

## ≡ Book Reviews ≡

**The Time of Our Lives: A Critical History of Temporality.** By David Couzens Hoy (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009), xxi + 288 pp. \$34.00/£21.95 cloth.

David Hoy's book *The Time of Our Lives* will not alleviate the anxiety that we experience as temporal beings, but then nothing can. What this book can do is help us to better understand where that anxiety comes from and various ways in which thinkers such as Kant, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Nietzsche, and Derrida have grappled with issues related to human consciousness and time. Hoy puts aside questions about time as an objective reality and deals with time as human beings perceive it and their relationship to it, and deals with questions such as 'is human consciousness a product of time (is time prior to human consciousness) or is time a product of human consciousness?' How are we to think about the fact that the past and future do not exist but only the moment? Human beings understand themselves in relation to their past and future and yet these things, strictly speaking, do not exist. What do we lose with the passing of time, and can we really call it a loss? Do we view the past as a fixed memory defining who we are, or a set of memories that can be recreated in order to affect change in the present or the future? Human beings live in an in-between state in which we assume we always have more time but that time is also running out. How do we live with these two perceptions? Why is it that sometimes time seems to go slowly and other times speeds by? These are the types of questions that Hoy takes up in *The Time of Our Lives*.

From one angle, Hoy's book is a history of thinkers who have dealt with issues of time and temporality. To that extent it is extremely

useful in understanding some of the most important phenomenological and poststructuralist philosophers, and for understanding how important questions of time were to their philosophical enterprise. Hoy starts with Kant and the question of whether "time is mind dependent or mind independent" (2). Whereas Kant thinks that time is subjective, that human beings impose the concept of time upon their experience, Heidegger reinterprets Kant and "reverses the relation and suggests that time is the source of subjectivity" (19).

So the author introduces the reader to the unsettling questions about who we really are, siding more with Heidegger than with Kant, and exploring from there the ways in which human beings confront time and how time in turn affects us. We are temporal beings—time is essential for our perception of ourselves, or we are time-conscious beings, according to Husserl. The anxiety that this consciousness can cause is an underlying concern that runs throughout the book and is especially noticeable in Hoy's discussion of Heidegger's treatment of the experience of boredom and Nietzsche's doctrine of eternal recurrence. Nietzsche's doctrine illustrates to what lengths the human mind will go to cope with the enormity of the question of time. In order to escape from the idea that time once lost is lost forever, Nietzsche invented the idea that all things happen again and again in exactly the same way. This idea is on the one hand comforting and on the other extremely disquieting, as is Hoy's book. This will be good reading for anyone interested in the concept of temporality and the question of human nature.

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**Liberty, Authority, Formality. Political Ideas and Culture, 1600–1900: Essays in Honour of Colin Davis.** Edited by John Morrow and Jonathan Scott (Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2008), xv + 281 pp. £17.95/\$34.90 paper.

*Liberty, Authority, Formality* is a Festschrift honouring Colin Davis, who retired in 2005 from his Professorship of English History at the University of East Anglia. Before working there, Davis had taught at three universities in New Zealand, Waikato, Victoria, and Massey. Davis is known amongst Anglophone historians of early-modern Britain for his research on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century utopias, religious radicalism, and for his insightful biography of Oliver Cromwell published in 2001. The Festschrift includes thirteen essays by as many distinguished contributors, plus a dedicatory appreciation by Dámaso de Lario, currently the Spanish Ambassador to Venezuela, and a bibliography of Davis's scholarly works compiled by Jocelyn Gamble.

The first essay, by Glenn Burgess, deals with examples of seventeenth-century British royalism that advocated liberty of conscience, most notably Jasper Mayne and Thomas Hobbes. The second essay, by William Lamont, connects with the first in tackling Hobbes' views on religious freedom and their varied reception by British Protestant sects of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. The third essay, by Mark Goldie, emphasises the ecclesiological elements of the legislation furthering religious tolerance in Britain during the last three decades of the seventeenth century, contrary to the common depiction of this process as a prolonged political wrangle between parliamentary authority and monarchic prerogative. The fourth essay, by Jonathan Scott, offers an interesting portrait of Charles II as a "great escapist" (67) and his ambiguous yet overall successful strategies towards monarchic restoration and the reaffirmation of his authority. The fifth essay, by John Morrill, tells of the other great protagonist of seventeenth-century British politics—Oliver Cromwell—whose religious fervour and "obsessive Biblicism" (109) are dissected with great care and psychological insight. Mark Knights's sixth essay offers a learned account of Roger L'Estrange's 1659–60 political

pamphlets and of the difficulties arising thereof *vis-à-vis* determining actual authorial intention. Gaby Mahlberg's seventh essay discusses the historical and political significance of republican Henry Neville's "utopian-esque" 1668 tale *The Isle of Pines*, stressing its profoundly anti-patriarchal connotation. The eighth essay, by John Morrow, steps into the nineteenth century and analyses Thomas Carlyle's work, particularly with reference to his assessment of the English and French Revolutions. Michael Braddick's ninth essay provides an account of the shifting political allegiances that can be observed in the politically mobilised civil society of England and Scotland in the 1640s. The tenth essay, contributed by Isabel Burdiel, looks at the complex advent of liberal monarchy in nineteenth-century Spain, especially with reference to the eventful reign of Isabel II, who was forced to abdicate in 1868. The eleventh essay, by James Belich, outlines the burgeoning ideologies of emigration in the period 1815–1850, both formal and informal; it is argued that neither rational actor theory nor booming demographics and the mechanisation of agriculture offers adequate explanations of the 22-million-strong overseas exodus that took place in England between 1815 and 1914. The twelfth essay, by David Thomson, studies the widespread opposition to poor-law-like legislation in the British colonies of the nineteenth century and its surreptitious reintroduction as mandatory family duties, Christian charity and rights-based welfare provision. The thirteenth essay, by Peter Munz, endeavours to show how culture, understood as "all those non-genetic practices and beliefs which are irrational and non-verifiable" (253), is often "cognitively, economically and politically disabling" (255), yet is also the only instrument at our disposal to cope with "the damage inflicted by the maladapted brain" (259) with which our species is endowed.

Like many other celebratory publications of this kind, this Festschrift too contains rather diverse contributions, most of which have a reasonable connection with Davis's own research. The three sections under which these contributions are organised—liberty, authority, and formality—are broad and, in truth, quite arbitrary. The introduction is uncommonly convoluted and unhelpful. However, the good quality of the essays is to

be commended. Historians of early-modern Britain will certainly appreciate *Liberty, Authority, Formality*, as the majority of its thirteen essays deal with seventeenth-century events.

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**Evolution and Ethics.** By Thomas Henry Huxley. Edited by Michael Ruse (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), xxxvi + 131 pp. \$39.50/£23.95 cloth; \$16.95/£9.95 paper.

The reissuing of Thomas Huxley's (1825–95) *Evolution and Ethics* is particularly timely given that Charles Darwin's (1809–82) bicentennial has recently been celebrated with a range of touring exhibitions and by the release of a series of new studies of his life and work. Referred to as "Darwin's Bulldog," Huxley's work neatly complemented that of Darwin given that the former was a committed anatomist and the latter a born naturalist. This handsome little volume reproduces Huxley's Romanes Lecture of 1893, "Evolution and Ethics." Delivered at Oxford late in his life, the lecture was the capstone of his life's work. It is widely regarded as Huxley's greatest lecture and, according to Michael Ruse's brief but informative introduction, the essay was "one of the greatest pieces of writing of the nineteenth century" (xxii). After delivering the lecture and before it was published, Huxley wrote a prolegomena that sought to address the questions and criticisms that arose in the wake of the lecture. Longer than the essay, the prolegomena is reproduced here as a preface of sorts to the lecture, but as Ruse notes, in some ways it make more sense to begin with the lecture and then return to the prolegomena.

Initially somewhat sceptical about the theory of evolution, Huxley went on to become perhaps its greatest advocate, working tirelessly to educate not only his students but the wider general public. As a committed social reformer, his life was in large part devoted to public service and public education. But he is best remembered for his critical role in advancing the case of evolution in the face

considerable scepticism and often open hostility. Less optimistic than Darwin, in *Evolution and Ethics* Huxley is concerned with questions of the relationship, or absence thereof, between biology and social and ethical considerations. As Ruse puts it, Huxley is interested in the source and drivers of "true moral behaviour" and "curbing the beast within us" (xxii). Elegantly expressed and cogently argued, *Evolution and Ethics* is littered with colourful turns of phrase and illuminating examples. While more than a century old, the book remains particularly pertinent given the ongoing debates both about and within evolutionary theory. In the twenty-first century it is only true believers who are yet to be won over by the force of arguments in support of the theory of evolution, and if they haven't been swayed yet it remains unlikely that they ever will be. Nevertheless, debates about the complex nature of the relationship between evolution (human and social) and morality and ethics (individual and social) continue to rage within and across a range of disciplines. And for this reason the reissuing of *Evolution and Ethics* serves as a timely reminder of Huxley's important contribution to debates about evolution more broadly and his ongoing relevance to disciplines from biology to philosophy to psychology.

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**The Military Balance 2009.** Edited by James Hackett (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2009), 488 p. £117.00 cloth.

Most professional defense study analysts consider the annual edition of *The Military Balance* prepared each year by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies as the indispensable unclassified reference book on the world's militaries. They are probably right.

*The Military Balance 2009* provides basic information on the armed forces of 170 nations. In addition to tables with basic data on the number and type of forces, number of major

systems (such as aircraft, ships, and tanks), this guide contains other essential information for understanding national “combat power.” Understanding that it takes both “guns and butter,” to field and sustain a military, *The Military Balance* also contains what the editor refers to as “defense economic” data including national GDP, demographic data, and selected arms procurements. Finally, there are thematic introductions to each chapter that outline strategic trends and other factors influencing military power.

The thumbnail thematic introductions are particularly useful for honing in on the key issues and factors that are driving defense trends. The assessment of “NATO at 60” offers a case in point. In a handful of pages (99–102), the editor packs in all the troubles plaguing the Alliance, starting with Afghanistan. Here, for example, the editor explains why the Alliance effort is far less than equal to the sum of the country by country lists of the forces in the NATO-member states. Caveats, restrictions that nations set on how their forces can be used, are a major issue of controversy and limit the effectiveness of the overall Alliance effort. Likewise, the editor points out that “NATO has increasing problems in forging a common understanding of objectives and its missions in Afghanistan” (99). He might have further added that the inability of the European nations to adequately supply even basic combat capabilities such as helicopters, demonstrates that NATO’s capacity to conduct “out of area” operations (given the size and wealth of the Alliance) is pathetic. NATO’s military force structure is grossly undercapitalized.

In addition to the tables on state forces and the regional introductions, each annual book contains long essays on specific themes. This year the topics include current trends in Asia-Pacific defense industries, UN peacekeeping at 60, and selected trends in non-state activities.

What makes *The Military Balance* most useful and dependable is the care and professionalism that goes into its production each year. This book is the Institute’s flagship product and it takes care to protect the brand. In particular, the editors drive for strict objectivity. Though the International Institute for Strategic Studies is based in London, it is a

true international organization with members in some ninety countries. Its editorial and consultant staff for *The Military Balance* reflect the institute’s global perspective.

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**Multitude: Between Innovation and Negation.** By Paolo Virno. Translated by Isabella Bertoletti, James Cascaito, and Andrea Casson (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008), 195 pp. \$14.95/£9.95 paper.

Paolo Virno’s *Multitude: Between Innovation and Negation* seems to deal with three heterogeneous aspects: the concept of “evil” in the criticism of the state (Part 1), jokes and innovative action (Part 2), and mirror neurons and linguistic negation (Part 3). Two questions arise from the book’s contents: what links these three essays, and what is the relation between multitude, negation, and innovation?

Virno sees contemporary multitude as “a historiconatural reality” (64) that bears a twofold influence: the human capacity for evil, which “gives proof of a virtually unlimited species-specific aggressiveness” (17) and, verbal language, alongside ritual and “katechon”—the restraining of evil (Part 1). He argues for the interweaving of evil with three linguistic structures that seem to govern the “problematic, unstable and dangerous” (18) human animal: these are—negation, the modality of the possible, and regression to the infinite, which link the three apparently distinctive concepts of the title. Multitude manifests itself in the public sphere and is characterized by “a negation of the negation” (21, 64), blending the possibility of the uninhibited and the limiting and ending up in a regression to the infinite through different chronic forms of incompleteness. The metaphorical representations of a crowd on the front cover and the title page are also illustrative of the concept of multitude: on the former the circular and disperse state characterizes the animal-like humans in the form of a flower, turns into a spiral and normative state that governs the disciplined humans depicted on the first page.

The paradox lies in combining the spiral as a sign of interruption of “the circular flux of experience” (73) with norms or rules, the signs of obedience.

These two representations have a twofold aspect: the “ambivalence between the rule and the regularity of species-specific forms of conduct” (166), and the importance of mirror neurons within the interpretation of the multitude. Starting from Gallesse’s definition of mirror neurons as “the biological foundation of the sociability of the human mind” (177), Virno identifies a “we-centric space” (178) that rather than designating a sum of individual “I”s implies “a preindividual or subpersonal context.” It is exactly this co-feeling, which foregrounds the mirror neurons that we are endowed with, that should have drawn Virno’s attention on the syntagm of “a semiotic animal.” This is so because “Man is a semiotic animal; his human nature lies in the fact that, instead of expressing naturally his needs and wants, he has developed a language of signs which is conventional, symbolic, and only indirectly understandable” (Mongré, in John Deely, *Defining the Semiotic Animal* [Sofia: Tip Top Press, 2005], 26). This *semiotic* rather than *linguistic* animal better renders the intersection between grammatical and empirical statements, the main focus of Wittgenstein’s late work, *On Certainty*.

Another argument for humans as semiotic beings is found in Virno’s treatment of jokes, which he defines as “logicolinguistic diagram[s] of innovative action” (73). Not only do jokes reproduce in miniature the structure of a given phenomenon, as geographical maps do (165) (and as Charles Sanders Peirce defines diagrams), but they involve the necessary presence of the third person capable of assigning instant significance to the return to regularity performed by the first person. In his challenging essay on jokes (Part 2), which includes an account of Austin’s *How to Do Things with Words*, Virno applies the fallacy framework to Freud’s notion of jokes. He presents two genres of fallacy (146–48), the multiple use of the same material and the displacement or the deviation from the axis of discourse. This linguistic “standing out of the crowd,” through jokes or breaking of the rule through a return to regularity and normality (118), constitutes Virno’s interesting account of innovation,

rendered by the interdependence of “semisolid or semifluid propositions” (167).

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**Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent: Faith and Power in the New Russia.** By John Garrard and Carol Garrard (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), xvii + 326 pp. \$29.95/£20.95 cloth.

John and Carol Garrard have documented the transformation of the Russian Orthodox Church from a greatly diminished, persecuted, and highly compromised institution under Soviet rule into the powerful ideological and political force that it is today. They show how the driving force behind this transformation was the late Aleksey II (Aleksei Ridiger), Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church from 1990 until his death in 2008. The seven chapters address: the role played by Aleksey in the events leading to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991; Ridiger’s rise to power and successes prior to the collapse in securing the return to the Church of the Danilov monastery and the relics of St Alexander Nevsky and St Seraphim of Sarov; the architectural restoration of Moscow as the spiritual centre of Orthodoxy and the rebuilding of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour; Aleksey’s handling of the twin problems of the Orthodox Right: anti-Semitism and monarchism; the assertion of Orthodoxy as the privileged national religion and its enduring hostility to the Roman Catholic Church in particular; the Church’s campaign to deal with the legacy of collaboration with the Soviet regime; and finally, its strategy of propagating an ideology of religious nationalism through the establishment of links with the Russian armed forces.

The book covers the decades 1987–2007, but one of its most interesting, and effective, features is the way it handles time, its attempt to animate for the Western reader the coexistence in the Russian Orthodox consciousness of at least three orders of reality: secular calendar time; the ‘liturgical time’ of the Orthodox calendar, structured around the feast-days and saints’ days of the Eastern Christian year; and

the semi-mythologised, symbolical and ideologically charged time of Russian national history, which is inseparable from the history of the Russian Orthodox Church and which is mystically permeated by acts of divine intervention. Without the frequent excursions into history, cult, and myth, it would scarcely have been possible to convey to outsiders the enduring power, at once surprising and disturbing, of the Russian religious-national idea, or convince them of its political significance.

This narrative strategy is not always successful—it can distract from the main narrative and confuse the reader, and the use of this quasi-literary technique is one of the reasons why the book borders on the non-academic. Others include: a failure consistently to provide information about source material, to consult primary sources or standard academic studies of historical and theological topics; some instances of irresponsible speculation about motives and events; a few rather stretched cultural comparisons, and the occasional shocking historical error, such as when St John Chrysostom and St Athanasios the Great are said to have commented on Rublev's icon of the Old Testament Trinity (286, n. 10). Most strikingly, the narrative voice is that of the impassioned observer rather than the objective scholar, as though the authors are addressing a non-academic readership: this feels strange for an imprint of Princeton University Press. Nevertheless, none of the above criticisms should detract from the fact that this is an engaging study of a fascinating subject that is essential to our understanding of the new Russia.

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**The Geopolitics of Globalization: The Consequences for Development.**

By Baldev Raj Nayar (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), xli + 301 pp. £11.99 paper.

Over the past decade there has been no dearth of books on globalization. Given the multi-faceted and interdisciplinary nature of globalization, each new study tends to focus on some

specific area of global phenomena often reflective of the author's home discipline. Baldev Raj Nayar, professor emeritus of political science at McGill University, offers an analysis of globalization with a twofold focus, namely how geography informs economic policy and how the consequences of these interactions affect the developing world. In contrast to many theorists, Nayar argues that while globalization is both extensive and intensive, that is, broad-ranging and deep, it is in actuality truncated in that it has not permeated the developing world as extensively as it has the triad of the European Union, Japan, and the United States.

Conceptually, he begins his two-part study with an overview of modern globalization, then moves in Part 2 to an analysis of the geopolitics of the post-WWII era, particularly regarding the establishment of supranational organizations like the WTO and IMF. This section in particular reads like a handbook of political and economic history and presents an excellent summary and overview of economic and geopolitical theories of the past decades. Given that the subtitle of the study is 'the consequences for development', it comes as no surprise that his analysis of power structures is quite critical of the West and the United States, which, he argues, is intent on establishing economic hegemony in the postwar era. To be sure, his critique of the United States is warranted, as Nayar's goal is to explore the ramifications of geopolitics on the developing world. Part 2, though, suffers at times from unnecessary repetition as Nayar recounts historical developments in the West both from a geopolitical and an economic perspective. Thus he treats the post-WWII period, the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet bloc in two different chapters. While both chapters are insightful, it is unfortunate that he chose to treat them independently, as this undermines his important argument that geopolitics and economic policy and globalization are closely linked.

A clear strength of the second part, however, are the case studies of the developing world. In selecting specific countries of the developing world, Nayar focuses on the relationship between growth and openness, postulating that contrary to some theories, political openness or liberalism results from economic growth. To that end, the book

concentrates on East and Southeast Asia, a region that has demonstrated considerable “economic dynamism” in the twentieth century (137). First he discusses the “original” Asian tigers—Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea—then follows with an analysis of their “emulators,” Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand. Nayar shows that by adopting an export orientation strategy as facilitated by the so-called development state, the Gang of Four Asian tigers joined Japan as a model for economic growth and development in Asia in the latter half of the twentieth century. The integration of state politics and economic development, he convincingly argues, serves not only as an example of state-directed growth but also of the influence of politics on globalization.

This final point is revisited in the summary and conclusion. Nayar notes the limitations of both geopolitics and globalization and how the former has led to the truncated nature of the latter. Unfortunately, Nayar too often views the primary driving geopolitical force in the world as the U.S. desire to maintain its political and economic hegemony. While it is certainly true that the United States has used its political and economic clout to thwart the rise of many competing powers, it becomes somewhat limiting to view the rise and spread of globalization primarily through the lens of U.S. geopolitical policies. This view tends to undervalue the impact and import of other nations and organizations. Nevertheless, Nayar’s study is a very insightful and useful work on the spread, but also the limitations, of globalization and, in particular, offers a very valuable and well-researched analysis of Southeast Asia.

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**Women’s Wealth and Women’s Writing in Early Modern England: ‘Little Legacies’ and the Materials of Motherhood.** By Elizabeth Mazzola. *Women and Gender in the Early Modern World* (Hampshire, UK: Ashgate, 2009), xi + 126 pp. £50.00 cloth.

Elizabeth Mazzola’s work presents and analyzes the literary culture produced by women in

Early Modern England with special attention to the material legacies these women left behind. From the very beginning, we understand that “women’s writing” in the title refers to different kinds of material goods created by them and, therefore, they do not constitute literature as we appreciate it today, but form a corpus of material legacies speaking of women’s authority and creating, describing and maintaining relationships. By producing and transmitting or exchanging different objects these women left a legacy of their authority and name and thus rendered the story of their selves.

The material things produced and owned by women, as Mazzola explains, constituted their wealth, including gifts, candlesticks, jewels, pots, clothes, plates, etc. rather than land or money. Significantly, together with personal letters, these goods fostered communication, built relationships and encouraged interaction. Hence, they created female networks outside the precincts of the household, and these networks are informative of the politics, economics, aesthetics, and literature of the period.

The book is structured in five chapters in which Mazzola focuses on the long and uneasy relationship among four English noblewomen: Queen Elizabeth I, Elizabeth Talbot, Mary Stuart (Elizabeth’s cousin), and Arabella Stuart (Mary Stuart’s niece). The objects these women created or the gifts they made among themselves signaled feelings like affection or resentment, but they also indicated deeper significations regarding aristocratic crises and conflicts, courtly matters, as well as more general social, economic or political aspects. Women’s influence was thus collaboratively produced and transmitted by means of personal objects and these ties went beyond the world of the domestic home, illuminating and shaping more general realities.

Chapter 1, “Miroir or Glasse,” centers on the way in which the education of early modern daughters mirrors a complex relationship to their mothers. Domestic objects or pieces of needlework (such as sewing or embroidery) constitute fragments of literacy and young daughters were particularly trained in becoming expert housewives. An important example where gifts “transform daughters into authors by endowing mothers with history and property” (18) is that of young Elizabeth

Tudor's gift to Catherine Parr, namely a translation of Marguerite de Navarre's religious poem "The Miroir or Glasse of the Synneful Soul." Elizabeth's gesture discloses her special concern for the ties between daughters and mothers, for the issue of mothering and its multifold roles, or for the debate over matrilineage vs. patrilineage.

Chapter 2, "Borrowed Robes," is concerned with the transmission of women's property, mainly the case of mothers and children where a mother's material possessions are handed down to their heirs. The author investigates Elizabeth Tudor's appropriation of her sister's clothes for her coronation in 1559. A controversial yet meaningful act, this borrowing is also illustrative of the maternal legacies in Early Modern England and suggestive of the process of reproduction of mothering.

But the author observes that even in Mary Tudor and Elizabeth Tudor's case the relation was defined by types of affection and gratitude that commonly link mothers and daughters more forcefully. Above all, what this chapter seeks to demonstrate is that Elizabeth's gesture is related to her will to manage reproduction—even though she would never become a mother in real life—the reproduction of cloth and, through it, the reproduction of supremacy, authority, and influence.

Chapter 3, "Manifest Housekeepers," investigates another instance of creating or acquiring power and transmitting it. Apparently, Elizabeth I's choice (investigated in Chapter 2) is insignificant but, at a deeper analysis, we find that it is an act imbued with political implication, and the same can be said about Mary Stuart's corpus of needlework and poetry. These artistic products also convey the grounds for ambition, espionage, intrigue, and plotting. Mary's creation of the Oxburgh hangings, four large panels with emblems and ciphers, represents the visual symbolic representation of her desires, anxieties, and plans. Mazzola underlines that Mary materializes the business of state and envisions the image of a royal setting which is totally different from Elizabeth I's court (52). This activity and the final product offer Mary the chance to proclaim her ancestry and defend her political identity even if she does it in metaphorical terms. Her iconographic vision of a new world, which is in stark contrast with

that ruled over by Elizabeth I, provides a meaningful "self-narrative" (61).

We find the story of another royal claimant and prisoner in Chapter 4, "Strange Bedfellows." Letters offer Arabella Stuart the medium to challenge royal power, and writing is the space where she dares to confront her own fears and where she can record her desires and hopes. Arabella was confined and deprived of any real instance of authority, so these letters represent the fictional realm for her to express the story of her 'imprisoned' rights. Arabella employs the aristocratic prison to her own advantage, turning it into a site for spying, estrangement, and treason. Once again, letters become useful instruments of family life but, more than that, they become powerful instruments of state business.

In Chapter 5, "Girles Aflote," another issue comes forth in this world of feminine legacies and wealth and it has to do with the disruption of this mode of production. This disruption is signaled by Arabella Stuart's sale of the needlework panels produced by her grandmother and by Mary Stuart. This act announced the change occurring in the world of single women who were gradually confronted with hardship and misery. With this act, the symbolic bond of affection and power is broken, giving way to a world where money presides over other forms of establishing connections and maintaining kinship.

Mazzola proficiently discloses the ways in which the material objects jointly produced by early modern women created and transmitted a series of attitudes and beliefs. These objects constituted the universe these women inhabited and were not merely a reflection of it. Women's work also mirrored instances of creating social networks, of negotiating power, of reproducing or reshaping it. The book highlights the cooperative nature of women's work, which makes it all the more suggestive, for it does not only speak of private concerns but of how these are integrated in a significant social web describing a larger community. Women's goods authenticated families, strengthened affections and relations, organized households, and were hence testimonies of the very structure and architecture of contemporary society.

These material objects confirmed a form of feminine authority, and their circulation or alteration created a bond, a relationship,



a history, while their legacy to us constitutes a cultural, sociological and anthropological event which is worth studying.

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**Notes on Sontag.** By Phillip Lopate. *Writers on Writers* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), vi + 247 pp. \$19.95/£11.95 cloth.

It is worth starting this review with the remark that Phillip Lopate, the author of the book, is also an essayist, a fiction writer, a poet, and an editor of anthologies. He has edited a volume on the art of the personal essay, which probably made his task even easier when writing his *Notes on Sontag*. In this volume Lopate explores Susan Sontag’s multiple masks—as an American art critic, essayist, social policy advocate, novelist, war correspondent, etc. As the author states, the book attempts to trace how Sontag came to present her own complex, often contradictory, identity. The essayistic approach follows different perspectives: chronological, thematic, genre-oriented, while everything is surveyed with a critical eye. For instance, from the very beginning, Lopate categorizes Sontag as an excellent essayist but a poor novelist, and he maintains and proves his statement all through the book.

The volume is not a biography but rather a collection of essays interrogating Sontag’s major writings and, with this endeavor, it is an opportunity for Lopate to interrogate his own thoughts and feelings about Sontag. He notes that in one of her most important books, *Against Interpretation*, Sontag advocates the need to preserve the ‘mystery’ of things, and hence, their essence. She fights against interpreting art forms, so as to experience the luminousness of things in themselves (28). Lopate includes in the book some of his encounters with Sontag while he was an undergraduate at Columbia University, his personal contact with her showing her as being sincere, dynamic, often taking a superior stance, sometimes snobbish, but daring, enthusiastic, self-confident, revolutionary, and radical. He insists that Sontag’s personality was contradictory, since most

concepts used by her were often reassessed later on in her career. For example, she utterly disregarded concepts such as realism, psychology, or humanism, and yet, along the years, she seemed to have come to accept their meanings and connotations.

Lopate shows that Sontag gradually began to see herself more and more as a moralist both in political and aesthetic matters. Always an activist, she supported the progressive nature of the arts but, as he often does, Lopate disagrees with her, suggesting that the dialectal recycling of some tendencies or trends in different periods could be a better model than progression (85). Progression, transparency, spirituality, or demystification were some of Sontag’s favorite concepts and, more than everything, aphorizing seemed to function as a central technique in her writing. The author suggests that in her quest for truth, in the tradition of Theodore Adorno, Walter Benjamin, György Lukacs, or Roland Barthes, she looks for meanings even though the aphoristic manner can sometimes act more like an abstracted statement (93).

Further on, Lopate includes Sontag among the best American film critics (99) with “The Imagination of Disaster,” “Theatre and Film,” or “A Century of Cinema” where she insists that the cinema should be purified of any theatrical elements or where she laments the decayed condition of contemporary cinema referring to its status in the nineties.

Lopate’s favorite book written by Sontag is *Under the Sign of Saturn*, a collection of biographical portraits of intellectuals, all men, such as Paul Goodman, Antonin Artaud, Roland Barthes, or Walter Benjamin. Her presentation discloses that she admired their intellectual achievements but also their melancholy solitude, all of them being born under the sign of Saturn. Lopate expresses his admiration for the essay on Benjamin for its rhythmic flow and clarity of ideas. He suggests that Sontag’s early style was opaque and rather blunt, but that she could also clarify difficult ideas even in a loose, conversational tone.

Analyzing Sontag’s novels from the sixties, Lopate identifies other characteristic features of her personality as a writer—her weak sense of humor, her sharp criticism of American society and of the American dream. And this subject brings to the surface another controversy or difference of opinion between Lopate

and Sontag. If Sontag disregards America for its violence, materialism and resentment caused by cultural dislocations and immigration, Lopate opposes her excessively negative evaluation of America (153). In fact, Sontag's negative feelings about America are related to her preference for Europe and European thought or models, which she associated with liberation, seriousness, and diverse and dense cultural backgrounds. Another very impressive work is *On Photography* where Sontag records the history of photography and its roles in the modern world. But for Lopate this complex work is also disappointing because Sontag equates the camera with a violating gun, an assaulting object, here using a metaphor, a practice she later on criticized. Sontag also took a keen interest in political matters. At a certain point she spoke about the identity between Communism and Fascism but, after some time, she realized that art must resist any form of political enticement. As a cultural critic, then, she witnessed the rise of consumer capitalism which perverted any chance of greatness in the arts. For her, contemporary society simply left no room for artistic excellence.

But Lopate also scrutinizes another aspect of Sontag's personality, a more human-centered one where she deals with human suffering and illness. Therefore, in *Illness as Metaphor* and *AIDS and Its Metaphors* she takes up a totally different subject, focusing on human health or, better said, lack of health. But when speaking about cancer and AIDS she still relates the topic to the cultural environment of contemporary America. She identifies a common metaphoric thinking and discourse about illness which is closely related to the disorders of American culture. For Sontag, he states, the most truthful and appropriate way of regarding illness and of living it was one purified of any forms of metaphoric thinking (235). Although Sontag took up the mask of objectivity and impersonality in *Illness as Metaphor*, she drops it in *AIDS and Its Metaphors*, basically performing the same recurrent gesture of negating some of her former ideas. What matters is that while evoking the most ruthless diseases of our time she also spoke about herself, her own suffering, even if in a disguised manner, still echoing her ideas about the impersonal in art.

Reading Lopate's reflections on Sontag the reader certainly appreciates the writer's constant

endeavor to disclose as much as he can about what and who Susan Sontag—the person, the writer—was. Yet, understanding her identity means accepting and understanding those very controversies that went into its making, and Lopate himself tries to convey her multiple selves: the Susan Sontag he knew from personal encounters, and from her essays, novels, plays, articles or interviews. Although Lopate claims to be rendering a mere “conversation between two authors” (20), his words should not be taken as the final words on the subject, the book offers a multifaceted, challenging and vivid picture of an elaborate personality—all conveyed through a very personal lens.

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**Heidegger and Philosophical Atheology: A Neo-Scholastic Critique.** By Peter S. Dillard (London: Continuum, 2008), viii + 158 pp. £65.00 cloth.

In this provocative book, Peter S. Dillard analyzes how Heidegger's philosophy challenges traditional metaphysics as embodied in high Scholasticism. Heidegger himself sought to “overcome” metaphysics by repudiating its concepts, themes, and arguments as objects of intellectual inquiry. Thus, Heidegger's later philosophy can be labeled as atheology, and to view this systematization as containing some elements of orthodox theistic belief would be, according to Dillard, a grievous mistake. Heidegger, he claims, rejected the notion that the universe was created by a metaphysically independent creator, and so the very idea of a First Cause is not rationally possible.

Dillard hopes to reinvigorate specific aspects of the scholastic tradition by drawing upon medieval metaphysics, by using analytical rigor, and by respecting phenomenological insights while disputing deconstructionism. The thrust of his analysis is primarily critical rather than constructive. In the process of his explication he recognized that actually metaphysics resembles poetry and literature, since all three have a creative component nourished by a vital tradition.

In Chapter 1, Dillard shows how the youthful Heidegger utilized Thomas of Erfurt and Duns Scotus in an attempt to reconcile an antipsychologistic conception of judgment and logic with scholastic realism, a reasonable view of the knowing subject, and the possibility of the phenomenological and vibrant account of the nature of being as being. In Chapter 2, Dillard raises objections to Heidegger's early scholastic view and explains how Heidegger's late atheology of appropriation addresses young Heidegger's lingering doubts about Scotus's conceptual reality of elements. Chapter 3 emphasizes the antimetaphysical character of the atheology of appropriation by showing how it challenges Scotus's causal argument for God's existence. The following chapter develops a scholastic response that is grounded in the issue of sufficient comprehension, and Chapter 5 then focuses on Heidegger's radical contingency theme. Chapter 6 raises the scholastic attack on Heidegger's philosophical assumption swirling around his position on nothingness. Finally, in the conclusion Dillard concentrates on revelation and the status of mathematical truth.

Dillard's book is an abstract critique of Heidegger, but unfortunately omits the philosophical reflections that emerged between Scholasticism and Heidegger's phenomenology. Such reflections could have included the tensions between knowledge from reason and from the "heart" as well as the historicism so prevalent in modernity. The lack of context makes it difficult for the reader to comprehend the full force of Heidegger's phenomenology in the history of ideas. The reader will be left to wonder how Heidegger's work leads to personalistic philosophy or to existentialism. Dillard's work is also incomplete due to his leap from Heidegger to God's revelation in the person of Jesus. The leap may be valid, but is too quickly done. Dillard's analysis of Heidegger's work is very cogently and lucidly presented, but there are too many historical and philosophical gaps in it so that, in brief, this book is incomplete, even though it does challenge scholars to engage in research along the paths so deftly cleared by the author.

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**The Incarnate Text: Imagining the Book in Reformation England.** By James Kearney (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), ix + 312 pp. \$65.00/£42.50 cloth.

In this well-researched study, James Kearney seeks an answer to the question: how were books imagined in early modern England? He explores the paths used to imagine books during the crisis in representation and language, which was ignited by the Reformation. His periodization is particularly significant, since the religious environment was the context within which early modern discussions of the book as object were nurtured.

Kearney notes that in early modern England writers were engaged in theorizing the culture's relationship to religious objects. The human condition was redefined in relation to the material world. Natural philosophy's embrace of empiricism, for example, led to new ways of apprehending the physical material of the world. Kearney focuses on the object in crisis, the Reformation book. The crisis of representation in the book returned to several core concerns of Christianity and suggested pathways that could be followed to understand the beginnings of modernity.

One of the principal themes of Kearney's analysis revolves around the ambivalence toward the book, which is rooted in Christianity's stance toward icons. Should the book be venerated or repudiated in favor of the spirit? This tension persisted through the Middle Ages. The notion of Christ as book and scripture as the incarnate Word served to sanctify the Bible. The codex or book, therefore, could be used by Christians to think through some of the mysteries of their faith.

Luther's role in imagining the book, of course, is crucial. Like others, he promised a return to the true religion of the book and differentiated the Reformers from the Catholicism that was characterized as a religion of images, icons, and relics. Even for the Reformers, the Bible as a book was a source of concern. Were the Reformers guilty of bibliolatry, of reifying the text of scripture? For Luther the Bible seemed to be a necessary evil. This ambivalence toward the letter is at the heart of Kearney's argument that is focused on England.

As part of his study, Kearney traces the role of Erasmus as he guided contemporary Christianity toward language and text and away from images. Kearney also examines his theme very effectively through a chapter on Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* and a chapter on Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, in which is explored the dangers of reading. Finally, in his epilogue Kearney explores Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* wherein the book becomes the emblem of a religion that preserves revelation and awaits apocalypse.

This nuanced reflection on the meaning and role of the book at the dawn of natural philosophy is provocative. Kearney's keen eye and mind have discerned the contradictions and tensions in Christianity from its inception through the Reformation by examining the meaning of the "letter" and the "spirit," both of which have helped shape the Christian cognitive processes. His use of a thematic approach in trying to understand the contradictions in Christianity can be used fruitfully as a model by others.

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**Why?** By Charles Tilly (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), xi + 202 pp. \$16.95/£9.95 paper.

In *Why?*, Charles Tilly, a social scientist, claims to give an analysis of why people give reasons for what they do and for what affects them. However, Tilly's book is less about why people give reasons and more about the types of reasons people give to both explain and justify their actions in the world.

For Tilly, the answer why people give reasons is simple. Tilly's perspective is neo-Aristotelian, and he understands people as both social and "reason-giving animals" (8). Thus, reason giving is simply the way people develop their social relationships with each other. Tilly is not concerned with whether the reasons people give are any good or not. He is only concerned with the types of reasons people give. Tilly comes up with four types of

reason-giving: conventions, stories, codes and technical accounts, and he covers each type in a separate chapter.

Conventions are accepted practices that people utilize as reasons in social situations to keep the relationships running smoothly. For example, if I am late for an appointment, I can say that there was a traffic jam. No further reason is needed because we understand what a traffic jam is and how it affects arrival times. Thus, when we accept conventional reasons, we do not ask for any further justification.

Stories are reasons we give that simplify "cause-effect accounts of puzzling, unexpected, dramatic, problematic, or exemplary events" (64). Stories do this by reducing the number of players in a given state of affairs, assigning responsibility, providing a moral for the events and negotiating through relationships. For example, using a convention for a tragic family occurrence, such as "it was fate," may not be a sufficient reason for justifying the action to a family member. However, a story about why it happened could help to ameliorate the situation and heal the relationship. Stories act as powerful modes of justification in people's lives.

Codes are "formulas" that are generally used as reasons in organizations for specific disciplines, such as law, medicine, education and business (99). Codes function in terms of a "logic of appropriateness" (130). Sexual harassment claims and medical malpractice suits are often based on codes of procedure, where the codes act as justification for determining proper or improper behavior of the professionals in the organizations. A violation of the code is justification for the suit to continue, while not finding a violation of the code is a justification for the suit to be dismissed.

Technical accounts give cause-and-effect explanations and operate within "some systematic specialized discipline" (130). The sciences, regulatory agencies, legal researchers, medical researchers and other similar groups often supply technical accounts as justification, and their degree of specificity depends on the audience receiving the information. For example, a climatologist arguing in favor of the dangers of global warming would offer a much more technical account to fellow climatologists than she would to politicians. Yet, she would

still try to make the relevant cause-and-effect connections to the politicians that would show the urgency of the situation and the need for action.

Finally, Tilly addresses the issue of “reconciling reasons” (157). As Tilly points out, “authoritative reason giving” often works in society to justify a state of affairs (158). The problems for those who are authoritative, i.e., the specialists, are threefold: they need “to make the reasons credible,” to be able to communicate technical reasons and codes to ordinary people, and to reconcile these specialized reasons with the reasons people ordinarily give to social events (158). To deal effectively with these problems, Tilly argues for the use of what he calls “superior stories,” which are reasons given by specialists in a storytelling format that communicate technical accounts and codes in such a way that non-specialists can accept them (171). Tilly even understands his book as an example of superior storytelling.

Tilly’s book is insightful, easily accessible to any audience and worth reading. My problem with Tilly’s analysis is that he never addresses the issue of whether the reasons we give, in whatever form, are any good or not. Giving a bad reason is much more of a problem than the form the reason takes. So-called superior stories have been used by various authorities to get us into fruitless wars, to justify heinous actions and to silence the evil at work in society. After all, propaganda is a mode of reason giving. Perhaps Tilly would understand these reasons as inferior stories, but he would need to explain the difference between good and bad reasons.

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**James Watt, Chemist: Understanding the Origins of the Steam Age.** By David Philip Miller (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009), 233 pp. \$99.00/£60.00 cloth.

David Philip Miller’s thesis in this book is that we cannot understand the origins of the steam age if we do not appreciate the fact that

James Watt saw himself as at least as much a chemist—hence a scientist searching for understanding—as a mechanic-engineer, that is, as someone trying to invent a new kind of machine.

Miller argues that Watt’s carefully thought out improvements of Newcomen’s crude steam pump were, in Watt’s eyes, consequences of his ideas about the properties and natures of steam in particular, of “airs” (different kinds of gases) more generally, of heat, and of combustion. To the world at large, however, Watt, who died in 1819, was by the mid-nineteenth century widely hailed as a mechanical genius, an inventive engineer of the first order, and the “father” of the Industrial Revolution, to whom Britain especially was indebted for her new prosperity and global power. Even those who knew of Watt’s commitments to chemical theories, of his writings on chemistry and extensive chemical experimentation, consigned him to the front rank of great engineers but not of scientists. Why?

Miller does a good job of describing Watt’s chemical activities. He corrects the popular overestimation of Watt’s indebtedness to Joseph Black and he details Watt’s interactions, and occasional collaborations, with Joseph Priestley and with other Continental as well as British chemists. Miller makes a thoroughly convincing case that Watt *could* be called a chemist, but he is disingenuous about why even Watt’s sincerest admirers chose to present him to futurity only as an inventor-engineer. Effectively all of the chemical ideas to which Watt was most unshakably committed had, by the mid-nineteenth century, been dismissed as wrong.

Watt vigorously defended a quasi-material, chemical theory of heat as a substance with distinctive properties that determined its combination with different forms of matter in varying ways under varying conditions. He dismissed the ultimately triumphant physical theory of heat as “a vibration in bodies.” He defended the phlogiston theory of combustion, dismissing both Lavoisier’s oxygen-based theory and reconceptualization of chemical combination. In 1784 Watt claimed, in a *Philosophical Transactions* paper, that water was a compound because he had decomposed it. Posterity, however, attributed the credit for first decomposing water to the chemist

Henry Cavendish, because Watt had announced that water was composed of dephlogisticated air plus phlogiston “united to elementary heat and light . . . [which] are contained in it in a latent state” (103). A chemist but sounding by the 1850s very much like an alchemist! If you love the engineer Watt, then forgetting the chemist Watt seems the right thing to do.

Miller enriches our appreciation of Watt as a thinker, and by the way reminds us of one role that social construction plays in science—at the intersection of socially embedded scientific practice and the historicity of scientific ideas and theories. In the process of doing that, he raises but does not address a fundamental issue for understanding the relationship between science and technology: that technological innovations of great import, machines that work wonderfully well, can be conceived by the most eminent practitioners of science and engineering as the “fruit” of ideas/theories that to us are flat-out wrong. Miller’s restoration of Watt as a chemical experimenter and theorist cries out for expansion as an exemplary illustration of Kuhn’s *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.

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**The French Revolution Debate in Britain: The Origins of Modern Politics.** By Gregory Claeys. *British History in Perspective* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), x + 246 pp. £18.99 paper.

Gregory Claeys provides an authoritative and engaging treatment of the British assessment of the French Revolution. The major figures in British political thought are all given extensive treatment, including Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine, Mary Wollstonecraft, William Godwin, and John Thelwall. There is also extensive treatment of the various political parties, interests, and social thinkers from all the major groups including radicals and socialists, Tories and loyalists, and Whigs.

At least since Spengler noted the significance of the events of the French Revolution for the “Crisis of the West,” commentators

from Etienne Gilson to Ernest Barker to Leo Strauss have noted the importance of Enlightenment thought and the resultant crisis of modernity. From political philosophy and historical experience, “the French Revolution is incontrovertibly the defining act of modern politics” (1), Claeys states. The events of the twenty-first century reflect the enduring relevance of careful study of the foundations of modern politics. Claeys brings an important contribution to the most central historical watershed for the Crisis of the West and modernity generally.

Claeys provides a review of the biography and significant works of each major political thinker, as well as a felicitous structure that provides a review of their primary works, effect on the politics of the time, and enduring impact. His treatment of Edmund Burke illustrates the comprehensiveness of his approach. Burke represents the most noted British reaction to the French Revolution, if not the most important in the history of political thought. Claeys adeptly utilizes secondary commentators such as Carlyle and Coleridge to great effect to illustrate both Burke’s influence from the political philosophy presented in the *Reflections on the Revolution in France* and the centrality of the French Revolution for transforming politics in the modern era (22). For Burke: “The sins of the ancient regime . . . were thus modest beside the frightening hubris of its opponents. The Revolution, indeed, embodied the apotheosis of evil . . . The stakes being gambled for, thus, were nothing less than civilization itself” (23).

The only significant shortfall in this book is the limited treatment given to other significant figures such as Thomas Malthus, John Stuart Mill, and Charles Hall. In addition to expanded treatment of figures in the epilogue, the book would have benefited from additional analysis of the formative significance of the Revolution and its aftermath for the Great Conversation of the Western tradition. Claeys provides an excellent, though unfortunately limited, analysis of the relationship of the British reaction to the Revolution to the later political, social, and philosophical cleavages of the succeeding centuries, such as to the development of ideologies in the modern era.

Overall, this book is an essential addition for scholars studying the formative political, social, and historical foundations of modernity

as well as for students of the politics and history of the British and European reaction to the French Revolution.

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**The Cambridge Companion to Harold Pinter.** Edited by Peter Raby. 2d ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), xx + 323 pp. \$90.00/£45.00 cloth; \$29.99/£14.50 paper.

Harold Pinter is one of the most widely performed and best-known British dramatists. His contributions as actor, film-writer and poet have been extensively recognized and celebrated, as the citation for the Nobel Prize, which he received in 2005, demonstrates.

Pinter has also become an academic subject. There is a Pinter Society in the United States, producing an annual *Pinter Record*. There are Pinter conferences, and an increasingly formidable body of Pinter studies. This revised second edition of the *Cambridge Companion* reflects the wide approaches and different responses to the writer, to his work, to his influence and to his own presence on both performance and public stages. The contributions to this volume were all completed before Pinter's death on Christmas Eve 2008 and, as the editor underlines, "it was thought best to leave them unaltered" (4).

Although the edition deals with a diverse range of aspects and developments in Pinter's career, it centers on his writing for the theatre. In many of the essays there is a strong sense of the performance dimension. The collection also acknowledges the international interest in Pinter, with chapters on specifically Russian and Irish contexts, and by the inclusion of authors from the United States (Francesca Coppa, Steven H. Gale, Austin Quigley, Peter Raby), Spain (Mireia Aragay), and Israel (Yael Zahry-Levo), as well as from Ireland (Anthony Roche), and Great Britain (Richard Allen Cave, Harry Derbyshire, Charles Evans, John Fowles, Sir Peter Hall, Ronald Knowles, Mary Luckhurst, Drew Milne, Michael Pennington, John Stokes, Steve Waters). Even where topics are tightly defined—for example

*Pinter and the 1950s* or *Pinter as celebrity* or *Harold Pinter and freedom of expression*—the contributors reflect a common enthusiasm about their subject "suggesting that Pinter's dramatic writing has, collectively, a strong coherence, a sense of continuity and evolution," as Peter Raby summarizes his impression after editing the nineteen articles.

I am not drawn toward such a set of perspectives. I assume one has to be a *Pinter fan* (or at least a native English speaker) to feel invited to a constant re-evaluation. As a theater practitioner I avoid overviews, because they hinder the discovery of the different dynamics in a work's theatricality. Its aesthetic structures, determined by social antagonisms, are the focus I care for. The influences of Yeats, Kafka, Webster, and Swift may result in metaphors, symbols and myths—the innovatory qualities of Pinter that bring the mechanism of contemporary insights and knowledge to play upon them. The notes by Evans, Fowles, Hall, Pennington, Waters, and Brady search for "use value" (as Brecht suggests): they describe and recognize contradictions.

All the contributors are determined to analyze Pinter's aesthetic within the context of the performing arts. Their central question—"What in his work has offered itself most recently for discovery and re-appraisal?" (Cave, 124)—invites a mishmash of work and life, which seems to be so seductive in our days.

Theatre is not about its makers' ideology or kitchen drama, it is about *story telling*, not siding with solutions. One has to withstand contradictions, not to celebrate ideological consensus. For a long time in his life Pinter himself "acknowledged that he had no political arguments to make" (Quigley, 14). Even parallel to his loudest exercises of free speech in the media, as actor, writer or director he insisted that ideology is not the source of art. He relates to the old realism debate at best by guessing (as Ionesco did before him): it may be the other way around that art is the raw material for ideologies to come. If art reflects life, says Brecht, it does so with special mirrors. Pinter's strength as a playwright is that he draws a distinction between the political and the social. The local perspective of his characters, their conversational dialogue grasps the social status quo. Love, loyalty, the commitment of individuals within a small community arise as language, find their voice in *social gestus*.

Speaking indirectly or refusing to speak is what makes the characters of Pinter's plays attractive for actors. (Roche reports how the Irish audience translates its own reality into the play's events.) *Attitudes* of a very specific social context allow the spectator a meaningful and accurate examination of their own experience of living together. (Aragay confronts this concept with the postmodernist culture and its ignorance of *fable*.) The community context, its control of the speaker, is a sociopolitical conditioning not unfamiliar to most spectators. But Pinter actually writes silence. As a director I know his pauses are threats that the actors have to understand, that the silences are moments of intense emotions. Hall relates this technique to Beckett and Shakespeare, and he gives the strongest and clearest summary of Pinter's dramaturgy: "Precision that is masked in understatement" (164).

This book is a significant contribution to the understanding of the whole range of Pinter's work, and should be used not only in academic circles but in theatre dramaturgies too.

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**Mountain against the Sea: Essays on Palestinian Society and Culture.** By Salim Tamari (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009), xi + 237 pp. £19.95 cloth.

The escalating Arab-Israeli conflict, of which the Israeli-Palestinian dispute is only a small part, has in the last decade been further exacerbated by setting the Islamic world, led by Iran, who is not part of that neighborhood quarrel, against the Jewish people, Israel included. So much so, that even as the Palestinian leadership of the PLO has been struggling for the legitimacy of representing its people, other parts of the Palestinian people, like the Hamas, who seem to have been taking over that mantle of legitimacy, have voted for the widening of the circle of the conflict by joining the Iran orbit and predicating the conflict no longer on nationalistic and territorial claims, but on absolutistic, annihilistic and uncompromising Islamic threats.

Challenged by the absolutistic demands advanced by the Hamas, even the seemingly more moderate policies of the Palestinian Authority, and certainly individuals and intellectuals and the official media of that tendency, have in the past decade embraced a negationist approach to their conflict with Israel, in total disregard of either history or scientific approach. When this tendency is adopted by politicians and backed by pens-for-hire who dub themselves journalists, it is still within the boundaries of a legitimate political struggle. But when social scientists misuse their learning to lend their support to their political party, instead of differentiating between their legitimate personal loyalties and downright distortions of history to back their politics, academic research too falls victim to this conflict.

It has unfortunately become commonplace to hear Palestinian and other Arab archaeologists claim that Jews have never been in Palestine and have no claim to the land; that Jewish existence in ancient Palestine is fake; that there are no ruins of two Jewish Temples under the al-Aqsa Mosque; or that the Palestinians are the descendants of the Canaanites, not the Israelites, etc. We are even told that the new historical museum in Amman, which celebrates the ancient peoples of the area who are no more (like the Emorites, Jebusites, Moabites, Perizites, Edomites etc.) does not as much as mention the two Israeli kingdoms whose descendants are here today in modern Israel.

We know that imagined histories have been created in many political struggles between ethnic groups, to prove various myths or debunk them, or to diminish the rival or tarnish his image. But seldom has any such struggle totally negated the "other" out of existence like the Arab and Islamic world has been trying to do to Israel. So much so, that in their desperate attempt to prove the nothingness of the rival, they vow, repeatedly, to "wipe it off the map," without the United Nations and the civilized world so much as venturing a meek protest. What, then, could prevail on the Arabs and Muslims to change course?

What we have in Salim Tamari's book is a milder and more civilized version of this Arab- and Muslim-wide trend to negate Israel's existence, to demonize it so as to delegitimize it. For this purpose, it is easiest to attribute to Israel all the ills of the Arab world, as if without



Israel all would be well among Arabs and Muslims, among whom the rate of mutual killing, the level of poverty, sickness and backwardness would still relegate the Muslim world to the bottom of the human development scale according to the UN annual reports compiled by Arab experts themselves.

Thus, this otherwise original, insightful and in many of its parts brilliant, sociological analysis of the Palestinian historical and human landscape, often suffers from the flaws of ideological omission, factual distortion, and historical twists in order to avoid mentioning the two Jewish commonwealths which, for a millennium (from c. 1000 BC until the Christian Era, which itself was rooted in Jewish existence there) had animated ancient Palestine and pushed it onto the world stage; or Zionism, the major engine of modernity and development in the modern era; or the State of Israel, which has created a high rate of development, science and culture in the new Palestine (the Land of Israel in Israeli parlance, of which there is no mention in Tamari) as to put it on a par with the most developed nations of the world. Whether Tamari likes it or not, Palestine under Arab and Islamic rule never enjoyed statehood or autonomy, and its designation as such was only geographic, whereas under Jewish rule it has grown and flourished. Thus those horrible “imperialistic” and “Zionist” designs, lauded as “natural” and “Allah-ordained” under Arabism and Islam, are condemned under Israeli governance. So much so, that under the rapid pace of Israeli development, the dichotomy between the coastal cities and the mountains of the Galilee has become virtually nonexistent, though the author does not recognize this as Israel’s doing.

Most disconcerting to anyone concerned with sociopolitical definitions, for example, is Tamari’s invented terminology such as the “Arab-Jew” (3), which spells out a contradiction in terms rather than an ethno-cultural composite. In other socio-cultural milieus where Jews were allowed to merge into society, one accepts the terms American-Jew, European-Jew, or German-Jew. There they were accepted as a separate ethnic and religious people which could partake nevertheless in the national and cultural life of their country. In the Arab and Muslim worlds, the *Umma* is exclusively defined by Islam, and all non-Muslims who live in their midst are either

subject to discrimination and persecution or admitted into society as second-class *dhimmi* citizens. That situation has worsened since the beginning of the Arab-Jewish conflict and has resulted in the almost total evacuation of Jews from Muslim countries (about 1 million of them).

To evoke the construct “Arab-Jew” is therefore as bad as “Nazi-Jew.” Worse, for while the Nazis recognized the existence of a Jewish people in their search to exterminate it, article 20 of the Palestinian National Charter, to which Tamari presumably adheres, negates the peoplehood of the Jews, hence their statehood, and relegates them to the status of a religious group which, together with Muslims and Christians, can partake of a “democratic secular Palestinian state in Palestine.” From what others and Tamari have observed so far, Palestinians have not been very successful in remedying the corruption of the Palestinian Authority or of settling the contradictions among their parties. Democracy? Who dreams of democracy?

Colonialism and Zionism are similarly accused (3–4) of the rise of nationalism and the “unfulfilled modernity” of the Palestinians. The truth is that Arab Palestine was and remained underdeveloped compared to Jewish Palestine before 1948, and remained so under Jordanian and Egyptian rule in the days when the present pretext of Israeli occupation did not yet exist.

Tamari should recognize some of the benefits of the “Zionist occupation,” though he would prefer it never to have come about. It would be hard for him to admit that “Zionist occupation since 1967” has added 20 years to the Palestinians’ life expectancy (from 50 to 70), thanks to the healthcare introduced by Israel; agriculture has advanced by a millennium thanks to the introduction of modern farming, computerized irrigation, and hothouse farming, which have led to agricultural yields no Arab country has ever known. Where no university was allowed by Jordan and Egypt in the West Bank and Gaza, six universities have been built, including Tamari’s own, Bir Zeit, though in later years these universities became nests of terrorism. Even prior to that, since the end of the nineteenth century, it was the industrialization and modern farming introduced by the Jews that drew to Palestine new immigrants from adjoining Arab countries, the

very people who today claim they were “displaced” by the war they had caused. Contrary to Tamari’s assertion that Palestine was “forcibly disconnected” from the Arab world (3–4), it was the British Mandate that inaugurated the modern era in Palestine (not Napoleon and certainly not the Ottomans, who perpetuated the appalling backwardness of all the Palestinian populations, Muslim, Jewish, and Christian), and facilitated the massive immigration of Arabs that came to constitute the Palestinian Arab majority.

Similarly, for Tamari Imperialism began with the western penetration of the Islamic world in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries (6ff.). That 300 years previously, Ottoman Turks destroyed the Christian civilizations of the Middle East, including in Palestine, and Arabo-Muslims from the Arabian Peninsula invaded Roman, Berber and Vandal North Africa, and others rendered Central Asia Muslim through conquest—is not imperialism for him.

Tamari also finds no fault with the *Istiqlal* party (Independence of Palestine), which wanted their country to be part of Syria (6). Had they acceded to this there would have been not only no Israel but no Palestine, and both would have been submerged under the military dictatorship of the Assad dynasty. Is that the independence Tamari envisages for his state? The author also spreads the legend that Arab industry during the Mandate was as developed as Jewish industry (9). Why is it then that 60 or 70 years later, the GNP in Israel is 10 times that of the Palestinians, and it is the Palestinians who seek work in Israel? Until, of course, the Palestinian day laborers started to sabotage the plants where they made their living and to murder their Jewish employers. Then, naturally, Israel dismissed them and hired Thai, Chinese, Rumanian and other foreign workers in their stead. So, when Israel employed masses of Palestinians, granting them a higher standard of living than they ever knew before and acquainted them with a free and democratic society, it was doing no more than “exploiting their cheap labor.”

Tamari then comes up with another sociological invention: the “subordination” of the Israeli Arabs to Jewish society. Surely when one makes such a serious claim, one is under the obligation to show some evidence. How are they “subordinated”? Quite the contrary,

they behave like a new nobility, clamoring for the privileges of Israeli society—advanced social services in education, health and welfare—but disclaiming any duty towards the state. Tamari attributes their built-in social problems to the “limited options of political affiliation” (12–13). Quite the reverse is true, but the many years Tamari has spent observing Israeli society have not weaned him from his anti-Zionist commitment which has directed his research and colored his conclusions. Further investigation would have taught him that the Zionist parties have taken great risks to include Arabs in their constituencies, and there was a time when most of them indeed voted for them. The turning point came with Tufiq Zyad, a fervent communist Arab nationalist, a virulent hater of his country in whose parliament he sat, who headed the Nazareth municipally for many years, who through his fiery speeches shifted the Arab vote to the Arab parties and away from the Zionist parties. This shift manifested the nationalist tendencies of the Arab voters, which pushed them further towards separatism and alienation.

Tamari’s broadsides against Israel, which would render him popular among the Arabs and the anti-Israel left in the West, remain for the most part unsubstantiated and, far from teaching the reader the roots of the Palestinian problem or the conundrum faced by the Palestinian society today, directs him to lay the blame on others. Thus Tamari misses the opportunity to trigger the wake-up call to his people and urge them to compromise and settle peacefully, by continuing to tread the path of incitement. To seek support in the illusory theories of anti-Zionist Americans like Ian Lustick or of the Israeli-Arab Aziz Haidar, who suggested that the Hebrew University be closed down because of the scholars it produces (including himself), and in other failing ideas such as that Israel’s economy is based on “cheap labor” (16), or citing the Israeli incursion into Lebanon in 1982 (despite Israel’s later withdrawal) as “shattering the social fabric of the Palestinians”—is perhaps an easy way to get accepted by one’s public but is hardly commendable if one aims at scholarly excellence.

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**Thuggee: Banditry and the British in Early Nineteenth-Century India.** By Kim A. Wagner (Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), xx + 281 pp. £50.00 cloth.

Kim A. Wagner's book is an exceptional exploration of the historical 'thuggee' phenomenon in India, as it became visible in the early nineteenth century, and helps dispel several popular as well as academic myths. It is much to the credit of the author that he explores the manner in, and multiple social and institutional structures within which, thuggee becomes visible through the economic, administrative and juridical procedures of the East India Company. This exploration is methodologically credible, and necessary.

One example of the academic and intellectual benefits of his method is the new knowledge of the role of the *tehsildar*, of local feuds over land and honour, of N. J. Halhed's ignorance of these, and of mis-cognitions and mis-understandings that resulted in the attack in the ravines and the killing of Lt. Maunsell.

Another important benefit from reading Wagner's book is the demonstration of how the captured 'thugs' adapted themselves to what they saw as the expectations of the British authorities, and how through these mutual expectations, one can see the phenomenon of 'thuggee' emerge.

In this book Wagner combines interpretive, historical and linguistic skills to reveal hitherto undiscovered historical facts about a phenomenon that for almost two centuries has been covered over with myth, legend, fiction (Philip Meadows Taylor); and the academic double vision that afflicts any study of 'colonial' India. Wagner astutely refrains from engaging with this double vision, and thus has a clearer description of 'thuggee' than available elsewhere.

Had Wagner engaged with the affliction of the double vision, he would have produced a 'theoretical' book, a jump that he makes but does not make (he would have had to engage with 'postcolonial theory' at its best). This is not a flaw as far as this book is concerned, because the book is convincing in its historical and archival material provisions.

Wagner spends some space on the notion of the "itinerant underworld." This notion, when articulated in this manner, is worth attention, but it is also necessary to think of

the dis-privileged who become ambulant "criminals." This is the "theoretical" jump that Wagner does not make. A description of the transformation and redistribution of dis-privilege that must have taken place after the East India Company became dominant would have made the book even more valuable.

This book will do much to dispel the static popular image of the thug with this *rumal*, the man of innumerable disguises, the cheater, the Kali-worshipper; and replace it with historical and variable processes that are difficult to fix into static images and categories. It also makes it possible for the reader to appreciate the mutual cognitive failures, and the mutual cognitive successes.

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**The Godfather Doctrine: A Foreign Policy Parable.** By John C. Hulsman and A. Wess Mitchell (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 85 pp. \$9.95/£5.95 cloth.

This pocket-size book originated as an essay in a conservative American journal, the *National Interest*, with subsequent versions appearing in a major newspaper and *Harper's Magazine*. John Hulsman is president of an international relations consulting firm in Berlin and a member of the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations. A. Wess Mitchell is director of research at the Center for European Policy Analysis in Washington, D.C. Their essay occupies the first sixty pages of the work, followed by a twenty-one-page epilogue in which they respond to the reactions of critics.

Their project is a focused critique of recent American foreign policy using Francis Ford Coppola's famous mafia film, *The Godfather* (1972), as an allegory for what to avoid and what to embrace in order to succeed better than the United States has in recent decades. The authors reached this unusual solution while drinking beer in the Kreuzberg district of Berlin late in 2007. They concluded that the film had great potential to "convey the

seriousness of America's current predicament and the strategic alternatives that are available for handling it" (17). They perceived in the movie "two hauntingly prophetic messages that speak directly to America today: that the fall of the powerful is inevitable and that we have options for how we respond to this tragic truth, make the most of the hidden opportunities it presents, and chart a course to renewed strength" (16).

Following the almost successful assassination attempt on mafia boss Vito Corleone, his three sons proposed divergent ways to respond to the attack on their family and its power-hold on various rackets. Son Tom becomes a marker for the "liberal institutional" approach advocated by liberals, like Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, using entities like the United Nations to solve international problems and threats to U.S. interests. They place excessive faith in the potential success of "negotiations." Tom's brother, Sonny, serves as a stand-in for conservatives like George Bush and Dick Cheney who would use American might to punish enemies swiftly and spread the nation's values to benighted cultures that lack democracy but possess resources essential to U.S. vital interests. Rejecting both approaches, the youngest son, Michael, is used by the authors to represent the view they advocate, called realism: "wholesale strategic retrenchment" (47).

Why? Because in their view the United States is no longer the dominant hegemon in the world and therefore must stop living in the past. America should position itself as "the next best thing: *primus inter pares*—first among equals" (60). They argue that only by doing so can the United States preserve its position in a dangerous world. Many will find that view problematic, perhaps because much has changed just since 2007. Even as Barack Obama seems increasingly embattled at home, his popularity in Western Europe remains very high though less so in the East ("U.S. Stance Toward Russia Again Divides Europe," *New York Times*, Sept. 10, 2009, p. A8). But traditional allies in the West are increasingly unwilling to commit themselves to constraining such threats to international security as al-Qaeda and the Taliban. An expanded NATO appears reluctant to co-operate fully, leaving the United States standing as a

hegemon *malgre-lui*. American resources are finite, and it cannot police the entire world. Yet terrorism and climate control remain truly global issues and others will continue to look to the northern hemisphere for leadership. Members of the BRIC group are unlikely to supply that for diverse reasons.

The "realist" position as schematized by Hulsman and Mitchell ultimately reads like a new form of aloofness, almost an abdication of leadership in world affairs. They want America to regain its role as a "city on a hill," a model republic for others to emulate. Unfortunately, the planet will not become a safer place if the United States does little more than pose as "an inspiration for the rest of the world because of what it stands for as much as for what it does" (81).

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**L'Amour à Versailles.** Par Alain Baraton et Laure de Chantal (Paris: Grasset, 2009), 281 pp. €17.50 cloth.

Dixième ouvrage d'Alain Baraton, co-rédigé avec la collaboration de Laure de Chantal, *L'Amour à Versailles* raconte un pan méconnu—mais souvent évoqué—de la vie quotidienne au Château de Versailles durant l'Ancien Régime en se concentrant sur les ébats sentimentaux des monarques français et ce, avec une foule de prétendantes, courtisanes, nymphes, maîtresses, favorites. Les personnages de ce livre sont réels et déjà bien connus: d'un côté les rois successifs Louis XIII, Louis XIV, Louis XV, Louis XVI; de l'autre Marie-Antoinette, Madame Du Barry, Madame de Pompadour, Madame de Maintenon. Ce désordre amoureux au plus haut niveau de l'état occasionnait alors de nombreux débordements: jalousies excessives, enfants naturels, intrigues et conflits de toutes sortes.

Ce livre se subdivise en vingt chapitres succincts, respectant la chronologie des événements, mais c'est la dernière moitié qui est la plus étonnante: libertinages, amours licencieuses, détournements de mineures, incestes, orgies (149). Mis à part son audace parfois étonnante, j'ai particulièrement apprécié

l'insistance de l'auteur à souligner les jalousies fréquentes ayant existé à la Cour de France; ce mot revient d'ailleurs à maintes reprises et on comprend que ce sentiment était à l'origine de bien des furies et des déboires à Versailles. L'avant-dernier chapitre porte sur les conséquences inévitables de tous ces écarts: l'apparition des maladies vénériennes et les naissances d'enfants bâtards (232).

Ouvrage sans illustrations, *L'Amour à Versailles* fait indirectement écho aux nombreuses adaptations filmées récentes qui donnent au grand public une image excessivement romancée et frivole du 18<sup>e</sup> siècle. Le style d'Alain Baraton est plutôt anecdotique et son essai se lit parfois comme un roman léger qui, malheureusement, ne comporte pas de notes en bas de page (192). Même les nombreuses citations entre guillemets n'indiquent pas de sources ou de titre du livre cité; c'est d'ailleurs là le principal défaut de *L'Amour à Versailles* (119, 141, 144, 158, 161, 208, 228, 235, 238). L'auteur n'est visiblement pas historien de formation, mais il travaille au Château de Versailles depuis un quart de siècle. De ce fait, cette position privilégiée et quotidienne sur ces lieux devenus mythiques lui permet de confirmer qu'aujourd'hui encore, les jardins du Parc de Versailles servent toujours de lieux d'ébats à certains couples fascinés par l'histoire de ces lieux enchanteurs et légendaires; ainsi, entre 1976 et 1990, on a rapporté chaque jour au moins un cas de couple—de Français ou de touristes—surpris en flagrant délit dans l'immense Parc de Versailles (268). Parce qu'il se concentre trop sur des anecdotes et passe très vite sur les événements politiques peu mis en contexte, *L'Amour à Versailles* ne devrait pas constituer l'initiation idéale à l'histoire de France d'avant la Révolution, mais il permet néanmoins de comprendre les mœurs exceptionnelles des derniers rois de France et de leur Cour envahissante. En outre, on ne saurait reprocher à Alain Baraton de ne pas raconter toute l'histoire de la monarchie française en un seul volume: ce serait un défi impossible. En revanche, celui-ci tient assurément toutes les promesses annoncées dans son titre clair et sans équivoque.

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**Feeding the World: An Economic History of Agriculture, 1800–2000.** By Giovanni Federico (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005; reprint, 2009), xiv + 388 pp. \$24.95/£17.95 paper.

As the oldest and most important human activity, agriculture continues to play a major role in our lives. The last 200 to 300 years, however, have seen a major transformation in how farming is practiced. To condense these processes, which have been taking place in varying intensity across the globe, into a book of 230 pages of text, followed by 17 of a statistical appendix and 72 of explanatory notes, is a major operation full of risks. Giovanni Federico has used an extensive and impressive body of literature to cover the topic (his bibliography extends over 56 pages), and his examples are taken from all continents, as far as studies and data are available.

The period under examination—the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—is characterized by changes in many fields that are relevant to agriculture (patterns of land use, crops, machinery, status and input of manpower etc.). To be precise, many processes in Europe started in the eighteenth or even seventeenth century, but in-depth studies on this earlier period are rather rare. To concentrate on the past 200 years therefore makes sense.

In ten chapters, the author first discusses the relevance and particular nature of agriculture, long-term trends, growth patterns, and increases in productivity. He goes on to present, in this order, technical progress, macro- and microeconomics, institutions, and the role of the state, before coming to a conclusion.

Right from the beginning it becomes clear that Federico's approach is essentially technical. The role of agriculture in our society would justify a reference to Malthus who was writing before the major innovations in various fields (techniques, machinery, capital etc.) took place. The problem of food supply—the major task of agriculture—is discussed in a rather superficial way. Similarly, the ecological side receives very little attention. The title of chapter 2.2, "Agriculture and the Environment: An Uneasy Relationship," suggests a way of thinking that considers "nature as an enemy"

(5), an assumption for which no reference is given. The mere idea that we could sacrifice most existing forests in order to increase the surface of farmland (5) sounds absurd at the beginning of the twenty-first century when forests are sacrificed for oil palm plantations, soya fields, and stock rearing. Given this attitude, the lack of a reference on organic agriculture is not surprising, although this practice (promoted by the anthroposophist Rudolf Steiner) started over eighty years ago and has been growing ever since. The general outlook shows a lack of understanding for certain socio-cultural practices that hamper progress. Africa, for example, suffers from a “witch economy” whereby no member of a family should excel others for fear of being accused of unilaterally profiting from the family structure (David Signer, *Die Ökonomie der Hexerei oder Warum es in Afrika keine Wolkenkratzer gibt*, 2004; see also Barack Obama, *Dreams from My Father*, 2008, esp. 319f., 337: “If you have something, then everyone will want a piece of it”).

Despite certain weak points, one has to acknowledge the huge amount of work that was needed to produce this volume. It is the orientation that seems far too technical. The discussion about prices in chapter 3.3, for example, culminates in the statement that “agriculture has successfully accomplished its basic task, to feed the population and provide raw materials for industry” (25). Given this apparent success, the question remains why there is still hunger in the world.

Property rights, labour issues and the state of capital receive excellent treatment in chapter 7, as too the agricultural institutions and their growth. But questions remain: why was only the successful case of Japan chosen to illustrate land reforms (15)? An unsuccessful example could have illustrated the wide range such reforms cover and the many difficulties that need to be overcome. Similarly, why is there no reference to the microcredit movement started by Muhammad Yunus in the 1970s that was also directed to farmers (and for which he received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006)?

Federico’s book left this reviewer with mixed feelings. On the one hand, it presents a lot of interesting material, though often backed by a poor statistical base (which is not the

author’s fault); on the other hand, key ecological and societal elements are missing. Sometimes one is even puzzled: in Table 8.10 (167) we find a reference to a source that does appear in the list (De Cambiaire 1938). Such an omission may of course happen to anybody. Still, it remains a mystery how this 1938 source can include data for Switzerland for the period 1931–46.

I recommend this book for those who want to gain a general understanding of the dynamics of world agriculture and who are looking for scientific texts in the field. The rich bibliography can satisfy many people’s curiosity in this respect.

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**Rome and the Barbarians, 100 BC–AD 400.** By Thomas S. Burns (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), xiv + 461 pp. \$30.00 paper.

This is a reissue in paperback of a book that first appeared in 2003. It covers a long stretch of Roman–barbarian relations, with a primary emphasis on the Rhine–Danube frontier, and provides a general framework for approaching this complex area. Much of the treatment is fairly general, and there is relatively little detailed discussion of specific items of evidence. This is partly a product of the broad sweep and the attempt to include a survey of relevant archaeological insights.

The first chapter is a discussion of the Roman view of the barbarian, and grapples with their static self-image. Romans saw themselves as agents of change but believed (mistakenly) that they themselves remained unchanged by the process. This is an area that has been very thoroughly explored by Greg Woolf in *Becoming Roman* (Cambridge 1998), and the present work shows this influence. There is also consideration of the barbarian response to Romanisation, and modes of assimilation chosen by these outsiders. The chapter suggests that the image of Romanisation presented by the ancient authors can be checked against the archaeological

record, while admitting some inherent limitations in our capacity to date and track changes.

The main chapters deal with the Romans' earliest involvement in southern Gaul, and their employment of patron-client relationships and the process of colonisation as tools for controlling the area. There is quite extensive consideration of the use by the Gauls of *oppida* as a response to the Roman presence, as well as of the way in which groups such as the Cimbri and the Teutones were kept in view as threats as late as the age of Augustus. The chapter on Caesar shows a good awareness of the limitations posed by the genre employed, and the limits of Caesar's treatment of ethnography. Thomas Burns points out that the elite squabbles in Gaul are in fact rather similar to those at Rome. Frontier developments on the Rhine-Danube are a central concern in the chapter on the early empire, and there is a detailed and useful chapter on Pannonia which extends to the third century. Both trade and the use of veterans as agents of change are explored, and archaeological evidence, especially tombstones, demonstrates the gradual process of barbarian integration.

Chapters 6 and 7 discuss the later period at some length and in rather greater detail. It is here that the theme of barbarian relations with the Roman world tends to become swamped by the discussion of chronological developments. Topics covered include the historiography of the period, and quite detailed analyses of the strengths and weaknesses of Dio and Ammianus are included. The broad scope of the book, which includes some coverage of trade and social conditions on the Rhine-Danube frontier, should be emphasised, and the disparate coverage will be seen as strength or weakness according to taste.

Earlier reviewers have commented on the excessive length of this book. There are times when it seems to do too much—to attempt to provide a chronological account of late antiquity in the process of covering its main theme. Nevertheless, its strength lies in surveying the Rhine-Danube frontier over a long timescale, and the attempt to make sense of Roman-barbarian relations in this context.

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**Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity.** By Martin Heidegger. Translated by John van Buren. *Studies in Continental Thought* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), xii + 138 pp. \$19.95 paper.

Heidegger is not easy to read. He doesn't help his case much; he readily lends himself to the criticism of a developing Heideggerese that only the initiates can follow. Some translators have decided that fidelity to Heidegger's style should be favoured and thereby ease of comprehension should be sacrificed. Such is the case with Macquarrie and Robinson's translation of Heidegger's seminal work, *Being and Time*. Criticized for being too rigid and difficult to comprehend, others have preferred the approach of Joan Stambaugh who renders Heidegger much more accessible. For that very reason, however, staunch Heidegger scholars have rejected Stambaugh's work as un-Heideggerian. Such is the landscape of Heidegger translation: too rigid and the text becomes incomprehensible; too accessible and the text is no longer Heideggerian.

This is the divide that John van Buren successfully bridges in his masterful translation of *Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity*. The text is a rendering of a lecture course in 1923, just three years before the writing of *Being and Time*. No matter what position one takes as the point of access into *Ontology*, there are numerous stumbling blocks that make the text largely inaccessible, whether that be the title or the main concepts. Even if one starts with the title, problems already pop up. The course was originally to be titled "Logic" but because of some difficulties with another course being offered at the same time, it was renamed "Ontology," which Heidegger, in the opening section, states is really the "Hermeneutics of Facticity" if understood properly; it is the investigation of the being-there of Dasein and its world in its temporal particularity. This is one of the first instances where Heidegger turns phenomenology into a study of the *how* of the being of Dasein as factually existing in the world.

Alternatively, if one takes the main concepts as the point of access, one is besieged by over fifty neologisms. True, many of these terms have already had quite a bit of work done on them, such as *Dasein*, *Umwelt*, and *Sorge*,

but van Buren's translation simultaneously renders these terms accessible and yet ever so slightly foreign to the seasoned Heidegger reader. The foreignness of these familiar terms perfectly renders the fact that Heidegger was still working through these concepts that did not reach a resting form until a few years later in *Being and Time*. Of particular note is Heidegger's *weilen*, to while, which undergoes many different formulations in the text, is conspicuously absent in *Being and Time*, but is returned to again in Heidegger's later thinking.

John van Buren's translation should be read by anyone looking for an access point into Heidegger's work because of his faithful and comprehensible way of rendering this difficult text. Any careful reader of Heidegger who is looking to better understand his work should also read this translation if for no other reason than to see, in nuce, the beginnings of Heidegger's thought. Basically, anyone reading Heidegger should be reading this text.

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### **Motivation and Narrative in Herodotus.**

By Emily Baragwanath (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), xii + 374 pp. £65.00 cloth.

Herodotos is a 'wonderful' historian. He wrote his *Histories* from the broad standpoint of a near contemporary who wished, or rather intended, to capture memories, events, traditions, and history/histories in progress, the 'witness' of quite remarkable times. From the beginning of his work (*Histories* 1.1 in its entirety) to his candid and shrewd observation in 7.152, Herodotos well understood he was working with a kaleidoscope of opinion, rumour, assertion and reportage.

Herodotos' grasp of a grand narrative for an equally large and memorable subject is also perhaps an inscribed intellectual confirmation of his ranging intensity of interests in human behaviours in and through traditions in formation—in and of rivals and rivalry—historical times, dynastic rule, the exercise of power, and their intersections with other cultures by ways of human actions—the play of *chance*,

*circumstance* (*symphora/symphorai*—note *Histories* 7.45–52, generally, and 7.10ff, and see earlier re Solon and Croesus 1.30–45ff), that is, the course or passage of risk-taking behaviours. Whether or not ideas of hubris are present here, the sense of things would appear to be that human actions are subject to the variable plays of external chance and circumstance—human and divine. Their potential or combination could confront or confound human intentionality. Intellectual history in-the-making is omnipresent, and Herodotus, historian and philosophical anthropologist is in dialogic/interrogative, enquiring narrative mode.

Herodotus writes history as many historians might well wish to write it: with ease, with pace, with a verve born of complex engagement with his own Hellenic and wider Mediterranean worlds, and yet it's such a 'reasonable', intelligent, ready to hand read. Intellect and intellectual engagement are not the "ghosts in the machine" of Herodotus' *Histories*, they present themselves throughout his enquiries. He engages readers and/or listeners with a lively intelligence in all senses of this term... a useful truism when considering the integral complexity of beliefs, ideas, traditions, histories and social practices in daily life in Hellenic/Mediterranean societies and well beyond.

Emily Baragwanath's *Motivation and Narrative in Herodotus* is a welcome forensic venture which merits the attention of students and readers, and those scholars interested in the development of history writing.

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**Hypatia of Alexandria: Mathematician and Martyr.** By Michael A. B. Deakin (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2007), 231pp. \$28.00 cloth.

Hypatia of Alexandria was a person of singular intellectual presence and, whether the female Mathematician scholar was aware of it or not, an Alexandrian possessed of courage. Michael Deakin's study of Hypatia and his compilation of written materials concerning her life and times is a timely and scholarly contribution to the history of ideas. Neither her



contributions to teaching and education nor her standing within Alexandria in the late Roman Empire should be underestimated. Alexandria as a city was characterized by its remarkable creativity and the diversity of its cosmopolitan population—a feature of this city-state enclave which continued well beyond the Hellenistic and Roman worlds. Yet, as can be said of other cities and times in Europe, the Mediterranean and beyond, extremes of violence, and hatred or intolerance, born of civil strife or internecine religious/ideological struggles and blind or induced fear-of-the-other can and did lead to human tragedy—individual and collective.

Hypatia was blessed by Theon, her father, with intellectual support and his considerable educative presence in mathematics and astronomical work and her own vocational gift for philosophical/mathematical teaching and research.

Amidst this tumultuous Alexandrian environment, where Christian Alexandrians, Hellenistic Alexandrians, Jewish Alexandrians . . . Alexandrians of belief, ethnicity and locale lived and worked, prayed and worshipped, Hypatia entered intellectual life in terms of her cultural and historical sensibilities and ranging intellectual interests in this Alexandrian world city, and proceeded to teach and live the life of an engaged, urban and urbane intellectual. However, the city of Eratosthenes and Herophilus was not the same city in which Hypatia lived during the latter half of the fourth century and the early years of the fifth century C.E. The flourishing of Greek letters, science, ideas and traditions of thought, of the learning and legacies of Plato, Aristotle, and the rise of Neoplatonism was caught up in the pressures, wars, civil strife and violence which surged through the late Roman Empire. Alongside these experiences followed the more local violent tides of political, civil and religious unrest and warring . . . if these forces can be isolated one from the other. It was as if 'The Museum,' the 'papyrus/parchment-book' repository and research libraries, later renowned as The Library of Alexandria, was gradually, as well as negligently, allowed to wither.

By the end of the fourth century, these forces, as exemplified by the destruction of the Temple of Serapis, were seeking in cultural/anthropological and social senses of these terms

to displace and remove Greco-Roman Pagan Antiquity.

The Hellenistic/Ptolemaic legacy had lost or was losing its allure. The intellectual and cosmopolitan Christian Neoplatonist thinker and social mover, Synesius, a former pupil of Hypatia, remained in the course of his remarkable, short life, an influential, outside, protective force and friend in the complex of politics, religious beliefs, philosophical arguments and alignments which coursed through Alexandrian city life and the late Empire.

Hypatia's brutal death, still controversial (see Appendix D for sources: excerpts, and ranging, variable accounts, and deadly fragments; see also, chap. 7), remains a testament to irrationalism, intolerance, and the descent of Alexandria into a centre of theocratic absolutism ruled by fanaticism, fear and the use of the pogrom. Murderous "mob/gang/factional" actions and fanatical conspiratorial players have not departed from humanity's histories. This was a far cry from Alexandria's old, cosmopolitan and often unruly cantonal past.

*Hypatia of Alexandria* is to be welcomed for readers interested in the intellectual and scientific legacies of Greco-Roman civilization and its remarkable Alexandrian contributions. It is also to be welcomed for its introduction to, and gathering of sources, which open up the dangerous passage of civil, religious and sociopolitical discord in late Antiquity. Mathematical, geometrical and philosophical reasoning, treatises and arguments live uneasy private and public lives in 'ancient' as well as 'modern' worlds.

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**The Lost Love Letters of Heloise and Abelard: Perceptions of Dialogue in Twelfth-Century France.** By Constant J. Mews. Translated by Neville Chiavaroli and Constant J. Mews. 2d ed. (Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), xxi + 421 pp. \$31.00/£17.99 paper.

This study is based on an incomplete fifteenth-century transcription of lost love letters Constant J. Mews believes are by

Heloise and Abelard. Mews contends that these letters illuminate the early relationship between the two lovers and the tensions of the society in which they lived. The first chapter examines Johannes de Vepria's transcript of these letters in a collection revelatory of the relations between educated men and women. Following a summary of the contents of the letters, Mews concludes that they were written in Paris and in two voices, that of the man expressing a vision of *amor* as passionate and unrefined by reference to some higher ideal, and that of the woman interested in the nature and demands of love. The letters cover a period of about a year. The second chapter treats the better-known collection of letters written about fifteen years after the end of Heloise and Abelard's physical relations, discovered by Jean de Meun in the thirteenth century. This chapter deftly treats the shifting scholarship on Heloise and Abelard over the years.

The third chapter, "Paris, the Schools, and the Politics of Sex," analyzes the relationship between Heloise and Abelard as revealed by early-twelfth-century documents other than the *Historia calamitatum*. The fourth chapter sketches the nature of twelfth-century dialogue on authentic relations and argues that for Heloise to reflect on love was not unusual. The fifth chapter attempts to give a firm foundation to the claim that the letters transcribed by Johannes de Vespria are by Heloise and Abelard through a learned comparison of their vocabulary to the known writings of Heloise and Abelard. The sixth chapter develops the implications of this for understanding "The Voice of Heloise." The argument is that an acceptance of the letters transcribed by Johannes de Vespria as genuine allows a more complicated view of the relationship than that given by Abelard. The final chapter, a rewrite of the *Postface* to the French translation, covers the debate and discoveries since the publication of the first edition of this book in 1999 until 2007. For instance, about the time the first edition of Mews' book appeared, C. Stephen Jaeger's *Ennobling Love* drew some of the same conclusions as Mews did, and in the new edition Mews discusses Jaeger's work. But Peter Godman, whose *Paradoxes of Conscience in the High Middle Ages: Abelard, Heloise, and the Archpoet* was too recent for Mews to use in the second edition (reviewed by me in

*The European Legacy* 15.6 [2010]), seems unaware of Mews' scholarship.

The second part of the book consists essentially of the text edited by Ewald Könsgen, and the translations of the letters. There is a new "Bibliography since 1999." Though occasionally Mews makes an improbable statement, for instance, that the kind of exchange found in the *Epistolae duorum amantium* "was simply not possible after Pope Calixtus II imposed clerical discipline throughout the Church [at the 1119 Council of Reims and the I Lateran Council]" (196), for the most part this is a convincing book. Hopefully, Mews has lain to rest the widespread view that, whereas an ideal of spiritual love informs Abelard's letters, Heloise's love is worldly.

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**Dominicans, Muslims and Jews in the Medieval Crown of Aragon.** By Robin Vose. Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought. 4th Series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), xv + 294 pp. \$99.00/£55.00 cloth.

In the last generation, much of what we thought we knew about the interrelations between the Abrahamic religions in the later Middle Ages has been dismantled. In this book, centered on the Dominicans in the medieval Crown of Aragon, more famous, but short-lived, activities such as Arabic language instruction and disputation with Jews recede before study of the everyday Dominican life of teaching and preaching, concerned to protect religious boundaries. Oddly, the Introduction affirms R. I. Moore's undifferentiated labeling of this period as the "persecuting society" (on the limitations of which see my "The Middle Ages in the History of Toleration: A Prolegomena," *Mediterranean Studies* 16 [2007]: 1–20), while the book itself warns against all kinds of commonly accepted generalizations. Robin Vose insists that at the local level Dominicans were little interested in campaigns of proselytism: "Always . . . the friars' primary aim was the protection and nurturing of the faithful rather than conversion of

unbelievers (7).” He argues that centering Dominican history on missionizing is more a product of the sixteenth century than something in place from the beginning.

Chapter 1 examines the initial Dominican concept of mission: providing teaching and the sacraments to Christians. Vose understands that much high medieval canon law was devoted to the question of the sense in which Christendom was “dualistic,” that is, had two authorities, one practicing spiritual direction, and one engaged in temporal matters. He lists both theoretical and practical limitations on any practice of forced conversion. His treatment of the twelfth-century Christian polemicists and apologists, men like the convert from Judaism, Peter Alfonsi, is well-informed: presumably Thomas Burman, *Reading the Qur’an in Latin Christendom, 1140–1560* (2007) appeared too late to be used. Chapter 2 analyzes the Dominicans’ position in the Crown of Aragon, socially, politically, and financially. The survey of the friars’ resources is continued in Chapter 3. The limited evidence of Dominican preaching to Jews and Muslims is the subject of the fourth chapter.

Chapter 5 turns to censorship, inquisition, and discipline. In these matters the Dominicans seem not to have disturbed the Muslims and Jews among them. Chapters 6 and 7 cover Dominican activity in the (western) Muslim world, emphasizing again Dominican concern for pastoral care in these regions. Finally, Chapter 8 uses the story of Baruch Teutonici to illustrate daily contact with Jews and Muslims in an atmosphere largely free of harassment or proselytism, contextualizing those cases of inquisitorial persecution and polemics which did occur. Everything is found here, brutality, friendliness, indifference.

Much recent scholarship emphasizes that the Inquisition could only bring Christians before it, but of course in Spain in the late Middle Ages this was unendingly complicated by the status of *conversos*, especially of Jews who, under duress and against canon law, had been baptized. Vose is very aware of the complexity of the situation, and does a good job of illustrating this, hesitating before unjustified generalization. The “Conclusions” contrasts “medieval paradigms of co-existence with segregation along religious lines” (259) with the early modern situation. The book closes

with an Appendix on “Dominican *Studia*” and a skimpy index.

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**The Politics of Documentary.** By Michael Chanan (London: British Film Institute, 2007), viii + 280 pp. £16.99 paper.

In *The Politics of Documentary*, Michael Chanan, taking on the daunting challenge of writing a deep and grounded survey, argues that documentary is a necessarily political form that serves as a public space through which marginalized or suppressed voices can be heard. Throughout the book, Chanan eschews an understanding of politics in the strict sense, and instead takes up the issue in a broader, and arguably more fruitful, manner. Centering his discussion on Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of the *habitus*, Chanan constantly reminds the reader that documentary does not exist in a vacuum, but that it is dialogical in nature and is dependent on the internalized world-views of both filmmaker and film viewer.

The book’s organizational emphasis on theme over chronology attests to Chanan’s particular concerns. In the first section, “Mapping the Field,” Chanan lays the groundwork for what is to follow by establishing a definition of documentary (which, informed by Wittgenstein, he sees in terms of family resemblance) before combining semiotic theory with his own filmmaking experience to explore documentary’s muddled relationship to reality. Having established his terms, Chanan traces the documentary genealogy from early actualities through to direct cinema, covering topics such as Russian formalism, the coming of sound and British Free Cinema along the way. Blending social, technological, political and aesthetic history with theoretical concerns and personal anecdotes, Chanan produces vibrant and insightful textual analyses that are made even more engaging by his pairing of each historical period with a thematic and theoretical concern. In one of the strongest chapters, for instance, Chanan employs Lefebvrian and Deleuzian models to explore documentary’s relation to urban space in *Berlin, Symphony of a*

*City* (Walter Ruttmann 1927) and *Man with a Movie Camera* (Dziga Vertov 1929).

It is in the third section, "Contemporary Themes," where the book's strengths and limitations are most apparent. Indeed, this is where *The Politics of Documentary* most clearly transitions from introductory survey to timely theoretical text as it engages with current debates surrounding non-western cinema, performativity, autobiographical documentary and film's relationship to memory and the archive. In what is itself a highly politicized move, Chanan chooses to filter these discussions through a selection of lesser-known, but highly significant, works. Unfortunately, this move is only moderately successful as Latin American cinema is over-represented (perhaps unsurprisingly considering Chanan's past work) at the expense of a more sustained and comprehensive examination of, say, Asian or African documentary. While Chanan should be commended for covering so much ground, this comes at the cost of some unevenness. The same can be said for Chanan's theoretical insights which remain more implicit than explicit. Feminist and Queer theory are given a cursory glance and, perhaps most disappointing of all, considering Chanan's attention to technological shifts and conditions of reception throughout the rest of the book, the effects of new media on documentary filmmaking are given little more than an acknowledgement. For the reader hoping that Chanan will address these issues in a subsequent volume, *The Politics of Documentary* is ultimately a highly readable, informative book that confirms the historical importance of documentary while posing some essential questions about its role as an aesthetic and, of course, political form.

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### **Women, Gender, and the Enlightenment.**

Edited by Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor (Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), xxi + 769 pp. \$43.00/£22.99 paper.

*Women, Gender, and Enlightenment* presents the most recent results from "Feminism and Enlightenment, 1650–1850: A Comparative

History," the international research project that coeditor Barbara Taylor directed from 1998 to 2001 with coeditor Sarah Knott as research fellow. The original project, which eventually included over 100 participants from the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, the United States, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, and Spain, sponsored conferences, colloquia, and symposia, inspired the creation of a website for the resulting Gender and Enlightenment Research Network, and originated an ongoing research seminar which continues to explore related themes at the Institute for Historical Research in London. The collection itself, which brings together some of the latest work in Enlightenment studies and feminist studies, features a general introduction by Knott and Taylor, 33 articles and 9 introductory essays by an international array of scholars in a wide variety of disciplines, a historical conclusion by John Robertson, a philosophical conclusion by Kate Soper, and a set of 69 biographies of important male and female Enlightenment figures.

Unlike early studies of the Enlightenment, which often focused on the high culture and intellectual influence of eighteenth-century French philosophers such as Voltaire and Rousseau, this collection takes a much broader chronological, geographical, and methodological approach. The central philosophical figure is Mary Wollstonecraft, who appears as topic or reference in over half of the essays. The major countries are England and Scotland, which constitute the focus of twice as many articles as France. The time periods range from seventeenth-century Italy to nineteenth-century America. Intellectual biographies and literary analyses of individual figures such as Mary Astell, Catherine Macaulay, Denis Diderot, and Germaine de Stael mix with the social, intellectual, and cultural histories of a variety of literary, philosophical, scientific, and political networks including British bluestockings, French salonnieres, Italian academics, and Scottish Whigs. One of the collection's two longest sections, a unit that explores the complex intersections between religion and sexual politics, includes studies of Christine de Pizan's and Marie de Gournay's Catholicism, Catherine Payton's Quaker activism, and Anna Barbauld and Mary Hays' relationships to Dissenters and Unitarians.

One of the central themes of the volume is the question of whether the Enlightenment was good or bad for the fate of women in the modern world that it helped to create. Where scholars such as Joan Landes, Carol Pateman, and Joan Scott have argued that the Enlightenment and the subsequent French Revolution excluded women from the public sphere by definition, most of the contributors to Taylor and Knott's volume, such as Anna Clark, Arianne Chernock, Suzanne Desan, Felicia Gordon, Carla Hesse, Lynn Hunt, and Rosemarie Zagari, are more likely to emphasize the positive effects of Enlightenment and Revolution alike: the explosion of female authors appearing in print across Europe (259), the wide variety of ways that women found to participate in the public sphere in England, France, and the United States (565–66, 570–71, 610–12, 623–24), the rapid development of both men's and women's arguments in favor of women's rights on both sides of the Atlantic (567–68, 587–88, 600–602, 667–68, 685–86), and the revolutionary transformations of French family law that eventually provided the women of the First French Republic with new rights to private property, civil marriage, and secular divorce (631–32, 645). The debate continues within the volume itself, with Taylor and Knott emphasizing the positive in their introduction, Robertson looking again at the negative in his conclusion, and Soper considering the dialectic between the two in the collection's final essay, on the legacy of Enlightenment philosophy for modern feminist theory.

Anyone who is interested in Enlightenment literature, history, or philosophy, and anyone who is interested in women's history, feminist theory, or gender studies will want to read this book.

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**Property, Education, and Identity in Late Eighteenth-Century Fiction: The Heroine of Disinterest.** By Virginia H. Cope (Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), viii + 180 pp. \$75.00/£50.00 cloth.

This interesting study by Virginia Cope argues that late-eighteenth-century novels contributed

to a new understanding of the relationship between property, education and identity in Britain. At a time when absolutism was under attack and non-landed sources of wealth were expanding, Cope indicates, personal status and identity became less closely aligned than previously with land ownership and inheritance and more closely associated with education and qualities of mind. Focusing on the workings of private consciousness, late-eighteenth-century novels, it is suggested, contributed to the emergence of a modern concept of identity as self-determined, dynamic, and independent of property relations and underscored the transformative potential of education.

Cope's particular concern is with the evolution of a character type that she terms the "Heroine of Disinterest." Precariously situated economically but alert to the lessons of experience, these heroines demonstrate their superior worth by rising above narrow economic concerns and embracing a benevolent outlook. Identifying Samuel Richardson's Pamela (1740) as the "originary" Heroine of Disinterest (31), Cope traces the evolution of the type in novels by Frances Burney, Elizabeth Inchbald, Ann Radcliffe, William Godwin, Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Hays, and Jane Austen. The depiction of women as disinterested, Cope argues, marked a break with the civic humanist tradition's identification of the trait with leisured, propertied males. Instead, disinterest was increasingly associated with mental orientations based on education—broadly understood as encompassing not only formal learning but also wisdom gleaned from reflecting on experience. By the early nineteenth century, Cope argues, disinterest was becoming democratized. Detached from its traditional associations with property and gender, it implicitly mandated self-government.

Cope's interpretation of the novels aligns their concerns with theories advanced by John Locke, Adam Smith, William Blackstone and others, the assumption being that in particularizing and bringing to life issues posed abstractly by these theorists the novels served to diffuse their ideas. The alignment of abstract theory and fictional discourse often works well. The discussion of novels by Godwin, Wollstonecraft and other radical writers of the 1790s is particularly successful, drawing attention to

the authors' dual rejection of social injustices and romantic narratives that sustained these injustices. There is also a most interesting reading of Elizabeth Inchbald's *A Simple Story*. Occasionally, however, the parallels seem strained. For example, one doubts that many readers associated the spectacle of heroines kneeling before their fathers or guardians with feudal investiture rites and "pre-modern" assumptions about property holding (15–16). One also misses a discussion of the social provenance of the novels' authors, whose views seem closely attuned to the concerns of the professional classes. However, in general this is a stimulating, instructive study. It is also a generous-spirited book, meticulously directing readers' attention to work done by other scholars. Scholars interested in women's history, literary studies, property relations and contiguous fields will find that Virginia Cope's study offers many insights into late-eighteenth-century developments.

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### **Upbuilding Discourses in Various Spirits.**

By Søren Kierkegaard. Edited and translated by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), xiv + 442 pp. \$35.00/£24.95 paper.

The decision by Princeton University Press to publish a first paperback edition of the previously difficult to obtain 1993 hardback, *Upbuilding Discourses in Various Spirits*, provides a timely and especially welcome opportunity to review one of Søren Kierkegaard's (1813–55) most pastorally sensitive and lyrically evocative works.

Particular attention is due to the pastoral elements of this trilogy of discourses since they emerge from a period when, following the publication of *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, on 27 February 1846, an uncharacteristically contented Kierkegaard confessed his intention to lay aside the various masks of his previous pseudonyms, to cease his occupation as a writer, and to withdraw from the spectacle of Copenhagen in order to find sanctuary in the

higher vocation of a rural pastor. Cruelly, Kierkegaard was soon shaken from this idyllic calling by an unedifying and malicious lampooning at the hands of Copenhagen's most notorious satirical newspaper *The Corsair*.

Kierkegaard sharpened his pen and his resolve, and embarked on the so-called "second authorship"—marked on 13 March 1847 by the materialization from the presses of three upbuilding discourses. In this second phase, Kierkegaard reveals himself to be adept at fulfilling a pastoral role through the written word: through words of spiritual passion and edification which have subsequently reached far beyond the historical and geographical locus of rural nineteenth-century Denmark.

In Part 1, Kierkegaard opens with "An Occasional Discourse" designated "On the Occasion of Confession" (still at that point a sacrament in the Danish Lutheran Church): "Purity of Heart is to Will One Thing." Part 2 constitutes three more meditative discourses on the contentment, glory, and blessed happiness that God has promised to human beings. In contemplating "What We Learn From the Lilies in the Field and From the Birds of the Air," the familiar anatomist of religious melancholy, anxiety, and despair now seeks to elicit a salve against worry and distress from the simplest of pastoral (in both the Romantic and the spiritual senses of the term) and occasionally humorous reflections.

The third and final part comprises Kierkegaard's more avowedly "*Christian Discourses*" on "The Gospel of Sufferings." In these altogether gloomier discourses, Kierkegaard seeks to pierce "suffering's dark night" with lyrically tender arrows of light and praise. In his Preface to this Kierkegaard modestly declares that if "just one single sufferer" should "find a heavy moment lighter" then his authorial intentions shall be satisfied (215).

In this confession I suspect we gain a glimpse of the elusive union of writer and pastor which Kierkegaard was more capable of evoking than he himself realised. In these discourses Kierkegaard gazes deeply into the glittering darkness in order to discern traces of the hidden Face of God, the cruciform figure of the God-forsaken Christ, and the Christian burden of suffering without innocence. Over 160 years since their emergence, these admittedly melancholic Lutheran motifs

continue to represent, to this reviewer at least, some of the most uncompromising, disturbing yet earnestly faithful struggles to derive spiritual joy from ineffable suffering in modern European literature.

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**The Monstrosity of Christ: Paradox or Dialectic?** By Slavoj Žižek and John Milbank. Edited by Creston Davis (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009), ii + 312 pp. \$27.95/£18.95 cloth.

Thank god we don't have to choose between theism and atheism, between radical Roman Catholic orthodoxy and radical Marxist materialism, or between John Milbank and Slavoj Žižek, the advocates, respectively, of paradox and dialectic! In this monstrously entitled debate, the odds are heavily weighted on the side of Žižek, as readers familiar with his earlier work will see by the title of this volume. He is the editor of the series ("Short Circuits") in which this book appears (he is also the author of two of the previous eight volumes in it); and he writes the series Foreword (in which he informs us that "Lacanian psychoanalysis is a privileged instrument" for short-circuiting our normal reading of received texts and ideas). Furthermore, this volume contains, in addition to the Introduction by the editor, two essays by Žižek: "The Fear of Four Words: A Modest Plea for the Hegelian Reading of Christianity" and "Dialectical Clarity Versus the Misty Concept of Paradox"; and one essay by Milbank: "The Double Glory, or Paradox versus Dialectics: On Not Quite Agreeing with Slavoj Žižek." Actually, he does not agree at all! (One of the sections of Milbank's essay is entitled "Paradox: A Misty Conceit.") While we are not told what occasioned Žižek's first essay, Milbank's essay is a response to it. Žižek gets the last word by commenting, in his second essay, on Milbank's preceding essay.

Although this reader had to labor to find his way through the extremist (violent) rhetoric of the *enfant terrible* Žižek, the militant atheist and materialist philosopher, and the

obscurantist, scholastic rhetoric of the *éminence grise* Milbank, the orthodox Roman Catholic theologian—both qualify their positions as "radical"!—he is happy to report that they engage fundamental issues: the meaning of Christianity (and so of God and Christ) and thus the relationship of the Bible (above all, the New Testament) to modernity; Hegel's (mis)interpretation of Christianity; and the role of that (mis)interpretation in constituting not only modernity but also now the return to (Christian) theology in the current reaction against postmodernism on the part of philosophers like Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou, Terry Eagleton, and Jean-Luc Nancy, in addition to Žižek. (Milbank would doubtless say that it is about time!) The good news is that Žižek and Milbank agree that modern thinking is inconceivable outside of its historico-ontological origins in central biblical concepts like, in addition to God and Christ, creation, crucifixion, incarnation, love, and trinity. It is also good news that Žižek's reading of the crucifixion and incarnation is, in being consistent with Hegel's philosophy of religion, intelligent and probing.

But there is also lots of bad news. In addition to his extremist *épater le bourgeois* rhetoric, Žižek constantly diverts his reader away from substantive discussion of critical issues by making extended forays into kitsch. He is never able to forgo (repeating) a bad joke. But it is also the case that Milbank's extended scholastic analysis of, for example, the logic of Hegel and Meister Eckhart does little to deepen our understanding of fundamental biblical concepts. Milbank holds that all of modernity is fundamentally a Gnostic diversion from the truth of Christianity as established in the Middle Ages prior to the replacement of Dominican (Aristotelian) reason by voluntarism on the part of Franciscan philosophers and their descendants, Luther and Descartes—and the rest is history. But I also want to point out that Milbank is, in my judgment, rightly critical of the concept of desire in Lacan as lack. I find Žižek's Lacanian reading of basic theological concepts to be no less "scholastic" and thus no more informative than Milbank's Thomistic reading of them.

But the news gets worse, and that news involves Christ (incarnation and crucifixion) and thus the relationship between faith and reason, between the divine and the human, and

so also between Judaism and Christianity, between law and love. Significantly, it is Žižek the atheist who, in believing profoundly in Christ, writes that the four most important—the most frightening, the most monstrous—words are: “He was made man.” In Milbank’s view that means that “there has to be a first real human subject” who was Christ, with the result that our human subjectivity is but “a continued intersubjective fidelity to this origin” (181). Žižek correctly rejects this conception of Christology as based on an authoritarian (irrational) faith—consistent with the insight of, let me add, Derrida, Buber, and Spinoza, not to mention Kierkegaard, that in the beginning the origin is the cause of itself as the paradox of relationship. Still, Žižek himself holds that Christ goes beyond Judaism, beyond the “Old Testament,” beyond the law and the prophets with his “extravagant” teaching that he was God (whence, he says, the shattering scandal, at once ontological and ethical, that he died).

While I cannot here undertake to address in substantive terms the heavily freighted problem of how we are to understand Jesus as at once the son of Judaism and the father of Christianity, it is important to see what neither Žižek nor Milbank clearly (or systematically) sees: biblical religion—Judaism and Christianity (together with Islam, which they do not discuss)—is *progressive*. It is precisely this religion that gives us the idea of progress as freedom and justice for all persons and peoples; as faith in, hope for, and love of the past no less than of the future. (For this reason I am deeply wary of the apocalyptic stance adopted by Žižek.) But what, then, is critically important to see is that we do not progress *beyond* Judaism or Christianity or *beyond* faith or *beyond* modernity or *beyond* the Bible (at once both Jewish and Christian). Rather, in coming, historically, freely, into existence, as Kierkegaard says, we progress *from*...the beginning, from being original (from original being). No one of us can go further than faith, further than being a faithful human being. But each of us has the task of becoming ever more adequate in our fidelity to what it means to be human. (Spinoza’s concept of adequate, as distinct from inadequate, ideas is particularly apt here.) We do learn, we do grow in self-consciousness. Each of us—and thus each of the communities, small and large, that we

constitute as persons—makes progress in becoming, let us ever hope, more generous, more just, more loving, more caring, more courageous... We progress *from* ourselves *to* ourselves—ever to become the person we are (as Nietzsche says). The history of Spirit is the story of freedom—of salvation, liberation, emancipation. (It goes without saying that we constantly regress insofar as we faithless human beings are seduced by false idols of progress.)

Žižek does not truly have a concept of progressive hermeneutics. For all his insight into the paradox of the God-man, he, like Milbank, separates Jesus (Christianity) from Judaism in putting love above law. While he cites passages from Romans in which Paul is generally but inadequately held to privilege faith (grace) over law, as he (consistent with the prophets) makes spirit (or love) the standard of the letter (or flesh), Žižek fails to note what Paul writes in Romans 13: “he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.” All the law, with its commandments (as found in Exodus and Deuteronomy and recapped in Leviticus 19), Paul writes, is “summed up in this sentence, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” Consequently, while Jesus conceives of himself as divine, as spirit, as embodying, in his life and death, love of the neighbor, he progresses, not beyond but rather *from* (out of) Jewish scripture and law. He returns radically to the origin—in God, in creation from nothing, in the covenant—to demonstrate, by plumbing yet again the unimaginable riches of the biblical treasure, that human beings are made in the image of God. Human beings are the God-chosen whose holy spirit is liberated from the fatal cycle of pagan naturalism. Human beings are created from nothing, from nothing that is natural. (“Creation from nothing” is a concept utterly distinct from any notion of natural generation, whether through a first or a final cause.)

However, not only has the “image of God” been constantly misunderstood within Christendom (which Kierkegaard defines as pagan values rationalized as Christian, i.e. as idols) in the pseudo-Platonic terms that man is finite and God is infinite—when it is rather nature that is finite (at its end) in being identical with itself, while it is spirit, at once divine and human, that is “infinite” (progressive). But also Jesus’ identity as the Christ, the God-man,



has been constantly misunderstood in terms of what is first (superior and sinless) as distinct from human beings who are then viewed as secondary (inferior and sinful). Žižek, however, unlike Milbank, does not make this error. He sees that God is made (created) man—God establishes his covenant in and as history with his people who are chosen, who are created holy and perfect as God is holy and perfect—as the revelation to human beings of their divinity, of their infinity, of their spirit as belonging to the covenant, to the kingdom of God, what Kant calls the kingdom of ends. The first (the powerful) will be last, and the last (the powerless: the poor in spirit, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness) will be first. The kingdom, i.e. democracy progressively to come, is ever to be found where love of neighbor is proclaimed as the constitution for all.

Still, Žižek, the apocalyptic Marxist atheist, tells us that his “radical political stance” is “inclusive of a critical attitude toward democracy—to put it in a vicious way, democracy is not to come but to go” (255). With Milbank, however, it is even worse. For, in identifying liberalism with Marxism (although Žižek himself identifies liberalism with Stalinism!), he holds that justice involves social hierarchy, “an objectively right proportionate distribution, as Aristotle taught, and beyond this a will to encourage all in their infinite fulfillment within their appropriate social roles, as St. Paul taught” (188). But this is not what Paul, or Jesus, or the prophets taught, as Spinoza so amply demonstrates in the *Theologico-Political Treatise*. In his treatise Spinoza shows conclusively, for the first time in world history, that democracy is the most “natural” political constitution because it constitutes and is constituted by freedom of thought, that is, because it is grounded in *conatus* (desire *is* the cause of itself) as the essence of human existence, in utter refutation of Aristotle. As Spinoza makes clear in his *Ethics*, we do not desire something because it is the good, separate from, outside of, and superior to ourselves. Rather, desire is the good. What we desire is the good: the good is what we desire. Still, because it is desire that creates the good, with the consequence that the good is not the end, the *telos*, of desire (i.e. that which we lack), as Aristotle holds, all hell can and does break out. Since, from the beginning, man and

woman have desire of good (and evil), our desire easily becomes short-circuited as the worship of idols generating injustice, oppression, hatred, cruelty, slavery . . . . The sole non-contradictory, i.e. the only truly paradoxical constitution of *conatus* is love of neighbor, as found, in all of its infinite manifestations, in and as covenantal democracy. Nevertheless, while Žižek fails to see that for Kierkegaard, as for Jesus and the whole Jewish tradition, love of neighbor (the golden rule) is command, love is the law, love is the covenant, love is duty and obligation, love is fidelity and faithfulness (love is not preference), he does cite Kant’s imperative—“Think freely, but obey!”—as a four-word précis of biblical ethics and politics (295). Obey (love) your neighbor, a freely thinking person, as you would have your neighbor obey (love) you, a freely thinking person.

The good news, then, is that we do not have to choose between theism and atheism. For Žižek possesses sufficient dialectical dexterity to conceive of atheism in the tradition of Job who, in contradicting God, confronts fundamental issues like suffering and the meaning or purpose of existence and, to the horror of the three friends of theism, bears witness to a-theism as constituting the very essence of theism, to atheism as true belief in God. Žižek writes: “A truly logical [atheistic] materialism accepts the basic insight of religion, its premise that our commonsense reality is not the true one; what it rejects is the conclusion that, therefore, there must be another, ‘higher,’ suprasensible [supernatural] reality . . . : ‘God’ (the divine) is a name for that which in man is not human, for the inhuman core that sustains being-human” (240). Apparently unbeknownst to himself Žižek here replicates the ontological argument for the existence of God as found in Descartes (not to mention St. Anselm and Spinoza and also Kant with his concept of reason as thoughtful, faithful practice, as the categorical imperative willing relationship). To doubt—to think freely and obediently—is to prove (confirm) our faith in the existence of spirit (the spirit of existence), at once divine and human. God, like the neighbor, is the one thing that cannot be doubted, that cannot be thought or conceived (loved), by human beings without existing necessarily (freely). God does not exist outside of human thought and existence. (Nor does God exist inside of

human thought and existence.) It follows, then, that we also do not have to choose between paradox and dialectic, for they are the same, as Kierkegaard makes clear. The absolute paradox is that I have to begin with what is not myself, with what is other than myself, with the neighbor (with God), in order to become myself (and vice versa). It takes exquisitely dialectical logic—we normally call it love—to account for the paradox. But we do have to choose between faithful atheism and faithless theism, as between faithful theism and faithless atheism. Žižek is surely right. Doubt, free thinking, critique, atheism must be at the very core of theism in order to keep it honest, just as loving faithfulness must be at the very core of atheism to keep it honest.

BRAYTON POLKA

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**Music and the Numinous.** By Richard Elfyn Jones (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 122 pp. €25.00 paper.

This book, modest in its size but ambitious in its topic, is written by the well-known musician, composer, performer and musicologist, Dr. Richard Elfyn Jones. The term *numinous* in the book's title, from the Latin *numen* (deity), coined by the German theologian Rudolf Otto in *The Idea of the Holy* (1917), refers to a "non-rational, non-sensory experience or feeling whose primary and immediate object is outside the self." Today the term is used more broadly as a synonym of the mystical, wholly other, supernatural, sacred, or transcendent. Jones notes that while the concept of the numinous is central to theology as well as to other contemporary issues relating to Christian faith, he defines it as pertaining to the *numen* or the supernatural (5).

Those who are looking here for an answer to the question 'what makes music numinous?' are unlikely to find it. There is almost no theoretical analysis: the semiotic approach is not mentioned, nor biomusicology, cognition or any other attempt to prove that the numinous is a quality of the musical composition itself. On the contrary, Jones does not pretend that the latter may be the case and more than once

asks himself and the reader whether our greatest spiritual experiences are not influenced by extramusical factors: "We can never be absolutely sure that all is not imagination because there is here, in the absence of scientific verification, a fear that what has been achieved [a striking emotional effect] may after all be nonsense because of the perceived irrationality" (110). The numinous *in* music thus is not Jones' purpose.

Neither does he go into the theological argument. Rather "this book... aims to explore music, and to a lesser degree the other arts, in a somewhat unusual way by relating it directly to its ontological roots" (5). Indeed, what we find in this book is a critical historiographical discussion of the topic in metaphysical philosophy from antiquity to the end of the twentieth century. The main source of Jones' discourse is Alfred North Whitehead's metaphysics as expounded in *Process and Reality*. After the Introduction presents the oblique approach to the subject through links between art and mystical and esoteric theories, the argument on Process and Music becomes the key theme, and at some point the author seems to substitute the concept of 'the numinous' with the concept of 'process' or, more correctly maybe, to synthesize the two.

As the first chapter on "The Transcendental and Rational Discourse" shows, the historical discussion of Process—from Plato, Plotinus, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas and some later writers—culminates in "Schopenhauer's important hypotheses on music's capacity to lead to a transcendental reality" (6). Jones then concentrates on the ontological sides of music art. From various universalistic theories he discusses those of the Austrian musicologist Victor Zuckerkandl (1896–1965) in his Chapter 2, "Music as Sublime Organism." Next he considers Process Philosophy (Chapter 3), defining its most important terms. The three following chapters, constituting the second half of the book, combine both subjects, Process and Music. In Chapter 4, "Music and Process," "the universal nature of Whiteheadian concepts are extrapolated *vis-à-vis* music." The author explores critically where the ontical (the world and material things) ends and the ontological (the sacred) begins (8). "A Whiteheadian Aesthetic and a Musical

Paradigm” (Chapter 5) presents an example of musical analysis purporting to show how the numinous might be “teased out” from “what is no more than a musical excerpt.” In the final chapter, “Music, the Other Arts and Process,” Jones compares music with other arts, drawing mainly on George Steiner, J. A. W. Hefferman and others, seeking to characterize the relationship between rational discourse and the approach to the numinous.

‘Music’ may compete with ‘God’ when it comes to the sheer number of definitions proposed for each, which suggests their immensity. Regardless of this reviewer’s expectations, this study explores its niche in considerable depth, granting us new knowledge and many insights.

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**Cultures of Violence: Interpersonal Violence in Historical Perspective.** Edited by Stuart Carroll (Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), xii + 271 pp. £50.00 cloth.

Until very recently, violence was prominent in the everyday life of all societies, ranging from fights to allegedly beneficial corporal punishment of children or criminals. Yet it was only in the 1980s that historians and social scientists started to pay systematic attention to this phenomenon. The focus of historians has long been on the history of progress, and violence seemed to be a vulgar relict of the past which would gradually disappear in the process of civilisation. From Jacob Burckhardt to Johan Huizinga, and from Sigmund Freud to Norbert Elias, history was marked by an increased control of violence, either by moral conventions and the super-ego or the civilising force of the nation-state. The many social conflicts around us, however, ranging from genocide to religious and political violence, from illegitimate violence in war to sport hooliganism, and from street fights to domestic violence, the phenomenon continues to be so prominent that it certainly deserves careful attention.

Not surprisingly, understandings of violence differ widely. Violence has been seen as a

language and a form of social interaction by influential thinkers such as Bourdieu and Foucault, and much attention has been devoted to the ‘structural violence’ of symbolic orders, bureaucratic structures and codes of practice. While all these points are important, it is also important to pay attention to physical violence in the literal sense of the word. But even this physical violence (in contrast to coercion and force) is not just an instinctual behaviour, as many psychologists have suggested, but culturally structured. Historians can thus inquire into the line societies draw between legitimate and illegitimate uses of violence, the motivation for the use of violence and its dramatic quality (for example in the storming of the Bastille).

Violence played a central role in all societies we know of; yet the topic has not played a prominent role in historiography. In principle, a book on this topic is thus to be welcomed. The introduction of the edited volume reviewed here provides a good overview of the topic: Stuart Carroll not only offers a competent introduction to key figures and concepts in the field but succeeds in showing the importance and the breadth of the topic. But exactly this breadth becomes a problem with the choice of individual contributions which range from theoretical chapters to a study of the meaning of Aztec ritual violence against women, from late medieval studies of ritual violence to aerial warfare in the two World Wars, from vengeance in early modern France to beheading in Ireland, from revolutionary violence in France to duelling in early Stuart England, and from kidnapping of British travellers in the Mediterranean to the increasingly limited acceptance of violence in the modern British navy. It not only makes the job of reviewing the edited volume practically impossible but raises the question of what the purpose of such a publication might be. While edited volumes with a clear focus can serve as a highly useful, multivocal introduction to a topic or serve to explore a theme from a wide variety of perspectives, this publication contains a large number of case studies which do not really add up to one perspective on the topic or a consistent introduction to the field of violence in history. As far as this reviewer can judge such a wide and disperse field, the individual contributions are of a consistently high quality, but the danger with such a

publication is that the findings will get lost in this overly broad volume.

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**Lost in the Sacred: Why the Muslim World Stood Still.** By Dan Diner. Translated by Steven Rendall (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), ix + 213 pp. \$21.95 cloth.

This book makes an exceptionally important contribution to our understanding of the Muslim world. It outlines the obstacles that stand in the way of overcoming both its perceptions of the West and, in turn, the West's inability to curb the extremism that has manifested itself in recent years.

The author points out that in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the Muslim world was in no position to resist the West—militarily, economically or culturally. The fact that Christian powers were able to do as they pleased in the region became lodged in Muslim consciousness as an omnipresent humiliation. This led to their viewing themselves as chronically victimised, although the inequality was present even before the colonial periods.

Muslims' self-perception was shaken by the technological advances of the West. Their only defence was to view modern machines as the work of the devil threatening God's sovereignty. Dan Diner discusses many aspects of the Muslim world in the past that have directly led to its technological deficiencies in the twenty-first century. Many of the examples of these deficiencies are taken from the AHDR (Arab Human Development Report) published in 2002 by the United Nations. In the 1970s in the whole of the Arab world, for example, the number of books translated from other languages into Arabic was a fifth of those published in such small countries as Greece. In 1996 the Arab world as a whole had 1,945 publications, 17% of which were religious specific. Most publications in Arabic only have 1,000–3,000 runs for each book printed. Patents are an indicator of the level of research—370 for all the Arab countries combined in the years 1980–2000. Israel had

8,000; South Korea 16,000. There are 300 million people in 22 Arab countries, but literacy is very low, which is a partial explanation of the paucity of research and publications.

Another difficulty, particularly in Arabic speaking countries, is the way the language is seen in Islam. There are two levels of Arabic—colloquial and High Arabic, which is a written language hardly used by the common people and far less flexible, its rigidity standing in the way of technological expression. High Arabic is used when writing; colloquial Arabic is used in everyday speech. The high or classical Arabic of the Koran has a sacred character even when used to convey secular content. This leads to a linguistic dilemma. Knowledge crucial to development is written in Arabic, but the written language is far from easy to use. Conversely, colloquial Arabic is not written down, and can enter the storehouse of written languages only with great difficulty if at all. In order to be rendered into writing, any new expression must clear a very high hurdle of a regulated canon. This puts Muslim Arabs who speak only Arabic at a great disadvantage, greater than for example, the Iranians, who have two languages at their disposal, Farsi and Arabic. There is a reverence for high Arabic—created as a holy language by God—thus humans may not lay their hands on it.

Knowledge of English in the Arab world is also not advancing. In the Arab countries there is no university department on the West, unlike many of the Western universities that have Departments of Oriental Studies that include the study of Arabic and Muslim culture. This lack of knowledge of the West has led to widespread ignorance that leads people in these countries to construe conspiracies in all areas.

Scientific research in Muslim countries is expected to adhere strictly to Islamic standards, to be perused without individual autonomy and in strict obedience to the word of God. Academics and scientists are expected to meet the rulers' requirements. It is thus not that surprising that so many of their qualified people emigrate—between 1998 and 2000 more than 15,000 doctors left their countries in the Arab world, as did a similar number of engineers. Scientific and technological knowledge in Arab countries like Saudi Arabia is brought through the input of foreigners, rather than being produced in their own universities, and is therefore not adapted to these countries' needs

and cannot be further reproduced to enable them to enter the modern age.

Diner also points out that the Muslim attitudes towards the equality of women there is a massive deviation from the global trend. Their ideas of how women should behave in public were taken from legal rulings dating from the ninth, fourteenth, and early twentieth centuries. These rulings remain as if untouched by time. In fact the Western concept of movement in time is not indigenous to Muslim culture—everything is necessarily a repetition of the past. They view history as cyclical—an interpretation to take them back to an idealized sacred time—the way to restore the ideal Muslim community is to imitate the past and the way to do that is to strictly obey the law.

The dissemination of knowledge through the use of the printing press is relatively recent. The printing press was banned by the Ottoman Empire for 300 years. The Ulema, official scholars of the Shari'a prevented its introduction. The printing press in European history was of extreme importance in the advancement of all sorts of ideas, not only of technology. Printing influenced public opinion and the dissemination of all kinds of literature.

The author of this book gives a very interesting picture of the background to learning in the Islamic traditions of the past, many elements of which still find echoes today. There was, for example, no individual reading. It is, and was, an orally transmitted culture supported by the written word. The complexities of Arabic, however, meant that much of the learning had to be overseen by the teacher, then memorized and recited. Only the Koran and the Hadith (the corpus of Muslim oral tradition) were worth putting in writing. Islam was revealed because the other religions had distorted and misrepresented the doctrine originally communicated to them. This misrepresentation occurred when the Jews, by editing the Mishnah, attempted to make authoritative a second book besides the Torah. Thus Muslims adopted the rabbinical scholars' principle of orality while condemning their written practices. No book can enter into rivalry with the Koran, so there can be no book but the One Book. Muslim tradition thus developed an open aversion to putting things in writing.

Early Islam has left many documents of people suspected of circumventing the taboo

on writing. At one time resistance to excessive writing set in, warnings were issued about having too many books and the written word came to be generally distrusted. Books became suspect in case they distorted the faith. Hadith was remembered through great feats of memory. Blackboards and walls that could aid the memory were used but then wiped off. Pupils were forbidden to write anything on the palms of their hands. They were also not allowed to read books without supervision. The teacher had to be present and mark the text because of the difficulties which can arise in interpreting an Arabic text if it is not provided with the oral vowels. Short vowels, absence of vowels, and double consonants are not represented in the written Arabic thus mistakes may occur and correct intonation is important. Neither written documents nor letters are regarded with the same suspicion as books. This gives the Islamic teacher complete control over both content and understanding.

Islam is not unique in having a sacred language. But Hebrew and Latin eventually became dissociated from the religions that they initially represented—only Arabic remained unaffected by this development. Handwritten documents give a spiritual connection with the early correct days of Islam. It is thus understandable why they were against the movable metal type and mechanical reproduction. Printing was banned in 1485 by the Ottoman Sultan Bayed 11. In 1588 Venetians offered books for sale by Arab philosophers but no one bought them! This ban on printing was not only of the Koran but of anything that touched on Islamic subjects. The French in 1798 set up a printing press in Egypt—a mob broke in and destroyed it.

For the Muslim world the way out of decline is to go back to the Golden Age of pure uncorrupted Islam. Muslims are expected to submit to the rule of Islam in two ways: they are to obey Islamic law in everyday life and to obey laws that guarantee Muslim rule. Only by living under Muslim rule can Muslims fulfil the demands of Shari'a. Only thus can the ideal Muslim community be reproduced. Ultimately, strict observance of the law meant arresting time.

The Arab modernists who compare the achievements of the West with their own lamentable Arab countries and wish to emulate the West in any way are regarded

as enemies of Islam. This includes Habib Bourguiba, Nasser, Mubarak, Sadat—all are the enemies of Islam. Those who attempted to modernise the Arab countries were seen as worse than the pre-Islamic heathens because they had seen the light and turned away from it.

According to the findings of the AHDR, Arab countries have the lowest share of what we would call freedom. Five Arab states are listed among the least free in the world. Arabic has no suitable word for what we regard as *freedom*—the right of the people to participate in public affairs, the original meaning of the Arabic “hurrays” is merely the opposite of slavery—it has been transcribed as *justice* and *moderation* which is the equivalent of the blessings of a just rule. It means that the leader should refrain from repressing his subjects, the equivalent of the benevolent despots of Europe, like Catherine the Great of Russia. Parliament, if it is there at all, is there to serve at the ruler’s pleasure. The latter has no checks. If there are any, it is because he has consented to them. There is no traditional separation of powers so the justice system, also at the mercy of the ruler, is little respected.

Arab states are poor, not immensely rich. Gross national product of all the Arab nations was only slightly more than that of a European country the size of Spain and nearly half that of Italy. Oil brings in mountains of cash but does nothing for productivity. Oil is patronage for the autocratic state. The ruler can deny its citizens any part in it. A ruler is just when he underwrites the fair distribution of goods. Rule is absolute no matter how enlightened.

Everything is laid down in the Koran and the Sunna. Any alteration is tantamount to heresy. Compromises or adaptations are to be resisted by all means.

Islam speaks of the unity of rule and religion. Theocracy does not make for a modern state, as the people of Iran realised and protested against in the last election, but seemingly at this point in vain.

The Islamist canon of duties and morals, which regulates all conduct in the public sphere, is based on Surah 3, verse 104 of the Koran, which insists that Muslims command right and forbid wrong. Everyone is instructed to drive out the false, the unjust and the sinful from their midst. This includes bans on drinking, playing musical instruments, on unmarried couples appearing in public or

couples not suitably related appearing in public or being unsuitably clothed. To offend is not trivial. It leads to the shaking of the foundations of the divine order. In performing duties imbued with the sacred, such as a jihad, everyone has a duty and must be prepared to give all. This duty, as enshrined by the Koran, is diametrically opposed to Western custom. In the West life is left to the individual, to find his own path, and if this harms no one, the individual will not be interfered with. In the Muslim view, breaking of any of the above rules, for example, is seen as a sin against God and must be averted by every Muslim individual who sees it. Thus in Islam conduct can be deemed harmful even if no one has been harmed by it. God is present to witness it and the devout Muslim must act to prevent it.

All the above is but a small part of the very rich insights which Diner’s book give, adding to our understanding of a religion which has assumed such an important role in our world today. It can be highly recommended.

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### **Giorgio Agamben: Sovereignty and Life.**

By Matthew Calarco (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), xiii + 282 pp. \$21.95 paper.

This volume contains essays from a variety of scholars involved in the study of Giorgio Agamben’s political philosophy. Recognized as one of the most original thinkers of our time for his analysis of sovereignty and biopolitics, capitalizing on the work of Foucault, Benjamin, and Schmitt, Agamben produced work across a wide range of fields including Jewish studies, Holocaust studies, totalitarianism, technology, philosophical anthropology, and animal studies. This volume also offers the first English translation of Agamben’s emblematic essay “The Work of Man.” This essay draws on an ontology of potentiality which is intended to accomplish a discriminant role in the descriptive and prescriptive dimensions of Agamben’s theoretical work.

The essays show a wide variety of approaches to Agamben’s work. Antonio

Negri's critique of Agamben is based on Negri's theory of empire. The other essays follow two themes: first, the definition of sovereignty proposed by Agamben and its relation to previous definitions in the western tradition; and secondly the analysis of biopolitics and Foucauldian influences, including Heidegger's, and their role in propelling Agamben's concept of life.

The essays offer an in-depth study of Agamben's original conceptualization of the relations of ontology and politics, which differs radically from Jacques Derrida's or Jean-Luc Nancy's views.

This volume is essential for gaining a deeper understanding of Agamben's political thought. It is also commendable for including a complete Agamben bibliography, many publications of which are in Italian, which can further help the reader to appreciate the extraordinary range of Agamben's intellectual *oeuvre*.

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**Nanoscale: Visualizing an Invisible World.**

By Kenneth S. Deffeyes (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009), ix + 133 pp. \$21.95 cloth.

*Nanoscale* is a charming book, filled with beautiful illustrations that will be copied by many a chemistry instructor (irrespective of copyright protection), with abundant home-spun anecdotes that will be repeated at many an academic cocktail party (without crediting the source), and with bits and pieces of history, "proper" names, and pronunciation guides that will help many of us to sound erudite (when we are not). Moreover, MIT did a magnificent job producing *Nanoscale's* 71 color illustrations on heavyweight glossy paper.

If *Nanoscale* truly reflects Kenneth Deffeyes (now Emeritus) classroom style, he must have been one heck of a teacher. His sympathy and sensitivity to students brims over when he recalls exam questions: e.g., "It's a dirty exam question because most students do it right but then can't believe their answer" (25; also see 64 and 130). And students must have sat on the edges of their chairs if Deffeyes related his

stories in the classroom as dramatically as he does in the text. His narratives of "Kathleen Lonsdale[']s... prison term during World War II for her refusal to cooperate with war preparations in England" (17) and of Cal Tech's crumbling to U.S. governmental pressure when Linus "Pauling resigned from the Cal Tech faculty" (32) would have gripped any audience.

*Nanoscale* achieves its greatest instructional potential where the two Deffeyes work most closely together. Indeed, superb integration of illustrations and explanations occurs frequently: for twin planes and the movement of dislocations in crystal order (69) including "what does not happen" (71), screw dislocation (83, 85), epitaxial growth (109), Penrose tiling (125), and the computer-driven fractal pattern it generates (127, program included [132]).

My only complaint is with MIT Press's careless copyediting: e.g., Watson and Crick did not publish the structure of DNA in "1957" (ix); Erwin Schroedinger's first name is not "Edwin" (27); cell membranes are not "cell walls" (51); the Pleistocene Epoch falls short of "the last few million years" (71); and comma splicing is still poor style (99)! Careless copyediting damages *Nanoscale*, because the reader is liable to lose confidence in the presentation thus undermining the very virtue of the book, namely, making the complexity of science comprehensible.

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**The Balance of Nature: Ecology's Enduring Myth.**

By John Kricher (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), xi + 237 pp. \$24.95 cloth.

*Balance of Nature* is a book with a thesis: "what we believe about Earth, ecology, nature, and our own biology and evolution, matters" (4), but the widespread myth of balance in nature is wrong and liable to lead us astray. John Kricher makes allowances for Santa Claus, however, as "an enchanting falsehood" (5).

Kricher peppers his first five chapters with opinions on other myths: "Aristotle developed an elegant and satisfying view of nature" but

“it is completely wrong” (37); “Lamarck [deserves] credit...[for] clearly [seeing] that evolution must occur...but he was flat-out wrong” (50); crediting Alfred Russel Wallace with discovering natural selection “is simply wrong” (54)!

What must “the lay reader” (97), Kricher’s target, think when he illustrates natural changes in allelic frequency with purposeful design: “If...diners in a restaurant never order the halibut but often order steak, the menu will soon change such that halibut is no longer included, while several kinds of steak are featured” (57). Kricher suggests that Darwin grasped the “strong genetic potential to change with selection” (57) while granting that Darwin knew nothing of genetics. And Kricher confounds individuals and genes when he asserts that “Natural selection could not occur without genetic variability” (60).

Kricher’s style improves (chapters 6–14) where he embellishes the history, problems, methods, and results of ecological research with spicy anecdotes: “Charles Darwin got ecology launched” (67), but expunging his version of “balance in nature...required over a century” (83). Obstacles included notions of ecological succession of communities developing to their climatic climax, supra-organisms, and density-dependent effects exhibiting ecological feedback. These obstacles were overcome by evolutionary explanations turning on life history, niche segregation, demographic theory, co-evolution, mutualism, and ecological dynamics. The “individualistic model” (71) or kaleidoscope of grazing food chains (webs), energy pyramids, trophic levels (links), producers, consumers, and recyclers or decomposers (75) ruled by “the laws of thermodynamics” (77), and density-independent effects with “no feedback loop” (78) all defied balance in nature.

Kricher extends his critique of balance to biogeochemical cycles and Gaia (87) by arguing that “Things just keep changing” (95) and “Natural selection...is constantly at work” (112). Regrettably, Kricher succumbs to distractions (principally anthropic principles and Goldilocks effects) before returning to his distinctively edgy ecology: “Natural selection is cumulative” (126); “reality is just plain luck” (128); “Major extinctions are evolutionary lotteries” (138); “anthropogenic greenhouse gas has forced the observed global warming”

(151); “The serious global problem of invasive species is generally an example of how a single species...may...alter the food web, usually by reducing biodiversity” (169); “anthropogenic activity resulting in loss [and severe fragmentation] of habitat is the major cause of the ongoing global decline in biodiversity” (174); “There is no natural balance of nature...and, given how profoundly humans affect Earth’s ecosystems...we must now make choices and manage ecosystems...for maintaining populations, species, and diverse ecosystems” (192). Finally, ““Do right”” (205).

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**The Crisis of American Foreign Policy: Wilsonianism in the Twenty-First Century.** By G. John Ikenberry, Thomas J. Knock, Anne-Marie Slaughter, and Tony Smith (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 157 pp. \$24.95/£16.95 cloth.

Princeton University Press recently released this stimulating book, in which four scholars discuss the extent to which Wilsonianism inspired the foreign policy of the administration of George W. Bush. They also discuss the directions American foreign policy may take in the future. Unsurprisingly, they all are highly critical of the Bush policy, and they differ on the extent to which Bush’s policy reflected that of Wilson.

G. John Ikenberry leads off with a thoughtful essay that sets the tone, defines terms, and provides the framework within which the others set their arguments. Tony Smith sees Wilsonianism, or progressive internationalism in general, as a cloak for American hegemony, whether in the guise of Bush unilateralism or Wilsonian multilateralism. He contends that American liberals—or “neo-liberals,” a group that he seems to have constructed—were not only complicit in the misguided Bush policies but that they actually provided the basis for them. His is the most despairing of the essays, offering only a most grudging concession as it draws to a close that perhaps the wrongs of the past may someday be righted.



Both Thomas J. Knock and Anne-Marie Slaughter interpret Bush's policies as repudiating Wilson's. They argue that unilateralism (including abrogation of treaties), which was a key component of the "Bush Doctrine"—along with preemptive war and the treatment of countries harboring terrorists as though they themselves were terrorist countries—would have been anathema to Wilson. Knock recognizes that Wilson was flawed, although chiding him only for "acquiescing" in the civil liberties violations that he engineered during the Great War, but has high praise for the Wilsonian vision.

Slaughter and Smith attack one another with gusto, and provide much of the intellectual spark of this collection. Slaughter fully recognizes Wilson's racism and his darker side, but counters Smith's completely negative assessment of his legacy. "Making the world safe for democracy," she notes, is far from imposing a specific form of government upon other countries. Bush was no Wilson.

This collection makes a definite contribution. If many of the contributors present an oversimplified portrait of Theodore Roosevelt—as do the conservatives who see themselves in what they believe to be his tradition of "muscular foreign policy," they nevertheless present comprehensive interpretations of Wilson's thought and of the approach of the Bush administration. Of course, whether Bush was a modern reflection of Wilson—which Smith asserts and Knock, Slaughter, and Ikenberry deny—is of importance primarily to academicians. Despite this book's title, this is not its greatest value. Analyzing the substance of the Bush policies and suggesting directions for the future of American policy is far more useful in the long run. This, these essays do as well.

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**Conrad in Germany.** Edited by Walter Göbel, Hans Ulrich Seeber, and Martin Windisch (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 285 pp. \$40.00 cloth.

This book is part of the series "Conrad: Eastern and Western Perspectives" where monographs

such as *Conrad in Scandinavia* (1995) and *Conrad in Poland* (1996) have appeared since 1992. It is divided into three sections beginning with the history of Conrad's reception (with its accompanying translation history). The main part of the anthology is naturally devoted to the *Heart of Darkness*, not only because of its status as a work of Modernism but because it figures prominently in the ongoing controversy about what constitutes colonial literature. The final section entitled "The Nautic Quest" focuses on the popular maritime stories of the former seafaring captain Józef Konrad Korzeniowski.

This book is not merely a historical backward glance at the reception of Joseph Conrad in Germany. It is itself evidence of a resurgence of interest in the writings of this fine representative of world literature. In 2005 Frank Förster published *Die literarische Rezeption Joseph Conrads im deutschsprachigen Raum* (an authoritative collection of German-language articles and reviews of Conrad's writings) and in 2007, just in time to commemorate Conrad's 150th birthday, Elmar Schenkel's *Fahrt ins Geheimnis* and Jonathan Stape's *Im Spiegel der See* appeared (both are biographies). The current interest in Conrad is partially due to the disagreement about his perspectives on colonialism. Whereas Conrad's writings were lauded in the past for their critique of colonialism (Hannah Arendt, for example, praised them highly), they have recently been categorized as racist, misogynist, and anti-Semitic. Even though one would never mistake Kurtz in the *Heart of Darkness* as a creation of Kipling, and even though Conrad's writings neither romanticize Africa nor glorify the white conquerors, he is now, just because of his subject matter, often seen as a writer insensitive to the African Other. But arguments such as these are ideological and do not speak to the literary merits of Conrad's world of characters. In the same vein one could argue that Goethe's *Italian Journey* is anti-Italian because he was more concerned with Germanic *Kultur* than the real life circumstances of the native population.

*Conrad in Germany* is an anthology concerned with the literary aspects of Conrad's works. It does not pass judgement on the issue whether Conrad described the colonial reality that he saw "correctly" or not. Only one article in the collection, Wolfgang Klooss's "Through the Eyes of Colonialism": Joseph Conrad's 'Heart of Darkness' and its Metaphors," is

devoted to Conrad as a writer who failed “to grant the natives their freedom” (Edward Said). The question here is if this is enough. Can one in this day and age, as the editors of this volume have done, bracket the subject? I would think not. However, had they not done so, the volume would have sprawled uncontrollably and included readings like the speculation that Marlowe’s journey (in *Heart of Darkness*) into Africa’s “dark Other” is misogynist because it is a violation of feminized space. Articles such as those would have made this anthology more “modern” and perhaps more interesting to an audience within the field of Cultural Studies. But then again, this is not a Cultural Studies volume but a contribution to *Conradia*. As such, *Conrad in Germany* is a useful and solid survey of the reception of Joseph Conrad’s fascinating journeys and characters in Germany.

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**Negative Horizon: An Essay in Dromoscopy.** By Paul Virilio. Translated by Michael Degener (London: Continuum, 2008), viii + 214 pp. £12.99 paper.

The present edition is a translation of Paul Virilio’s *L’Horizon négatif*, first published in France in 1984 by Éditions Galilée. The translator, Michael Degener, undertakes a rigorous work of translation, embodying in the English text a close knowledge of the work of Virilio, who is certainly one of the most stimulating authors of the present time. The translator reveals intelligence and wisdom on the chosen solutions for textual difficulties, one of which refers to the translation of French terms, such as “voyage” and “passager,” and some neologisms such as “dromoscopy.” In several cases, the translator’s solution has been to put the French term in square brackets adding elucidative notes on the options he made. The translator’s introduction entitled “Seven Minutes”—which in fact are nine, considering the previous *t-minus* e the final *t(er)minus*—functions as a stimulus for the reader, suggesting theoretical relationships

between Virilio and authors such as the pre-Socratics, Nietzsche, and Adorno.

Virilio’s book starts with a Foreword and is organized in ten chapters framed in five parts. The text is ruled numerically with precision, analogous to a simple equation for the edification of a building. Architectonical references cross the text, denoting Virilio’s background. In the Foreword the author evokes the simple typologies for architecture (the bridge, or rather the arch, the crypt, and the nave), and in the second chapter of Part 2, “From the Site of Election to the Site of Ejection,” he makes several references to this discipline and to the craft of the architect. Nevertheless, Virilio’s arguments are established by crossing several domains on an erratic rather than closed reasoning; or better, to adopt the author’s jargon, the text follows a vectorial structure rather than an architectural concretization. One of the most interesting analyses—which functions as the presupposition for what follows—is made within the ontology of human vision, following French phenomenology (Virilio was a disciple of Merleau-Ponty at the Sorbonne).

Virilio adopts the philosophical framework of a systematic linkage (which deliberately provokes in the reader the sensation of erratic thought) between facts and ideas and of a certain free use of language. The first method presupposes a pre-organized world, a place where each part and object can be linked and re-linked to any other part or to several other parts and objects. Prior to the form of an object should be the empty space between objects: “It is precisely this absence that I wish to interrogate, where is the void?” (26). He states that “the formless is an innovation of the west” (26) and that “looking at this more closely, what have we produced that is more original, more specific, than this idea of nothingness, of absence?” (26).

Virilio’s question introduces a critical vision of postmodern society, since, as he declares, “today we are prone to succumbing to the labyrinth of signs as we were once prone to succumbing in the absence of signs” (34). Not being truly seers of our world any more, but already mere reviewers, our destiny is to repeat the same again and again, “in contemplating what we have already contemplated, and by this we are most insidiously imprisoned. This redundancy constructs our

habitat, we construct on analogy and by resemblance, it is our architecture” (34–35). Virilio’s first goal could therefore be seen as the recovery of the void and, in some way, as an argument for the vacuity of human destiny.

In “The Metempsychosis of the Passenger” (chapter 1, Part 1) the author reviews the origins of human civilizations, starting with the concept of “the vehicle.” The first step taken was from predation to domestication—“domestication is the fulfilment and perfecting of predation” (38)—and “the domestication of the female stock has its place in this process” (38). Therefore, woman became the first vehicle; offering man free time, “woman became the ‘future of man’, his destiny and destination” (39). The horse will be the second, and the automobile the most recent vehicle. These ideas are developed in the second chapter, “The Great Vehicle,” where the author discusses the process that turned the horse into the war animal, the horse into the steel-horse and the rise of the motorized machine: “With the violent acceleration [*emballement*] of the motorized machine, it will be necessary to promote the value of the corporeal ‘packaging’ [*l’emballage*] of the passenger, of this traveller squeezed into His upholstered mantle, in the arms of His armchair, an image of a body *mummified that moves* and that the British practice of ‘sports’ will attempt to revive, yes, to resuscitate once it has arrived safe and sound” (52).

Throughout, the author uses a key concept—speed: “speed, by its violence, becomes a *destiny* at the same time as being a destination. We go nowhere, we have contented ourselves solely with leaving and abandoning the vivacious and vivid [*vif*] to the advantage of the void [*vide*] of speed” (40). Therefore, “speed is identified with a premature aging, the more the movement [*mouvement*] accelerates, the more quickly time passes and the more the surroundings are stripped of their significance” (42).

In the second part, Virilio discusses war and the strategies of power. Revisiting one of his main references, the Italian Futurists of 1909–10, he critically actualizes the futurist idea of the hygienic potentiality of war: “the art of war pertains to an aesthetic of disappearance that is probably the whole issue” (76). In modern warfare, the warrior has lost the heraldic condition to gain a ghostly condition

and the new military order becomes “a speed order, a dromocracy” (82).

In the third part, Virilio clarifies the concepts of dromoscope and dromoscopy: “Opposite to the *stroboscopy* which allows us to observe objects animated by rapid movement, as if they were in slow motion,” writes Virilio, “this dromoscopy displays inanimate objects as if they were animated by a violent movement” (101). This condition gives rise to a new landscape, a new desert, and “in this course-continuum the landscape is not so much traversed as perforated” (104), which allows a new type of catastrophe, that of collision. In the chapter on “The Light of Speed” Virilio announces the replacement of the mirror by the screen, which denotes another topic of his theoretical interests. With the desert being “the sky of visible speed” (131), one can finally ask—where then is the place for mankind and human civilization?

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**Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages.** By Mark R. Cohen (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), xxv + 296 pp. \$ 24.95 paper.

This important work, first published in 1994, was reissued in 2008 with a new Introduction and Afterword by Mark Cohen, Professor of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University. Cohen’s comparison of Jewish life in medieval Islam and Christendom, based on impressive and wide-ranging evidence, should be of interest to all those interested in Jewish history. His brilliant and subtle analysis, though focused on the medieval period, provides lessons that are of vital importance today. The book’s ten chapters (divided into five parts) follow the present and original Introductions.

The author hopes that the present edition will reach even wider audiences than before. In the original Introduction, Cohen states that his rationale for the comparative approach is to answer two questions that underlie his work. First of all, why were Islamic-Jewish relations during the classic centuries (from the rise of Islam to the Mamluk period) less marked by

intolerance and violence, than Christian-Jewish relations during the early and High Middle Ages? Secondly, what factors accounted for the constraints on persecution and violence in the Islamic world? In addition, he wishes to deal with a myth and counter-myth connected with Islamic-Jewish and Christian-Jewish relations in the Middle Ages.

Part 1 (chapter 1) concerns myth and counter-myth. Although there is truth behind both, the former ignores the humiliation suffered by Jews within the Islamic world, while the latter ignores the complexities of the relationship between Jews and Christians in Medieval Europe.

Part 2 examines the religious factor in early interfaith relations (chapter 2) and the legal position of the Jews (chapters 3 and 4). Jewish proselytization continued into the fourth century, and Judaizing, i.e., the assumption by Christians of Jewish practices, was a major cause of hostility toward the Jews. The denunciations of John Chrysostom had substantial influence; however, Augustine's doctrine of the Jews as witness did contribute to the preservation of the Jews within Christendom. Nevertheless, an ambivalent attitude remained. Furthermore, Christians blamed the Jews for the crucifixion of Jesus and thus of being guilty of deicide. The Muslims, however, had no grounds for holding the Jews responsible for the death of Muhammad. As People of the Book, Jews received protection in return for obedience and tribute. Although treated with contempt, Jews were allowed to prosper. Changeability characterized the legal status of Jews within Latin Christendom. In the Early Middle Ages the Jews performed vital commercial services and were thus tolerated. By the High Middle Ages their legal position declined, and they were subjected to increased violence. Islam did not single out Jews as a group that required a special law. All non-Muslims were under the jurisdiction of Islamic law. Although subjected to restrictions and humiliation, the legal status of Jews within Islam was far better than in Latin Christendom. In the late Middle Ages, however, the situation became harsher and intolerant.

Part 3 (chapter 5) deals with the economy. With the revival of the economy in Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Jews were relegated to money-lending, but were squeezed out of that profession. Jewish life under Islam was far different, where Jews were

broadly distributed throughout various sectors of the economy. Part 4 (chapters 6, 7, and 8) considers the place of Jews within the social order of both Christendom and Islam. Within Christendom, Jews were at the bottom of the hierarchy, but in a marginal position. Beginning in the eleventh century, Jews were gradually excluded from society and in the thirteenth century were required to wear an identifying sign as a mark of degradation. Within Islam, the Jews and Christians as Protected People, occupied a recognized, fixed, and safeguarded place within the Islamic social order. In both the Christian and Islamic worlds, the vast majority of Jews lived in towns. In northern Europe, Jews lacked full citizenship within the towns. This was not the situation in Islamic cities. The final section of Part 5 deals with inter-religious polemics (chapter 9), and persecution as well as Jewish responses and collective memory of life in the two dominant societies (chapter 10). In contrast to Christianity, for Islam, anti-Jewish polemic was incidental and temperate, and the Jews likewise responded with moderation. The embeddedness of the Jews of Islam was "the most important reason for their relative freedom from violent persecution" (194), thus their collective historical memory was very different from that of the Jews of Christendom.

In his Afterword, Cohen reviews recent trends in scholarship and reaffirms his original paradigm as to why anti-Jewish violence was much less severe in Islam than in Christendom. The author concludes with the hope that once Arabs and Jews have their own state and live side by side in peace they "will have reason to remember those times in the past when they lived together with relatively little violence between them" (283).

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**Iraq: A Political History from Independence to Occupation.** By Asheed Dawisha (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), ix + 377 pp. \$29.95/£17.95 cloth.

Since 1921 Iraq has witnessed a monarchy, republics, wars and upheavals, and the country

emerging today is one still causing controversy both within itself and in the wider community. These reasons are enough to justify this very interesting narrative of events from the time of the British Protectorate—which saw three provinces of the Ottoman Empire merged into what was to become modern Iraq—until recently. No ruler, whether king or president, has found it a sinecure to govern a country which includes, among others, people and cultures from the non-Arab speaking Kurds in the North to the Shi'ites in the South, both clamouring for independence.

The book is divided into twelve chapters and ends with Notes, a comprehensive Bibliography and Index. In Chapter 1 Asheed Dawisha explains that the purpose of his writing was to understand present-day Iraq by looking at how state institutions, democratisation and national identity have developed since the time of the Protectorate. “The British Government saw no reason to veer away from its age-old policy of direct rule” (10), when it appointed Faysal of Syria as King with the long-term aim of involving the people of Iraq in government. In fact the end of the monarchical period saw the triumph of the armed forces, and the military was to become the arbiter of power in the state (39). “One of the most important tasks undertaken by the new state was to mould disparate communities into one viable nation” (68).

There were many upheavals and changes during the period of the Monarchy both internally and in foreign relations and seemingly intractable problems remained. Between 1938 and the beginning of the Ba’thist/Saddamist era in the late 1960s an increase in literacy and the rise of the press (62) opened the way to a wider perspective on the world: a world which had seen the rise of a charismatic dictator in Egypt, and growing awareness of the value of Iraqi oil to Britain in particular.

Dawisha rightly devotes a third of the book to the period from 1968 till the present, which includes Saddam’s war with Iran, his attempted invasion of Kuwait, the occupation, the dictator’s downfall and subsequent fighting and devastation. He thinks it is an oversimplification to suggest that Iraq’s earlier history gave rise to Saddam’s thirty-five-year reign. More plausible is the suggestion that

Ba’thist rule after the coup in 1963 had a strong illiberal streak which paved the way. One of the ways in which Saddam tried to build a more cohesive nation ruled by himself was to emphasise the glorious past of Babylon and the former state of Mesopotamia by supporting important archaeological sites and museums, albeit with his own image at the forefront of these endeavours. The author avoids being partial on the question of the American/British action in 2003, though the book’s title would suggest that he does not consider it to have been in the best interests of that troubled country, even allowing for the fact that a brutal dictator had been overthrown.

This book should be required reading for all those involved in building a brighter future for Iraq.

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**British Democracy and Irish Nationalism, 1876–1906.** By Eugenio F. Biagini (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), xi + 421 pp. \$112/£58 cloth.

This book provides an intellectual history of the policies regarding Ireland’s status within the United Kingdom in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and undermines earlier arguments that minimize the political basis for changing Ireland’s status and providing for Home Rule. Eugenio F. Biagini demonstrates that Liberalism did not die in this era as much as it was replicated by the Tories and emerging Labour Party. Biagini contends that most historians have examined the Home Rule question in isolation of the more important general argument regarding the tension between empire and democracy. The author believes that the ideology of liberalism was strengthened in this period by the rise of nonconformists who challenged the hierarchical nature of religious authority and sought to democratize society. The increasing interest of the middle class in a free trade policy also brought political pressure on behalf of Home Rule. Many in England recognized that the Irish sought and should be empowered to govern themselves.

Biagini spends much of the book explaining the effects of the Home Rule Crisis as he does explaining its causes. He contends that Home Rule helped unleash further calls for democracy and liberal values more generally in British politics. Biagini chronicles how in 1886 Gladstone sought to pass a Home Rule bill after enticing the Irish Parliamentary Party to join his coalition. This effort failed because Gladstone could not keep his party solidly behind the measure. After the defeat of the Home Rule bill, an election demonstrated the strong split among Liberals regarding the merit of Home Rule for Ireland. After Parnell's death, the Irish Parliamentary Party was unable to force the larger parties in Britain to agree to Home Rule.

When considering the fate of Home Rule in Ireland, Biagini correctly points out that the major flaw with Gladstone's policy and effort was that it failed to account for, and underestimated, the impact of Ulster Unionism. By the late nineteenth century, Protestants in Northern Ireland were especially threatened by plans to separate Ireland from Britain.

Unionist resistance to Home Rule found political support among many in England and Scotland who identified and sympathized with Ulster Protestants. Despite this important concession, Biagini's book focuses too much on the British and European contexts to fully appreciate Irish nationalism's emergence and discourse in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Ireland was surely constitutionally part of the United Kingdom, but the period under review in this book includes the time when Irish nationalists looked to a Celtic past that predated British influence to justify not only the desire for Home Rule but ultimately their quest for an independent republic. This important part of the Irish nationalist story needs to be understood to appreciate not only the failure of Home Rule but how most Irish nationalists by 1920 came to reject this option in favor of a republic.

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