He argues that these critics are “reducing” Pueblo Indians to “hapless victims of sexist domination and rapacious capitalist exploitation” (159), as if Eastern elites’ “veneration” of Pueblo Indians did not attempt to reduce them to one-dimensional subjects of intellectual and cultural expansion.

Ultimately, Auerbach uses the Pueblos as his book’s historical figures did—to explain a phenomenon entirely unrelated to Pueblo
people themselves. Thus, the analysis perpetuates the abusive relationships that the explorers established to fulfill their own spiritual and intellectual goals. This kind of analysis ignores and silences living, vital, cultures for the benefit of understanding dead elites, an academic quest that has lost its relevance to scholarship and to understanding the international context that our nation occupies.

Malinda Maynor Lowery
Harvard University


Lee has produced a readable and sympathetic account of the role that he believes organized labor has played in improving the lot of working men and women in Kansas during the 100 years that followed the Civil War. His thesis is that labor unions were largely responsible for the substantial rise in real wages that occurred between 1860 and 1918. During this period, Kansas workers, who played a major role in the rise and the fall of the Knights of Labor, fought against a “tyrannical capitalist system” with the enthusiastic support of many rural people, including their representatives in the state legislature. The result was pro-labor legislation that attempted to regulate, for example, hours of work, the employment of children, and safety at work. Even if the conscientiousness with which this legislation was implemented and monitored is unclear, the sympathies of a wide cross-section of the state’s population lay is not. For organized labor, public support was some compensation for its failure to win most of the strikes that their members initiated.

Unfortunately, the violent radicalism of the Industrial Workers of the World, otherwise known as the Wobblies, helped to change the public’s view of organized labor. Relations became even more strained with the growth of larger and more impersonal urban centers. Moreover, the failure of unions and farmers to embrace the same agenda helps to explain why, after 1918, Kansas became more of an anti-union state, even allowing for the pro-labor New Deal period. Vocal groups of men and cultivators were not just unsympathetic to organized labor. Agrarian interests vigorously opposed unions and supported the anti-union legislation that Kansas adopted after 1945. The author suggests that this behavior was irrational; farmers should have realized that it was not in their economic interests to support regressive laws that hurt, or failed to help, the working man. According to Lee, this was a costly mistake. How much more industrialized might Kansas have become, he speculates, if it had not embraced anti-union policies in the twentieth century?

The author is heavily reliant upon secondary literature for this volume, though he also uses newspapers and state documents. The book is divided into eight substantial chapters, plus a conclusion and a bibliog-
raphy. Each chapter deals with a significant event in the history of Kansas labor—for example, a clear account of the events leading up to the creation of the Kansas Court for Industrial Relations in 1920, which the U.S. Supreme Court declared unconstitutional three years later. Lee’s interesting narrative includes an assessment of the role of key individuals, such as the volatile Alexander Howat and the ambitious governor, Henry J. Allen. But it fails to cover the impact in Kansas of the savage postwar depression of 1920/21, which caused mass unemployment and wage cuts throughout the country, even though this event must have had a profound effect on union membership.

Indeed, labor historians who consult this volume will find that Lee is long on narrative but short on analysis. Were unions largely responsible for the rise in real wages in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century? Possibly, but how do we know? What proportion of Kansan workers joined unions? What happened to the real income of those who did not? Can union power exert a damaging effect on the economy? These and other analytically oriented questions are not explored. In short, this book is a good account of certain aspects of Kansan labor history, but it will be of more value to general readers than to professional historians.

Peter Fearon
University of Leicester

*By the Ore Docks: A Working People’s History of Duluth.* By Richard Hudelson and Carl Ross (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2006) 336 pp. $18.95

*By the Ore Docks* is an extraordinary and exhaustively researched examination of the contribution and enduring legacy of Communist and radical organizers to the contemporary labor movement and progressive politics. The book spans about eighty years, beginning in the 1870s when Duluth first emerged as a dynamic industrial center and ending with the fall of the popular front, the ascendancy of a much-less radicalized labor movement, and the consolidation of Minnesota’s Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party under an antimcommunist banner.

Although the book is specifically about Duluth and northeastern Minnesota, it is applicable to the broader story of radical working class history. Hudelson and Ross have put together a well-documented book that draws heavily on archival materials, oral histories, and labor, ethnic, and mainstream newspapers to tell the struggle of radical working-class organizers who fought to build a democratic and economically just society in the face of crushing opposition.

*By the Ore Docks* does not uncritically celebrate this heroism, or dismiss it as naïve. Rather, it poignantly puts a human face on the struggle and its victories and costs. Hudelson and Ross balance their two audiences well. Their book is easily accessible and readable for a broader audience interested in labor history and radical politics, and its footnotes
and attention to scholarship make it a starting point for further research and study.

Hudelson was struck by the absence of written accounts or open conversation about Duluth’s radical-labor and political history. What started as a narrower study of the Communist Party in Duluth soon became interwoven with much more information about ethnic communities, labor politics, immigration, the rise of gigantic corporations, the consolidation of capital, and the emergence of the modern labor movement.

Duluth, once heralded as an industrial and shipping giant, also became home for tens of thousands of new southern European immigrants seeking their American dream in Duluth’s ore docks, steel mills, saw mills, industrial plants, and shipyards. By the Ore Docks tells the story of how these immigrant workers found in radical political organizations coherent explanations for the crushing logic of capitalism. They found solidarity in ethnic communities and clubs and a vehicle for collective gain in labor organizations. By telling their story, By the Ore Docks gives fuller recognition to the lasting impact and heroism of these radical organizers, and provides a useful framework for understanding political geographies that still resonate today and shape contemporary labor relations and political attitudes in many working-class communities.

Erik Peterson
University of Minnesota, Duluth

A Manufactured Wilderness: Summer Camps and the Shaping of American Youth, 1890–1960. By Abigail Van Slyck (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2006) 296 pp. $34.95

During the last third of the nineteenth century, as many Americans nervously surveyed the rapidly developing urban, industrial, landscape, the fate of children and youth in this new social order began to concern educators and reformers of all stripes. The organized summer camp emerged as one response to these worries. In this lavishly illustrated and imaginatively sourced book, Van Slyck examines how the leaders of the summer-camp movement used both the natural and built environment of their camps to socialize their young charges. Embodied in the physical spaces of the summer camp, Van Slyck argues, is the evolution of American ideas and values about childhood. And although many summer-camp advocates were “antimodern” in their worldview—often believing that they were challenging the dominant values of their day—most camp experiences reproduced the gender roles, racial hierarchies, and, at least in the early period, the militarism of society writ large.

The book is organized into six main chapters, each of which explores a different dimension of the way that summer-camp organizers planned and utilized the camp landscape. Whether examining camp-site development and recreation planning, camper housing and hygiene, kitchens and dining rooms, or the construction—both literal and
symbolic—of Native American ritual spaces, Van Slyck has marshaled considerable evidence to support her arguments. For example, in the chapter on cooking and eating at camp, the strongest in the book, she shows how evolving kitchen design and technology had by mid-century “reinforced in material ways the boundary between childhood leisure and adult work, and thus contributed to the larger mission of the camp” (144). Adults operated thoroughly modern kitchen technology to mass-produce food away from the camp sphere inhabited by children, which was intended to serve as an antidote to modernity. The paradox of modern conveniences steadily encroaching on the carefully constructed primitiveness of the camp environment is the most fascinating dimension of the history of organized summer camping. Yet, since the rise of the summer camp in American culture paralleled the revaluing of children as priceless (Van Slyck helpfully draws on Viviana Zelizer, *Pricing the Priceless Child* [Princeton 1985]), camp directors and planners had little choice; the physical health and safety of their charges trumped the desire to recreate the conditions of the frontier. Calling the camp advocates “antimodern,” as Van Slyck does, oversimplifies their agenda. Much of Van Slyck’s own evidence suggests that they were not really antimodern but *countermodern*; they did not reject modernity so much as try to modulate its impact on the way that children experienced the world.

The photographs, blueprints, site plans, and other visual sources that Van Slyck uses literally illustrate her argument about the “manufactured” quality of the camp environment. She weaves together these images with a narrative that analyzes her subject through the lenses of art and architectural history, landscape architecture, anthropology, sociology, and cultural history. Her research base is just as impressive as the interdisciplinary character of her analysis. She has gathered material from several individual camp archival collections, as well as from the archives of such institutions as the YMCA and the Fresh Air Fund, and she uses the voices found in musty brochures and long-forgotten camp–management manuals to good effect.

For all of this research and careful analysis, Van Slyck has not surmounted the challenge that all historians of children and childhood face—finding the voices of children themselves. Although she utilizes a handful of quotations from memoirs of camping experiences, her argument and conclusions about how summer camp influenced children’s understanding of race, gender, history, or even of such quotidian concerns as hygiene, are based largely on adult perspectives.

Everyone knows, however, that children’s experience the world often differs from what adults want or hope it to be. This shortcoming aside *A Manufactured Wilderness* is a fine example of interdisciplinary history and an imaginative investigation of a subject that deserves more attention from historians.

Michael B. Smith
Ithaca College

Through an analysis of the state’s emergent policies of sexual control, Holloway explores early twentieth-century Virginia’s efforts to maintain and extend elite-white-male domination. Although white-elite-male investment in the maintenance of their supremacy in this context is predictable, Holloway manages to elucidate some of the particular methods by which this supremacy was maintained and thus to provide a compelling and useful contribution to our understanding of the operation of social inequality. This history makes clear not only the power of the state and the methods by which white supremacy was enforced in the early twentieth-century South but also the multiple fissures in that power and, ultimately, the instability of elite-white domination.

The policies of “monitoring and regulating sexual behavior” that Holloway includes are a 1922 law creating the State Board of Censors to judge the suitability of films, a 1924 law prohibiting interracial marriage by the strictest measures in the nation, an act permitting the sterilization of “mental defectives” housed in state mental hospitals, and a state-sponsored campaign against venereal disease that included mandatory premarital testing (1). Holloway argues that the passage of these laws and the application of these policies extended the state’s power over individual lives in a region long suspicious of big government. Thus, the class of elite white men seeking to use these laws and policies to shore up their power in a modernizing society, to limit the influence of people that they considered dangerously degenerate, and to stimulate new economic opportunities did not proceed with total impunity. Instead, the necessity of convincing the voting public and state bureaucratic civil servants of the efficacy of their plans compelled them to draw upon fears of racial contamination and female sexual corruption. Using traditional sources such as newspapers and government, court, and hospital records, Holloway emphasizes that, despite the highly racialized and gendered language used by politicians, poor white people were the most affected by the state’s policies regulating sexual behavior (54–56).

Holloway zealously illuminates the many ways in which white elite men used racial myths and gendered biases to reinforce class hierarchies in Virginia. However, by often employing such phrases as “African Americans and lower-class whites,” Holloway represents these groups as members of precisely the same class, equally vulnerable to white elite men’s coercive policies (2). Indeed, as she analyzes methods of “social control,” Holloway fails to account fully for the exigencies of race within the Jim Crow society that prevailed during this period. In Holloway’s vision of Jim Crow Virginia, race is merely incidental to class. Reference to the interdisciplinary methodological examples of historians of social control like Stoler and Brown might have assisted Holloway in
providing a more satisfying analyses of the simultaneous interaction of race, class, and sexuality.¹

Holloway’s history focuses on state-assembly politics and the implementation of social policy. Its main contribution is the extension of our knowledge of the function of state government in the early twentieth-century South, a region neglected by other historians of government’s role in perpetuating social hierarchies. Although Holloway’s failure to incorporate a full racial analysis mitigates the book’s success, her account of the execution of social control through sexual policies in early twentieth-century Virginia elucidates the system of state-level institutional coercion that formed the foundation of ongoing social inequality in favor of elite white men.

Erin D. Chapman
University of Mississippi


Having made a horrific mess of the world in the first half of the twentieth century, Europe saw its leadership status diminish relative to that of the United States, which was twice its savior and, at the end of World War II, all that stood between it and domination by the Soviet Union. The power shift had many dimensions—military, political, and economic being the most obvious and important—but as Krige describes, included also was leadership in science. The United States had the resources, the facilities, and the motivation to dominate postwar science globally. European science, much devastated by the war, gave up willingly, though not without some envy and distrust.

The motivation for the reconstruction effort lay largely in America’s Cold War struggle with the Soviet Union. The United States did not want Western Europe’s potential strength to be absorbed by the Soviets, whose sympathizers among the European Left included academic scientists. Krige notes that the support the United States provided was welcomed by many in Europe who both feared the triumph of Communism and admired the energy and initiative of Americans. His analysis stresses the political purpose of the assistance that the United States offered European science, but also the underlying generosity and sensitivity that attended its distribution.

The mechanisms used to aid European science involved direct government assistance, the Marshall Plan, American foundations, universities, and individual scientists. Krige is necessarily selective, focusing at-

tention on a few cases and examples. He provides good descriptions of Isidor Rabi’s involvement in the creation of the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN); the Rockefeller Foundation’s role in decentralizing French science and helping it to reduce the influence of Communists; the Ford Foundation’s participation in efforts to temper anti-American beliefs among European intellectuals; the various initiatives to expand and reform the training of scientists and engineers in Europe, including the arrogant attempt to establish a European MIT; and the largely frustrated effort by Philip Morse to establish operations research as a field in Europe.

The American hegemony was soft, and because, in Krige’s view, it was consensual, it was inevitably co-produced. The language of European science became English, but its values were a mixture of American and European. What was gained or lost in the process, however, is not clear in this narrowly focused account.

Harvey M. Sapolsky
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Heroes and Hero Cults in Latin America. Edited by Samuel Brunk and Ben Fallow (Austin, University of Texas Press, 2006) 318 pp. $55.00 cloth $22.95 paper

This excellent collection of articles on heroism in South America owes much to ideas from European history. The very concept of heroism is prominent in the nineteenth-century writings of Carlyle, who was intrigued with the origins of European “kingship” and applied it primarily to the evolution of the nation-state.¹ But this collection needs its own unifying theme, and the editors found it in Weber, who developed the concept of the charismatic leader to explain why certain social movements become especially powerful.² It has proven highly effective in analyzing phenomena of both the political left and the political right.

The substance of this book is an examination of ten figures in Latin American history. It has the explicit goal of “making a case for returning the study of . . . individuals to the center of historical analysis” (11). The examples were chosen as “at least candidates for heroism, some attaining it, others celebrated as heroic only at particular moments in their lives, then largely forgotten . . . or marked down as villains” (14).

The fact that the book is organized by person leaves any explicitly comparative analysis to the editors’ introduction and conclusion. They are up to that task, drawing out a series of dimensions to determine heroic characteristics. They also discuss the extent to which Latin Amer-

ican heroes and their cults differ from those produced elsewhere, concluding that the differences are overdrawn. Finally, they ask whether Mexico is unique in Latin America, finding once again that the differences are overdrawn.

The criteria that the editors distil for heroic cult status involve not merely how heroic these figures were during their lifetimes but the extent to which their posthumous image has risen to cult proportions. The identified criteria for hero cult status (not counting gender) are four: triumphs/successes during life (image as a resourceful leader), dramatic death, a political leaning of liberal to left, and status as a political outsider (that is, never becoming president). On the basis of these criteria, they select for their top tier Emiliano Zapata, Felipe Carillo Puerto, Augusto Sandino, and Eva Peron. Their second tier includes Simon Bolivar, Frida Kahlo, and Victor Raul Haya de la Torre. Their third tier (at least partial failures) includes Agustin Gamarra, Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, and Porfirio Diaz.

The biggest surprise in their list is that Bolivar achieves only second tier status, which must be because he was not a political outsider. He is the meta-hero of Spanish American independence and the great visionary of possible South American unity. He has all the elements of true heroism, which include great valor and enormous talent for combat leadership. He was memorialized in his combat trips by the villages that renamed themselves after the Great Liberator. In addition, he was skilled at cultivating his own image as a dramatic orator and outstanding negotiator. His manner of death also helped his cult image—a mysterious river-borne disease that was immortalized in a glorious literary volume from the hand of Gabriel Garcia Marquez (Love in the Time of Cholera [New York, 1989]). Furthermore, he was unique among South American liberators in that he could claim paternity for three nations—Bolivia, Colombia, and Ecuador. Finally, unlike the others featured in this book, he was acknowledged as a supreme hero in Europe.

Thomas E. Skidmore
Brown University

The Sausage Rebellion: Public Health, Private Enterprise, and Meat in Mexico City, 1890–1917. By Jeffrey M. Pilcher (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 2006) 256 pp. $29.95

During the Mexican Revolution of 1910, a coalition of officials, livestock wholesalers, retail butchers, and clandestine sausage makers challenged the foreign owners of the ironically named Mexican National Packing Company for control of Mexico City’s meat supply. Their success put an end to the company’s attempt to profit from the production and sale of “modern,” refrigerated beef. In Britain and the United States, economies of scale had enabled a small number of producers of refriger-
ated meat to drive small operations from the market. Why that did not happen in Mexico until almost 100 years later is the subject of Pilcher’s book.

As the author of a history of Mexican cuisine and, more recently, of *Food in World History* (New York, 2005), Pilcher is broadly knowledgeable about the economic, political, cultural, social, and culinary contexts in which meat in Mexico City is embedded. He draws on newspapers and a broad array of archival collections in Mexico and the United States, in addition to a range of secondary sources, for insights into comparative conditions in other countries. His astute analyses, deft comparisons, and lively writing style will appeal to a wide variety of audiences.

The first chapter provides a historical overview of meat in Mexico from the arrival of the Spanish in the sixteenth century to conditions in the “1890s, at the dawn of the modern, industrial era in Mexico” (15). During the colonial era, meat was supplied by a monopoly, and quality assurance was in the hands of the butchers’ guild. Meat was consumed fresh, and more often by the elite (who preferred mutton). The popular classes subsisted on corn, beans, and chiles, adding meat only a few times a year, generally at harvest time and for religious festivals. Independence and the political struggles of the nineteenth century saw a shift from arguments justified on the basis of political rights to a rhetoric that emphasized public-health values, but the wholesalers of meat tended to maintain their dominance. They were often able to depose troublesome government inspectors.

The next two chapters examine the first attempts to modernize Mexico’s meat supply during prerevolutionary decades when President Porfirio Díaz dominated the government. Mexicans examined French and United States models of how to construct a modern slaughterhouse without recognizing the relationship between form and function. They chose (on the basis of cost) to build like Chicago but expected to retain a mixture of small enterprises rather than leaving the slaughterhouse in the hands of a private company. Plans included the latest technological innovations, such as aerial rails, but design and construction disputes, delays, and accidents marred the process. Pilcher provides an insightful analysis of what failure reveals about the relative strengths and weaknesses of government authorities, livestock wholesalers, slaughterhouse workers, retail butchers, and consumers.

The final two chapters detail the rise, fall, and aftermath of William DeKay’s attempt to profit from refrigerating Mexican meat. Consistent with recent work in the economic and business history of Mexico, Pilcher finds that the Díaz administration was not simply playing favorites and “did not give undue preference to politically connected elites” (121). In any case, DeKay was disappointed that Díaz would not dictate that all beef be refrigerated. DeKay’s efforts to ingratiate himself with Mexican presidents make him the very model of a modern, clueless foreign investor; in Pilcher’s words, he demonstrated “the counterproduc-
Aden and the Indian Ocean Trade: 150 Years in the Life of a Medieval Arabian Port. By Roxani Eleni Margariti (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2007) 343 pp. $48.00

This book about the physical-spatial and institutional development of the Indian Ocean/Yemeni port of Aden between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries draws together both archaeological and documentary sources. It argues that trade, not religion or politics, was the main force behind the urban development of this Arabian entrepôt.

Aden was a great entrepôt throughout the medieval period. Evidence of its much earlier existence goes back to the first-century *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*. Emerging as a major emporium in the ninth and tenth centuries, when the Indian trade shifted away from the Persian Gulf and Iraq toward Fatimid Egypt and the Red Sea, it was regarded as one of the three foremost commercial cities in the entire Indian Ocean area by the late fifteenth/early sixteenth century, on a par with Hormuz in the Persian Gulf and Malacca on the Malay peninsula. These three leading ports had in common that they controlled the entrances to the most important maritime passages of the medieval world. The impressively fortified city of Aden, at the entrance of the Red Sea, was in a position to dominate the traffic between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean.

This well-researched book focuses on Aden when it was still in a formative period, filling a gap in the much-neglected historical study of Islamic port towns. Margariti rightly observes that most of our current knowledge of western Indian Ocean ports of the medieval period—for example, Siraf, Julfar, Suwar, Kilwa, Manda, Shanga, Ayla/Aqaba, and Quayr—is derived from the work of archaeologists. Aden is somewhat exceptional among medieval Islamic port cities in that it offers a wealth of written documentation in addition to archaeological data about Aden (particularly concerning the city’s harbor works and water supply), its environs, and its hinterland. Aden stood at the center of the Yemeni Jewish diaspora. Among the written sources about it, a body of Judeo-Arabic documents (written in the Hebrew script) preserved in the Cairo Geniza, comprising letters, lists, accounts, and legal documents, is the most prominent.

This book is a welcome addition to the never-completed work on the Indian Ocean trade by Shelomo Dov Goitein, which is otherwise
known as the “India Book,” now located in the S. D. Goitein Laboratory for Geniza Research at Princeton University. Among contemporary authors on Aden, the most important ones for this study are Ibn al-Mujawir (fl. ca. 626/1228) and Abu Makhrama (870–947/1465–1540). These sources cover two discrete eras of city politics: the first from 476/1083 to 569/1173, when Aden was ruled by a local dynasty called the Zurayids; and the second from 569/1173 to 626/1228, when the city was under the Cairo-based Ayyubid dynasty and no longer autonomous. The Ayyubids initiated major innovations and expansion of the commercial infrastructure and institutions.

Margariti’s noteworthy conclusions fall into two categories: They are concerned either with changes in the physical structure and layout of Aden or with the social and economic history of the entrepôt. The first underscore the insularity of Aden’s peninsula as a key factor in sustaining its independent and dominant position in the region, the importance of anchorage arrangements, underwater constructions, fortifications (Aden attracted the predatory interest of other maritime powers), storage facilities, the location and character of merchants houses, and the like. The second category is concerned, above all, with issues of taxation; the administrative structure of the customs house; the shipping industry (Aden was a major center for shipbuilding); the world of shipowners, captains, sailors, naval fighters, divers, porters, and harbor boatmen; and maritime policing, salvage, mercantile and legal services, community leadership, mercantile representation, the practices of business and deal-making, and record keeping.


André Wink
University of Wisconsin

Producing Desire: Changing Sexual Discourse in the Ottoman Middle East, 1500–1900. By Dror Ze’evi (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2006) 223 pp. $60.00 cloth $24.95 paper

In this far-reaching and thoughtful book, Ze’evi studies the several Ottoman discourses on sexuality, identifies the common themes, and outlines their transformation in the nineteenth century. Although Islam tends to be treated as the principal and monolithic source of social and cultural values for Muslims, this book recognizes a variety of discourses
that shaped the Ottoman-era understanding of sexuality. Whereas pre-Ottoman Muslim religious literatures were misogynistic and condemned nonmarital sexuality, early Ottoman elites defined sexuality in a more open-minded way. The property-based independence of women, their power at court, and perhaps popular Turkish customs all enhanced the status of women. Ottoman norms attached no shame to sex, saw men and women as having the same sexual nature—the one-sex paradigm—and accepted both hetero- and homoerotic relations as normal. The medical discourse, based on Galen and the humoral theory of the body, held that men and women have the same nature, and blurred the distinction between hetero- and homosexual behavior.

In the legal discourses, seriat or Muslim law defined adultery and fornication by unmarried men and women as serious crimes. Sexual relations not involving both penis and vagina were disapproved without being subject to penalties. Kanun, state law, tended to equalize the treatment of men and women and of hetero- and homosexuals. Dream-interpretation literature accepted both homo- and heterosexuality as natural. In the puppet theater, both men and women are portrayed as avidly sexual, and women as independent and assertive. Karagoz, the principle puppet character, is married and has children, but he chases women, has both active and passive homosexual sex, and cross-dresses. Furthermore, Sufi mystics sought spiritual inspiration by gazing upon youthful male beauty. Homoerotic relations between an older man and a beardless youth, especially between a Sufi master and his disciples, were considered desirable.

In the eighteenth century, however, Islamic orthodox reformism rejected Sufi practices. New European ideas about sexual differences of men and women, and a more judgmental tone distinguishing natural from unnatural, normal from abnormal, and Christian from heathen forms of sexuality led to attacks on the Ottomans for the seclusion and the promiscuity of women, sodomy, homoerotic relations, and lurid theater. The corruption of government was traced to the corruption of sexuality. By the 1850s, European ideas were driving Ottoman discourses into self-censorship. Homoerotic love became shameful. Dream books virtually disappeared. The puppet theater was toned down. An embarrassed silence descended on Ottoman sexual discourses. The hetero-normalization of sex was reinforced by massive sociopolitical changes, such as the centralization of state power, the breakdown of small communities, and the emergence of the nuclear family.

The method of this book is basically literary-historical, but it is a major step away from older stereotypes of Islamic studies and a breakthrough toward realism and sophistication. It not only compels a re-evaluation of sexual beliefs and practices in other Muslim societies but also raises important questions about the differences among Muslim ethnic populations and between high culture and popular values.

Ira M. Lapidus
University of California, Berkeley
Crimson Rain: Seven Centuries of Violence in a Chinese County. By William T. Rowe (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2007). 437 pp. $60.00

In this richly detailed work, Rowe examines the local history of Macheng county, in present-day Hubei province, from late Yuan times through the early twentieth century. As the title suggests, he chooses violence as his organizing theme; the county witnessed truly horrific episodes of violence particularly during the seventeenth-century Ming-Qing transition and in the 1920s and 1930s—the “dynastic transition” between imperial and communist rule. This focus allows Rowe to make an important contribution to a growing body of literature—historical, anthropological, and literary, helpfully discussed in his introduction—which seeks to look past the normative Confucian representation of Chinese social reality as grounded in harmonious personal relations and to engage the gritty texture of life as actually lived in China. Although the book is deeply rooted in local history, the author’s goal is to explore large questions concerning the nature and causes of violence, in the hopes that such a long-term view will shed light on the meaning of China’s violent modern experience.

Rather than focusing uniquely on the violent events themselves, Rowe seeks to embed extreme eruptions in more routine forms or repertoires of violence, which he relates to socioeconomic structures. His most basic assertion is that a stark division between haves and have-nots in Macheng across the centuries is the root source of smoldering class enmities, which could be ignited by any number of secondary causes. He finds, for example, that forms of servile labor were widespread during the mid- to late Ming and even lasted—presumably in attenuated form—into the twentieth century. But Rowe’s explanation is not monocausal. He notes the “muscular Confucianism” embraced by many of Macheng’s local elites who built forts in the mountainous periphery of the region, serving for centuries as refuges from bandits, marauders, and occupying armies. He notes as well the passion for martial arts that gripped both commoners and elites. He skillfully illustrates the competing representations of violent events (and thus of justifications for the use of violence) found in local historiography from Ming times through the present day (including Communist reconstructions of Macheng local history). He notes that localism, or lineage ties, could and did attenuate the expression of class enmity on a regular basis.

The strength of the volume is its impressive mastery of local detail, which anyone who has attempted to work in late imperial local history will surely appreciate, as well as the author’s verve in bringing local and national perspectives together. Unfortunately, Rowe’s sources do not always allow him to probe key issues, such as the revolts of Macheng’s bondservants, in as much detail as he would have liked. It would be interesting to know how bond servitude intersected both with lineage structures and with a marketizing economy, and why bondservants did
not flee in greater numbers. But such minor concerns should not obscure the evocative portrait that Rowe creates. Surely in the back of the author’s mind was today’s China, an increasingly violent society, perhaps headed for another “dynastic transition” in the near future. A translation of this work should be made available to China’s leaders.

David Ownby
Université de Montréal

State, Peasant, and Merchant in Qing Manchuria, 1644–1862. By Christopher Mills Isett (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2007) 417 pp. $65.00

Manchuria was the homeland of the Manchu tribes that united in the seventeenth century and conquered China, ruling it as the Qing dynasty from 1644 to 1911. The Manchu emperors greatly expanded the geographical boundaries of the Chinese empire and achieved great internal peace and prosperity. The Manchu homeland was ruled separately from the provinces of China, but by the eighteenth century, its administrative and social practices increasingly resembled those of the provinces. In the early twentieth century, Japan successfully competed against Russia for the economic domination of Manchuria, and, from 1932 to 1945, ruled it as the puppet state of Manchukuo. Since 1949, under the People’s Republic of China, the three Manchurian provinces of Heilongjiang, Jilin, and Liaoning have constituted a vitally important industrial base.

Whereas twentieth-century Manchuria has been well studied, the history of Manchuria in the Qing period has been relatively neglected.¹ Isett’s new book fills an important need by examining the Manchurian economy during the period before 1862, when Niuzhuang became a treaty port and exposed Manchuria to foreign trade. Through use of archival sources, gazetteers, Japanese surveys from the early twentieth century, and even interviews with elderly residents, Isett has gone far beyond the standard published documentary accounts upon which others have relied. He shows how Manchuria, particularly the southern portion, developed agricultural and social patterns similar to those of north China despite the Qing court’s intention to control the distribution of land and to prohibit immigration by Han Chinese.

Population expanded from about 1 million in 1750 to 5 million in 1850 (and 14 million in 1900), due in large part to migration as well as natural increase. In the process, customary practices allowed commoners, increasingly Han Chinese or those of mixed ethnic background, to overcome legal segregation and to achieve firm claims to their land. Agricultural Manchuria exported abundant quantities of grain and soybeans to other parts of China—first to adjacent northern provinces, Zhejiang and Shandong, and then to Jiangnan—that is, the Lower Yangzi prov-

inces—which in turn exported cotton textiles to Manchuria. This inter-regional trade was dominated by Shandong merchants, who dealt with a well-articulated network of grain and soybean merchants within Manchuria.

Isett’s study situates this Manchurian experience within the major current debate about Chinese economic history. Put succinctly, on the one side are those who believe that the Chinese economy in the high Qing period, roughly the eighteenth century, was in an advanced state of development that was not necessarily inferior to Europe’s. This view is most specifically developed by Pomeranz, who argues that eighteenth-century Jiangnan, the lower Yangzi valley region, was at an economic stage comparable to that of England at the same time. On the other side are those who argue that the Chinese pattern of growth was essentially different from that of Europe and that China was locked in a “high-equilibrium trap,” as described by Elvin, and/or an “involutionary” pattern of labor use, as described by Huang. Isett labels the first group “Smithians,” for Adam Smith, and the second group “Malthusian–Ricardians.”

Isett believes that the Manchurian experience resembles that of China as the latter group perceives it, but the reason for the failure of the economy to develop, rather than merely grow, rests more on social constraints rather than Malthusian limits. “By virtue of the fact of peasant possession of land, peasants in Manchuria were not required to specialize for the market and were therefore free to pursue valued social objectives which, over time, made it ever more difficult to specialize, accumulate capital, and improve labor productivity in agriculture” (173). The custom of partible inheritance—dividing the land inheritance among sons—“shielded” peasants from market-dependent competition (192). Following the approach of Brenner in his work on the rural origins of capitalism in England, Isett repeatedly stresses that “structurally speaking . . ., rural Manchuria (and China Proper) looked nothing like rural England” (171).

This explanation seems an unnecessarily elaborate way to an unsurprising conclusion that is more easily reached through conventional reasoning. The author does not show why the noneconomic explanations for economic behavior are more satisfactory than the purely eco-

nomic ones. The central argument about social property rights is proposed but not well documented or demonstrated. How do we know that peasants’ custom of partible inheritance, rather than any number of other factors, prevented economic innovation? And why invoke England as the standard, when Brenner has already shown the early and exceptional character of the English historical experience? The author tells the story of Manchuria as a tragedy of lost opportunities, but, in fact, the region was rich in resources and served as a lifeline for north China and a bonanza for Jiangnan—as he himself indicates. Moreover, its history after 1862, though politically troubled, shows great potential for both economic growth and development. This book’s narrative is awkwardly fitted into an analytical framework that seems to overwhelm its excellent scholarship.

Nevertheless, those readers interested principally in the ideological debates on economic history will find no better, more detailed, and more nuanced, discussion anywhere, and those interested in Manchuria will find important historical research and insight.

Lillian M. Li
Swarthmore College

*Militarized Modernity and Gendered Citizenship in South Korea.* By Seungsook Moon (Durham, Duke University Press, 2005) 272 pp. $79.95 cloth, $22.95 paper

Long after the collapse of the Soviet Union, politics and society on the Korean peninsula continue to be influenced by the legacies of colonialism and the ideological antipathies of the Cold War. In this study, Moon first examines the institutional and cultural processes that shaped the relationships between people, the state, and businesses in South Korea during the period of rapid industrialization under military dictatorships (1963–1987). Then she looks at struggles to redefine South Korean citizenship during the years since democratization (1988–2002). Moon describes how both coercion and Foucauldian discipline characterized the process of making dutiful national subjects during the period of militarized modernity. Since that time, men and women have struggled to claim and create a more substantive and active political position as citizens. Moon shows that the trajectories of these later struggles reflect the gendered repressions of the experience under military rule.

Moon argues that the ideology of national security and the practice of universal (or near-universal) male conscription had a variety of gendered effects. Military service trained young men in obedience, preparing them for lifelong roles as productive “soldiers” in the national economy, not as active political subjects. The fact that military service

was open only to men, however, had the effect of excluding women from full citizenship both symbolically—because they did not contribute to the protection of the nation—and practically—because veterans were rewarded with preferential access to vocational training, employment, and benefits. Moon traces South Korean women’s efforts to redefine their political position, from membership in a social category recognized primarily for its reproductive contribution to full participation in a productive society. Moon contrasts South Korean women’s cross-class activities with South Korean men’s class-specific activism, which divides into a dichotomous type of citizenship—(masculine) workers who realize political subjectivity through democratic (labor union) action versus (male) citizens claiming political civil rights.

The data for this study are drawn from both English and Korean primary and secondary textual sources, as well as interviews with officials in a variety of public and civic agencies. Moon creates a narrative of discursive transformation regarding citizenship in the context of changing domestic and international economic and political forces. Her argument is bolstered by occasional statistical evidence of temporal shifts in opportunities for vocational training, union membership, and employment, as well as multi-year surveys of trends in several periodical publications of leading civic agencies. Although this book concerns relatively recent events, it includes few quotations from participants, and none from people who were not directly involved. A smattering of excerpts from activists’ memoirs and popular media add color, but since a significant element of Moon’s argument is about common perceptions and feelings, voices of ordinary South Koreans would have helped to support her map of changes in ideas about citizenship.

The sophistication of the argument and the thoroughness of the research make the book’s few other shortcomings curious: At several points in which Moon reveals a political viewpoint, she fails to provide a theoretical framework or an argument to support it. For example, she writes that although workers in strategic industries during the late 1980s were relatively privileged, they were “unquestionably exploited” (132). Is Moon broadly critiquing capitalist economy or something specific about the conditions of these elite South Korean workers that was exploitative? Similarly, her comment that the large percentage of South Koreans hired as contingent laborers after the Asian financial crisis of 1997 “are denied their basic labor rights” prompts the question of what basic rights these workers would ordinarily expect, and what legitimizes them (145)—surely open questions. Moon might have conveyed more information about the ways in which South Koreans have engaged the theoretical issues of exploitation and labor rights.

Finally, Moon avoids discussion of the Korean peninsula’s security and the presence of many thousands of American troops in South Korea. She dismisses the first issue by focusing on the ideological exploitation of anti-communism under the military dictatorship, and although the U.S. troop presence figures into certain aspects of her argument (for example,
the effect of anti-American student and feminist activism on notions of citizenship), she fails to discuss the larger implications.

Those observations notwithstanding, Moon’s unprecedented emphasis on the social effects of militarization, rather than on the direct effects of the military nature of the dictatorship, allows her to show how the uneasy truce on the Korean peninsula has affected the ability of South Korean people to claim rights and assume personal and political initiative. Moon also contributes to the de-colonization of a growing academic discussion about the contours of citizenship itself, bringing the perspectives of South Korean grassroots activists to the table.

Laura C. Nelson
California State University, East Bay

*Histories of the Borneo Environment: Economic, Political, and Social Dimensions of Change and Continuity.* Edited by Reed L. Wadley (Leiden, KITLV Press, 2005) 322 pp. $35.00

The book brings together a diverse group of historians, anthropologists, geographers, and social foresters to study historical aspects of Borneo’s environment. The contributions in this volume coalesce around three themes: long distance trade between local and distant economies, primarily involving forest and other natural products of the interior highlands; resource politics (“political ecology of resource control”) during colonial and post-independence periods; and social changes stemming from environmental change.

The first chapter by Eric Tagliacozzo on the ramifications of the China trade for northwest Borneo over the millennium to 1900 C.E. traces the process of economic interchange between the rise of an internationalized China market—when Western traders turned to find goods that the Chinese populace actually wanted—and the exploitation of forest products in northwest Borneo. He describes the resulting ecological and social impacts of this interchange, ranging from the emergence of small urban complexes along coastal stretches to the involvement of various inland forest tribes which reacted differentially to the opportunities offered by the China trade.

In the second chapter, Bernard Sellato covers the trade history of northern East Kalimantan in an engaging study of how pragmatic responses of traditional peoples fashioned modes of exploitation of forest resources for long-distance trade. A key conclusion that emerges from this careful study is that subsistence resources, “based on certain criteria of secure and continuous tenure,” led to sound practices of sustainable agriculture whereas “eager participation” in trade networks often led to severe forms of “extractivism” of natural resources for export (79).

In the following chapter, entitled “Histories of Conservation or Exploitation,” Cristina Eghenter presents two case studies of forest-product exploitation focusing on social conflict between different groups within
the social communities involved. Her argument is that “economic incentives alone cannot fully account for the different behaviors of local people and the decision of some, and not others, to impose strict measures of (environmental) protection” (103). The study shows the importance of taking into account patterns of local institutions, leadership, and social conflict in order to draw conclusions about natural-resource management.

Lesley Potter examines the economic benefits derived from forest products in colonial Borneo, alongside the ideas held by colonial writers concerning the value of such products and the need for their conservation. The author examines the writings of colonial administrators for their views (and measures) of environmental change and policy recommendations.

Whereas, unsurprisingly, beliefs in the inexhaustibility of forest resources persisted among some colonial observers, ideas of conservation began to emerge strongly in the 1920s and 1930s. In extrapolating policy recommendations for the present from the historical experience, Potter finds hope in the new decentralization policies of Indonesia, which will “[h]opefully . . . assist in promoting strong local communities and encourage more care for Borneo landscapes than has recently been the case. Hopefully their example will also be noted by local interests on the Malaysian side of the border” (129).

Wadley explores the creation and maintenance of boundaries as a component of “territoriality,” which he defines as that which divides territory into “complex and overlapping political and economic zones, rearrange[s] people and resources within these units, and create[s] regulations delineating how and by whom these areas can be used” (138). He focuses on an area of the upper Kupus River in West Kalimantan (Indonesia) over the past two centuries.

In a chapter entitled “Controlling the Land: Property Rights and Power Struggles in Sabah, Malaysia (North Borneo), 1881–1996,” Amity Doolittle offers a poststructuralist view of “similarities and continuities between colonialism and post-colonialism in terms of the technologies of rule employed and the ways in which discourses are used to obfuscate the intentions and actions of state representatives,” purportedly showing how “the imposition of Western-based notions of scientific and rational commercialization of natural resources and colonial land laws emphasizing private property rights served as two primary sources of colonial power and legitimization over local people and natural resources” (160–161).

Michael Dove and Carol Carpenter offer a critical literature study of the colonial mythology of the *upas* tree of the East Indies, a primary source of poison for blowpipe darts. The changing image of the tree in colonial literature “reflected changing visions of state, people and nature in the Indies . . . changes that had taken place in the colonial mission over the preceding two centuries” (184).

George Appell explains the environmental crisis afflicting the eco-
system of the Rungus of Sabah (Malaysia) as “the product of mistaken beliefs, attitudes and cognitive models of both colonial and post-colonial governments and Christian missionization. . . derivative of the Western world-view, the arrogance with which it is held and its ideology of market behavior and progress . . . that can be termed‘economic fundamentalism’” (214). Given the extant anthropological literature on resource exhaustion in native habitats in human history, however, it is difficult to give much credence to this breathtakingly simple view of the environmental crisis in Sabah.

Monica Janowski observes that rice cultivation, in its dual practical and symbolic aspects, provided a bridge enabling the Kelabit in Sarawak (Malaysia) “to adapt fairly successfully to the changing economic and cultural environment in which they now live” (245). In Janowski’s words, “the practical economy of the Bario area, which has access to town by air and can sell rice to the coast, has remained vibrant . . . [it] is able to keep one foot in the old (‘symbolic economy’) while dipping the other in the new,” although other parts of the Highlands have not benefited in the same way or to the same extent (266).

Any book that attempts to examine the myriad aspects of Borneo’s environmental history is to be welcomed, given the paucity of primary research on the relatively secluded communities of the interior of the island. Yet, given the diverse, and at times, conflicting, kit of conceptual approaches and metatheoretical predilections of authors from across a range of academic disciplines, the book cannot possibly offer a consistent set of themes in Borneo’s environmental history. Indeed, some of its divergent views on the historical trajectory of the Southeast Asian island even lack plausibility.

In his attempt to find signs of meaningful change in the longue durée, Tagliacozzo offers the familiar diatribe against Braudel’s view of the history of civilization as an “urban and lowland achievement,” leaving mountain dwellers “on the fringe of the great waves of civilization.”¹ But many scholars perceive Braudel’s view as an insightful reflection on anthropological and geographical constraints against societal development rather than as further evidence of “victors’ history,” as Tagliacozzo does.²

In the same vein, Doolittle builds on “post-structuralist concerns with discourse, power and knowledge” to support the case that “while colonial authorities were in reality preoccupied with economic considerations, they masked this concern by a rhetoric of moral outrage over the supposed destruction of forest resources that was occurring at the hands of native shifting cultivators” (160, 166). Doolittle finds a similar instrumentalism in the postcolonial period: “As in the colonial period,

² For instance, Jared Diamond, Guns, Germs, and Steel (New York, 1988), considers the verities of geography, botany, zoology, and epidemiology in his study of the evolution of human societies, which tends to the same conclusions regarding mountain dwellers.
the invention of knowledge by the Forest Officers and other members of the ruling class in contemporary Sabah, serves as a technology of rule that legitimizes state control over rural people and natural resources” (174). But Doolittle’s conjectures on the colonial and postcolonial “projects” seem little more than caricatures of history as vast conspiracies by ruling elites to legitimate class rule.³

In a parsimonious and thoughtful summing-up of the various contributions in the epilogue, Graham Saunders proposes that “how people perceive the environment and its resources determines to a large extent how they treat it” (271), concluding that the findings in the volume reveal that “those who have a stake in the environment are more inclined to look after it” (288). Saunders further argues that European perceptions of the Borneo environment “have been colored by what may be termed the ‘spirit of the age’ and by particular interests, pursuits, ambitions and motives of the individuals concerned” (273).  

Tilak K. Doshi  
Dubai, UAE


In this first of two planned volumes of collected essays drawn from a lifetime’s study of India, Robb assesses how the colonial experience shaped the construction of identities in India. The essays are divided into two sections—the first a set of reflections on the larger issues of the book and the second four previously published case studies. At the outset, Robb argues that the “colonial inputs” to the defining of India have been “unwisely neglected” and that scholars have “averted their eyes” from the colonial state (3–4). This assertion is hard to credit given the outpouring of studies in recent years on colonial discourse and the institutions of colonial governance. Robb also claims, in opposition to those who see colonialism as invariably exploitative, that the Raj was a liberal empire, dedicated to improving India, though he hastens to add that the reality often fell short of the promise (9). Liberalism, as he writes in a mostly favorable account of Lord Ripon’s 1881 to 1885 viceroyalty, “often stayed hidden beneath the calm waters of British complacency and special pleading” (28). Robb then discusses how the experience of living in the empire, not just its existence, helped to develop a national consciousness among Indians (54). There is little that is original here. The contrast with a work such as Manu Goswami, Producing India: From Colonial Economy to National Space (Chicago, 2004) could not be sharper.

The essays in the second part of the book, all previously published, take up a number of particular topics loosely brought together under the title “Some Boundaries and Identities.” They examine Colin Mackenzie’s 1799–1810 survey of Mysore, the delineation by the British of a Naga district in far northeastern India during the 1880s, the 1865 trial of an alleged Wahabi leader, and the growth of a distinct Muslim identity in the 1920s and 1930s as seen through the life of Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari. The most intriguing of these essays is the endeavor to bring the Nagas into the story of India’s colonial history. Mackenzie’s surveying and collecting activities have elicited much study recently, as has Muslim nationalism. Given the current obsession with jihadi movements, Robb’s account of Maulvi Ahmadullah’s trial might have thrown light upon the larger issues of Islamic identity. Unfortunately, however, he veers away from a close analysis of the trial to a general account of the British efforts at reforming and restructuring life in the Indian countryside (182–183).

Robb sees the British, though “weak on the ground,” as nevertheless influential in helping create communal sentiment. But, ever cautious, he concludes, “The story is one of myriad influences bearing upon a multitude of attitudes, in which general characteristics and tendencies can be observed” (195). Despite such banal observations, historians will find in this book a number of useful insights. The most suggestive are those regarding the important but often neglected role of boundaries and borders in shaping identities. Nonetheless, the format of “collected essays” inevitably falls short of the satisfactions provided by an original work of scholarship.

Thomas R. Metcalf
University of California, Berkeley