Understanding Derrida. Edited by Jack Reynolds and Jonathan Roffe (London: Continuum, 2004), 168 pp. $110.00/£55.00 cloth; $25.95/£13.99 paper.

The late Jacques Derrida was an enormously prolific thinker whose contributions to contemporary intellectual life span diverse disciplines and fields of learning. As a quick perusal of the extensive bibliography included at the end of the present volume will indicate, at least fifty book-length works are currently available in English translation along with scores of essays and short pieces. So copious an œuvre presents the newcomer to Derrida with the daunting problem of deciding where to begin. The editors of Understanding Derrida have sought to aid in this task by providing, in successive chapters, an inventory of Derrida’s principal concerns arranged under broad topical headings (“metaphysics,” “politics,” “literature,” “psychoanalysis,” “the subject,” and so on), each of which is accompanied by a select bibliography in which Derrida texts especially pertinent to the particular topic are briefly summarized. The book then concludes with a lengthy final section contextualizing Derridean thought in relation to the respective philosophic projects of five key predecessors: Hegel, Nietzsche, Husserl, Heidegger, and Levinas. Although virtually all of the contributors (drawn from universities in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States) are affiliated with philosophy departments, this introduction to deconstruction should nonetheless be of interest to readers across a range of disciplines. Understanding Derrida may serve as a useful guide, moreover, not only for the novice but for those who may wish to enlarge their acquaintance with Derrida’s œuvre beyond whatever sector of his thought they may already happen to have encountered.

The various essays comprising this volume do not claim to present an overarching perspective on Derrida, but collectively they foreground important continuities in his thinking as it evolved over the last half of the twentieth century. As one writer puts it, Derrida’s philosophic project was from its inception “drawn on by the ethical demand to open itself up to the other, to all the others” (44). Deconstruction emerged in the 1960s as a critical strategy whose demystification of the “craving for origins, or for the pure, undominated ‘presence’ of Being and truth” (17) was motivated by a “conceptual politics” that “sought to intervene on the side of openness against closure, difference against identity, perpetual movement against stasis” (28). This determination to destabilize “foreclusionary structures so as to allow for the passage towards the other” (29) remained constant. Thus, when Derrida turns to explicitly “ethical and political themes” (121) in the latter part of his career, he complicates his affirmation of “a traditional idea of Europe as the source and leading purveyor of Enlightenment ideals” by insisting that the Enlightenment “idea of democracy, like that of international law, is never simply given, that its status is not even that of a regulative idea in the Kantian sense, but rather something that remains to be thought and to come” (32). Similarly, when he addresses the “question of ‘religion today’” (57) in the 1990s, he posits a “religion without religion,” a “messianicity without messianism” whose “openness towards a future that can never be anticipated or circumscribed by the horizons of significance that we bring to it” (59) entails an “endless calling for justice” (61) accompanied by the recognition that “there will never be a time when freedom and justice are embodied fully in a constitution or a society” (60).

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The materials collected in this volume comprise a viewer’s guide to Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering Kofman’s 2002 documentary film on Jacques Derrida. *Derrida: Screenplay and Essays on the Film* contains an abundance of information pertaining both to the making of the film itself and to Derrida’s philosophic outlook. It includes a moving introductory tribute by Geoffrey Hartman; a critical essay on the film by Nicholas Royle that helpfully reviews Derrida’s principal concerns as a philosopher for those new to his work; essays on the making of the film by Ziering Kofman and Dick themselves; a “film to text adaptation” or screenplay of the film in its entirety; and transcripts of various interviews with Derrida, Dick and Ziering Kofman made both together and individually. Numerous stills from the film appear throughout the text.

The book is most notable for the insights it affords into the rationale for the unconventional representational strategy adopted by the filmmakers as they negotiated the challenge of producing a biographical film about a subject whose writings themselves constitute “a critique of certain prevailing conceptualizations of biography and autobiography” (28). That is, Derrida was dubious both of narrative as a way of making sense of experience—“I’ve just given up telling stories. I’ve just given up” (77)—and of the self, which he evidently believed is incurably prone to narcissism—“There is not narcissism and non-narcissism,” there are only “narcissisms that are more or less comprehensive, generous, open, extended. What is called non-narcissism is in general but the economy of a much more welcoming and hospitable narcissism” (71). Early on in their collaboration, the filmmakers therefore agreed that it would be inappropriate to “present a cinematic narrative of [Derrida’s] life in a way that reproduced uncritically the very structures his life’s work was intent on examining” (28). Experimenting with the conventions of biographical representation, they sought “to find a cinematic way to let [Derrida’s] theory inform the structure and style of the film, rather than make a standard biopic or present a simple explanation of his work” (38). This is not to say that they felt obliged to so undermine the conventions of biography as to deny the film’s viewers a satisfying glimpse of the quotidian texture of Derrida’s life. Indeed, as Hartman suggests, the film succeeds very well in conveying a “‘non-confessional’ yet highly revealing portrait” (6) of Derrida. But thanks to this book, the film’s audience may better appreciate how the filmmakers’ determination “to honor and not betray the integrity of Derrida’s critical work” (24) led them to produce a cinematic portrait structured less as a narrative than in musical fashion like a fugue, “with themes that are introduced and repeated, but, in their repetition, augment, weave, complicate and compete with one another—producing a steady and ever more rich and complex build that would not necessarily resolve in some neat and unifying fashion” (26).

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*Foucault and the Art of Ethics* assesses Foucault’s late effort to articulate an ethics premised upon “an aesthetic attitude toward the self; an attitude of *autopoeisis* which would regard the self as the maleable material for a task of self-transformation” (16). This final project emerged in response to his “earlier investigation of the way institutions and practices of power/knowledge construct and impose forms of individuality” (13). For Foucault, the modern “hermeneutics of the self” constitutes an “apparatus of subjectivation” (30) that constrains human possibility by defining and relentlessly manipulating individual identity. Foucault therefore sought to elaborate “a non-normalizing ethics based upon personal choice rather than social or legal imperatives” (7). Turning for inspiration to Classical and Hellenistic antiquity, Foucault believed that ancient ethical practices of “self-care, self-formation and auto-poiesis” (120) could provide a distant precedent for his own “aesthetics of existence.” The ancients had already developed “an ethics which is characterized by its openness to individual differences and its refusal to impose itself universally” (42). Notwithstanding “all its elitism, sexism and xenophobia,” ancient Graeco-Roman culture “conceived of ethics in a way that placed the
singular individual at the centre of an attempt to cultivate forms of liberty” (104). Such ethical practices might well serve as prototypes, then, for a contemporary ethics that does not presuppose “a pre-given self, or subject, which must be either deciphered or validated” (120). Instead, the self will henceforth be understood to exist “only in the embryonic form of its future becoming” (120), as a perpetual travail rather than a finished oeuvre (127).

Timothy O’Leary is broadly in sympathy with Foucault and over the course of his reflections persuasively counters various objections that have been raised by critics of Foucault’s speculations. The charge has been made, for instance, that Foucault’s promotion of an ethos of aesthetically stylized individuality might well ensue in an opportunistic self all too likely to “slip into, or at least collude with, a politics which treats the masses as a raw material to be moulded by the will of their masters” (123). In answer to this concern, Leary maintains that a Foucauldian understanding of the self as perpetually mutating entails an “acceptance of fragmentation, plurality and instability” (132), a perspective intrinsically resistant to such specifically modern cultural pathologies as fascism because the latter, premised upon “an aesthetic of uniformity, identity and permanence” (132), posits “the ideal of a non-fractured subject which finds itself reassuringly reflected in a non-fractured, uniform public space” (127). Again, critics have argued that Foucault attributes to the culture of Graeco-Roman antiquity “an anachronistically modern notion of the self” (92), a promotion of self-stylization indicative of his own investment in “nineteenth-century dandyism and aestheticism” (93). But if “Foucault’s account is certainly more ‘aestheticist’ than most,” O’Leary argues, “this emphasis is justified, to a great extent, by some of the defining features of ancient ethical discourse” (102). Moreover, Foucault’s overestimation of the aestheticist element in ancient ethics does “not crucially undermine either Foucault’s history or his attempt to formulate a contemporary ethics” (172). On balance, Foucault’s approach succeeds in maintaining a “productive tension” between “academic accuracy” and “political efficacy” (89). O’Leary therefore holds that “this art of ethics, this art of self-transformation, may help us to answer Socrates’ question—‘how is one to live?’” (6).

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**L’avènement de l’opinion publique. Europe et Amérique XVIIIe-XIXe siècles.**  
Edited by Javier Fernández Sebastián and Joëlle Chassin (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2004), 360 pp. €31.00 paper.

This knowledgeable and informative collection of essays discusses the advent of “public opinion”—in its diverse but interconnected meanings—in Europe and the Americas in the period that goes, roughly, from the death of Louis XIV to the belle époque. In particular, the book deals with the French, Spanish, and Latin American cases, plus some references to the British one, and a few marginal considerations on the Italian and German cases. Taken together, the essays show how “public opinion” emerged as one of the several cultural, economic and political offshoots of the Enlightenment, growing in direct proportion to the growth of literate bourgeois elites (the modern “intelligentsia”), the wealth of printing facilities controlled by these elites, and the degree of political representation earned by these elites. Occasional remarks about “public opinion” were not absent in previous centuries (e.g. Cardano, Montaigne, Temple), but it is only in the eighteenth century that it became a recurring theme amidst politicians and intellectuals, a widely recognised social phenomenon, and a crucial factor in the political affirmation of modern democracy.

Following in particular the reflections upon, and the manifestations of, “public opinion” from the affaire Calas to the affaire Dreyfus, the book allows the reader to explore several of its distinctive features and some significant trends in its history. For example, the intelligentsia’s optimism about its liberating and pedagogical power, typical of the Enlightenment, often turned in the nineteenth century into pessimism vis-à-vis the chaotic plethora of views that found room in the public arena via soaring numbers of publications. Similarly, the intelligentsia’s positive and generic assessment of “public opinion” in the
eighteenth century developed later into distinctions aimed at preserving the notion that only the educated elite should direct the formation of opinion in the relevant sectors of public life (e.g. the parliament): “public opinion” is not “popular opinion.” In other words, “public opinion” may have contributed to the advent of modern democracy, but was never committed in toto to it, just as liberalism and liberal institutions represented important steps towards the realisation of modern democracy, yet often opposed universal suffrage, census-indifferent computation of votes, etc.

In the same period, “public opinion” was depicted in many different ways—from being critical of absolute monarchs to being tyrannical over elected governments—along a scale of different abilities attributed to it: informing, educating, denouncing, advising, policing, restraining, ruling, punishing. Analogously, ambiguities persisted with respect to its being “mere” opinion rather than actual wisdom; truly “public” rather than sectarian; social knowledge rather than social agency; a matter for rhetoricians rather than social scientists. Most of these ambiguities, if not all of them, persist today.

The book is learned throughout, but it suffers from a serious academic flaw: it has no analytical index of the authors and themes cited. Also, the organisation of the essays in three loosely chronological and geographical sections seems “rhapsodic.” Though not diminishing the value of the book’s research as such, these defects reduce the likelihood of it being used by scholars and university instructors.

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Jill Burke examines the patronage of two Florentine families in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, the Nasi and Del Pugliese. The book is divided into three parts: “Families, Neighbors, and Friends,” “The Individual, the Family, and the Church,” and “Identity and Change—Savonarola.” Burke’s study is based on archival material as well as secondary sources, aiming for the kind of “thick description” that is the hallmark of contextual art history. She gleans information from letters, wills, and inventories in order to show how patrician men of means interacted with artists including Filippino Lippi, Sandro Botticelli, Piero di Cosimo, and Pietro Perugino. Wherever possible she illustrates the extant works mentioned in the sources as well as their original settings, providing a more complete understanding of audience and function.

In her Introduction to the volume, Burke gives a very useful overview of the state of Florentine studies, patronage or clientelismo, and the shift from fine art to material culture within art history. Whereas patronage studies from the late 1970s onward tended to assume that the patron was a free agent, Burke positions the Nasi and Del Pugliese in relation to their familial, civic, and spiritual obligations. If a previous generation of scholars was cynical about the grand claims and self-aggrandizement of Renaissance patrons, Burke has confidence in their genuine civic engagement and fervent piety. Her revisionist approach balances individual motivation against institutional control and personal meanings—for example, portraits imbedded within altarpieces—against the varied audience reception of a broader viewing public.

After an exhaustive analysis of the documents, the Nasi and the Del Pugliese turn out to be representative of their social class and their generation. They engage in international trade and banking, their wealth allows them to build or buy big palaces and to stock them with luxury goods, and their piety inspires donations to religious foundations and the erection of family chapels. These case studies do not overturn our understanding of Renaissance patronage so much as they confirm what has already been established by Bill and Dale Kent, Richard Goldthwaite, Richard Trexler, and others. Burke’s central argument—“visual objects transmit cultural values rather than simply mimicking them”—recalls the once controversial but now mainstream “New Historicism” identified with Stephen Greenblatt and the Representations crowd.

Chapter 4, “Patronage and the Art of Friendship,” considers an unusual double portrait in the Denver Art Museum attributed
to Filippino Lippi. Burke suggests that the older male can be identified as Piero Del Pugliese and the younger man in profile is a self-portrait; Filippino is speaking while Piero listens. This literalization of the trope of the speaking likeness allows for patrician and artisan to appear united in friendship. While Burke briefly considers gender coding of the profile convention and homoerotic subculture in Florence, she ultimately prefers to read the image as evidence of the emergence of enlightened art patronage.

The text is well-written, accessible, and free of jargon. A few minor issues: the studded dog collar mentioned in chapter 5 is not just an indication of the patron’s wealth; the collar could also be a Strozzi canting device playing on strozza, throat or gullet (see Helmut Nickel, “Two Falcon Devices of the Strozzi: An Attempt at Interpretation,” Metropolitan Museum Journal 9 [1974]: 232). Carole Frick is called “Catherine” in the text and the notes. The author employs an odd format for citing journal articles; the year and the journal title are given but the volume and page numbers are not. Finally, small black-and-white illustrations make it hard to see details and to appreciate qualities of style.

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At the end of The Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels urged the workers of the world to unite in order to overthrow their capitalist oppressors. The idea was at once noble, practical, and eminently problematic. As a moral ideal, it encouraged proletarians to transcend their differences and to see themselves as part of a universal brotherhood. As a political tactic, it realized that a workers’ revolution in one or several isolated countries may not be viable, or may subvert the ideal of universal brotherhood by a resurgence of nationalist, religious, or other conflicts. Although many theorists and radical activists adhered to the idea of socialist universalism, for many others it posed gnawing dilemmas. They lived and toiled in real capitalist nation states with their own particular histories, traditions, and cultures.

Robert Stuart’s masterful Marxism and National Identity examines the tensions between socialist universalism and national particularism for one socialist party during one historical era. Rather than a chronological history, Stuart analyzes the theoretical and practical dilemmas of the French Marxist Parti Ouvrier (later renamed the Parti Ouvrier Français or the POF) from its inception in 1882 until its incorporation in 1905 into the unified French socialist party. Much of the material for this analysis was written by Jules Guesde, the incredibly prolific founder of POF.

Stuart emphasizes that Guesde and the POF were firmly committed to Marxism’s cosmopolitan internationalism. However commendable, internationalism presented the POF with some of its most intractable problems. Was the POF disloyal to its homeland, as the nationalists charged? However delicate the balance, the Guesdits eventually reconciled a commitment to international revolution with a pride in France, particularly the France of the Revolution. How does an atheist party cope with the Dreyfus Affair, where a man is unjustly persecuted for his religious identity? Even more ominously, the growth of a racist French national socialism presented another challenge. Considering the racist position as beneath contempt, the POF may have underestimated the strength of the national socialists and were perhaps lax in criticizing what they considered to be inherently absurd ideas.

I used to think that I was fairly well versed in the history of nineteenth- and twentieth-century European socialist parties—until I read Marxism and National Identity. Now I am both enlightened and chastened. Throughout his 183 pages of text, Stuart is simultaneously comprehensive, subtle, and lively. Add 85 pages of content and reference notes and a 28-page bibliography, and I think that I can safely say that this is the definitive book on this subject.

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Until the publication of Klaus Mayer’s superb six-volume critical edition of Clément Marot’s Oeuvres complètes between the years 1958 and 1980, the rich complexity of Marot’s life and literary career was not well known even to scholars of the French Renaissance for three major reasons. First, Clément Marot (1496–1544) was the first major French Protestant poet and many of his most important poems expressed his rejection of Catholicism and his commitment to Calvinism. In anthologies published in France during the Third Republic (1871–1940), there was a definite effort to exclude overtly religious poetry because the regime was generally unsympathetic to organized religions. Secondly, due to the religious intolerance in France toward Protestants during Marot’s lifetime, censored versions of his religious poetry were published in France whereas uncensored versions had to be published in Geneva and many readers did not realize that there were significant differences between the published versions. Finally, Marot’s true originality as a creative imitator and translator of classical and neo-Latin works was not properly understood by those who did not possess a solid command of Latin and neo-Latin writers. Readers whose knowledge of Marot’s poetry came from the French anthologies had the mistaken belief that Marot produced little more than witty love poetry for the court of King Francis I.

Klaus Mayer’s critical edition of Marot’s complete works has enabled scholars such as Florian Preisig to carry out serious and reliable research on Marot’s poetry. Preisig argues persuasively that Marot developed his own poetic voice and dared to express unwelcome criticism of Francis I’s persecution of French Protestants.

Marot was imprisoned in France and eventually had to exile himself to Turin where he died in 1544. He was tortured in French jails. In his 1972 biography Clément Marot, Klaus Mayer explains that this torture most certainly contributed to Marot’s death at the relatively early age of forty-eight.

Preisig does an excellent job in describing Marot’s development from a rather conventional court poet into a profoundly original poet who combined a deep love for classical poetry and Erasmus with a strong commitment to Calvinism. This is an admirable contribution to Marot studies, but this reviewer wishes that Florian Preisig had examined more extensively Marot’s verse paraphrases of the Psalms that were enormously popular among sixteenth-century French Protestants and later inspired the French Catholic poet Philippe Desportes to produce his own version in response to Marot’s. The major role that Marot played in French religious life during the sixteenth century has been largely overlooked, but Florian Preisig’s book has begun to correct this historical oversight.

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(Re-) Reading Ancient Greek Theater Texts. By Heinz-Uwe Haus (Nicosia: Cyclos Theater Books, 2005), 121 pp. n.p.g

Heinz-Uwe Haus, a longtime contributor to the biennial conferences of the International Society for the Study of European Ideas (ISSEI), spans continents in his academic and theatrical activities, holding appointments in both Germany and the United States (with annual involvement in Cyprus in the summer as well), and spans millennia in his interests.

This slender volume assembles texts diverse in character and purpose, as indeed in intended readers (or hearers). Occasional overlaps notwithstanding, together these writings—schematic lists and essays, addresses and conversations, shrewd synopses and even shrewder notes—give us a good look into the intellect of a leading contemporary man of the theater and (a far keener than Mr. Bush’s into Mr. Putin’s) into his soul. We listen as he thinks, re-thinks, prepares, stages, and reflects back upon an assortment of those plays from nearly twenty-five centuries ago which, as he understands and revives them, still have much to say, to our post- or hyper-modern times.

Some material here is more suitable for general readers whose acquaintance with ancient Athenian drama and theater-practice is slight; for example, there are even a few illustrative drawings. Other items presume
conversance with the playwrights and at least their most popular plays. Nevertheless, bringing all of this together, Haus lets us share his vision of what the ancient plays were and remain and, in performance, what they can and should be in the twenty-first century. His very first pages (7–9) set out illuminating “Rules of Thumb” for a fruitful approach to texts whose importance for us, now, two of the following essays eloquently point out, “Hubris and Blindness: How Much Does Alan Greenspan Matter?” and “The Ancient Greek Democratic Ideal and Its Relevance for Today’s World.” The second of these properly distinguishes admirable ideals from unedifying realities (which Euripides in particular addressed) and so rejects any idolizing of a far-from-perfect Athenian democracy—an arrogant one with imperialist tendencies that would impose its style of government on weaker city-states. On the other hand, that Athens in her national, publicly-supported Theater of Dionysus tolerated criticism of her principles and policies is remarkable: thousands of her citizens sat through the tragedians’ lightly veiled, allegorized criticism, endured open and often savage topical satire that named names, like that of demagogue Cleon, from fifth-century comedy (which, however, Haus passes over).

For here our concern is tragedy, prized above all else for the moral crises it dramatizes. The plays Haus discusses include not only famous masterpieces (Sophocles’ Antigone and Oedipus Rex, Euripides’ Bacchae) but also a pair of less familiar works by Euripides. The latter’s sensational Hecuba deals, even more horrifically than the better known Trojan Women, with atrocities committed in the aftermath of the Trojan War, while the same poet’s little esteemed Suppliants brings before us a political and moral conundrum: under what circumstances can a state responsibly undertake a “good” intervention, with military force, on behalf of foreigners whose “bad” cause has suffered a deserved defeat and thus gotten its survivors into grave difficulty?

More fundamental, perennial dilemmas, for some reason especially prominent in tragedies set like Antigone and Bacchae at Thebes, confront rational human wishes for clarity and order with irrational human impulses toward love of a brother or to all that Dionysus, the “god of ecstasy,” represents (whether or not we can believe in his personal divinity).

One essay, “The Influence of Sophocles on Contemporary Theater,” treats the effect of working with Sophocles. Doing so enhances directors’ and actors’ appreciation of their art as action and communication, but it also transforms them. “To act, which is precisely the object of theater, is to change the world and in changing the world to change one-self” (59). Moreover, bold modernization of venerable classics is often desirable, because “theater has always been about creating a spark. It is alive for the purpose of, many times, putting forth some controversial subject matter. It can be at its most dynamic when it is able to exhibit something that will arouse the interest and ideas of the onlookers of a performance. The idea,” he summarizes in a Brechtian spirit, “is to force an audience to think critically and essentially about the material that they are being presented with” (60). On Sophocles’ choruses, in relation to an audience, Haus observes that “The audience’s presence and participation through the chorus [his emphasis] heightens the vividness and urgency of the action. Sharing of responsibility—that is what the Sophoclean drama trains its participants in. It is only in the performance as we know it that driving emotions, relationships, and events enclosed in the text are released to stimulate the audience to reexamine their own contemporary events and relationships” (68).

Other writings here discuss the results of Haus’ style of dramaturgy-direction, first in casting, thereafter upon casts who with him (re)learn and (re)play these plays. One Euripidean text provides an example, the brief “Notes for a Medea Workshop”; the seventeen pages of “Antigone at Oniades—from the director’s notes” are much more thorough, escorting us through that influential play scene by scene. In a transcribed round table discussion of Oedipus Rex director Haus recalls how during rehearsals “Many started to realize that it really wasn’t Oedipus’ play, it was the chorus’ play. We had a discussion about the political and social ramifications of that” (94).

Although this book may not be easy to obtain, it will well reward the effort to do so for students of drama history, of course, and for any actors who may ever have the chance to perform either the ancient plays or their free
adaptations on stage or in film, but also for all lovers of theater. A number of rather more comprehensive introductions to Greek drama are available as commercial paperbacks, while ambitious reference works survey the plays, such as The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy (1997) and now Blackwell’s A Guide to Ancient Greek Drama (2005). This little book nevertheless has its place, composed as it is not from a distanced, systematic philologist’s perspective, but from that of an engaged man of the theater and stage.

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Stephen Bronner has written a spirited and urgent defense of the Enlightenment and its values, and has done so from an engaged political perspective. For him the Enlightenment is not only a pivotal historical movement, it is also “the necessary precondition for developing any form of progressive politics in the present” (10). Only by recovering the Enlightenment heritage, Bronner argues, can we elaborate a politics that will make for a sustainable environment, mutual acceptance of peoples, the realization of a significant measure of social justice and for individual fulfillment.

The main values and features of the Enlightenment according to Bronner include progress (chapter 2), liberalism (chapter 3), openness (chapter 5), freedom and rights (chapter 8), together with cosmopolitanism, which implies universalism and sensitivity to the “other,” and toleration for minorities and out-groups. Compassion, civility and humanity while not original with the Enlightenment, are central to it, and according to Bronner the Enlightenment is the main source of modern democracy and socialism. He sees the main spokesmen of the movement, the philosophes, as pragmatic reformers and realists, not as revolutionaries or utopians, as certain of their detractors have claimed. On this most historians would concur.

There is no question but that the modern world is deeply troubled. Some scholars see the Enlightenment as the source of the confusions and catastrophes of modernity, among them two leading members of the Frankfurt School of critical theory, Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno. In their highly influential book, Dialectic of Enlightenment, Horkheimer and Adorno set forth a “dark narrative” of the Enlightenment, arguing that the aspiration toward the control of nature and liberation of man to be effected by instrumental reason were subverted by this form of reason, which then became a force for domination and dehumanization. Dialectically, the Enlightenment had turned against itself. One of Bronner’s main theses is that this analysis is profoundly mistaken.

Despite the acuity of some of the insights of Dialectic of Enlightenment and the enormous influence the book has had, Bronner offers a sweeping and stinging critique of it. In its analysis of totalitarianism the book “began with the wrong premises and drew the wrong conclusions” (108); it is based on “false concreteness and misplaced causality” (112). Against Adorno and Horkheimer, who see the ills of modernity emerging from the dialectic of Enlightenment and loss of subjectivity, Bronner maintains that they follow from a well articulated Counter-Enlightenment and currents associated with Romanticism, certain kinds of nationalism and irrationalism. As Bronner puts it: “it is crucial to consider whether the fascist assault on civilization may have been orchestrated less by individuals robbed of conscience and choice than men and women who consciously made the choice to join authoritarian movements with dogmatic ideologies indebted to the Counter-Enlightenment” (98).

His project being the elaboration of a liberal and humane framework for political engagement in the modern world based on the Enlightenment synthesis, Bronner necessarily condemns Adorno and Horkheimer’s tendency to “turn resistance into a metaphysical or aesthetic stance” (28) and to make of freedom “the metaphysical-aesthetic preserve of the connoisseur” (5). Rejecting this withdrawal from politics into a reified realm of the aesthetic, which is supposed to safeguard subjectivity, Bronner repeatedly emphasizes the importance of institutional bases and state
intervention for achieving the liberal and life-enhancing policies that he advocates.

Bronner agrees with Jürgen Habermas that the “Enlightenment project” was never completed or applied, and that many of the ills of modernity are the result of the curtailment of this project by conservative and reactionary forces and ideologies rather than a fulfilled Enlightenment dialectically turning against itself. This point is well taken. It does not make historical sense to “blame” one period, say the Enlightenment, for the ways it has been appropriated, modified or used by subsequent periods. One cannot, for example, reasonably hold Adam Smith responsible for the ways in which contemporary neo-conservative economic theory, fathered by the multinational corporations, has undermined the relative autonomy of the political realm. While Bronner notes the impact of globalization on the modern world, he does not consider the possibility that neo-conservative ideology and the economic interests behind it will succeed in the future, as they have in the past, in manipulating democratic processes and in weakening or effectively destroying institutional safeguards of the common good.

There are a number of points on which Bronner’s account of the Enlightenment is problematic. The characterization of Enlightenment thought as “bourgeois” and its opponents as “feudal” (42–43, 71, 98) fails to recognize the significant role of the nobility in the Enlightenment and the degree to which it was the work of a socially composite elite. Similarly, by emphasizing the “solidarity with the outcast and the dissident” (159) of the philosophes, Bronner misses the degree to which many of them were integrated into, and benefited from, the Old Regime. Bronner’s claim that the Enlightenment developed a “uniquely modern understanding of democracy” (58) needs to be qualified by noting the gender exclusiveness most Enlightenment thinkers derived from the tradition of classical republicanism, and by taking into account the consistent demand for a property qualification by even the most progressive of political thinkers of the period, such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Thomas Paine. Bronner does not give due weight to the elitism of the Enlightenment, humane, paternalistic and “responsible” (the term is aptly used by Harry Payne) as this elitism often was. Bronner also seems to underestimate the importance of the Industrial Revolution and its achievements for the development of social and political thought, and so ascribes more weight than is warranted to the Enlightenment in the emergence of democracy and socialism (12, 35, 99–100). Some of these criticisms are obviated by Bronner’s recognition that the inheritance of the Enlightenment needs to be adapted to modern conditions to serve as the basis for a liberal, democratic and engaged political ethos. The overall argument is convincing.

Production of this volume by Columbia University Press is more than usually careless. Note 1 on page 1 gives the first and middle name of the author of Voltaire’s Bastards, but omits his surname. For some reason references are omitted from citations to some primary sources (29, 39, 47, 165). Abbé Barruel is given as Bruelle (66; but correctly on page 84), and Uriel da Costa is misspelled da Casta (83). The “in” in the phrase “was in already prevalent” is redundant (90), “it would necessary” (108) lacks a verb, and “from the Thermidor” (104) should probably read “from the Thermidorean reaction.” The assertion “his [Vico’s] famous statement, which looked back to Kant and forward to Lukács” (163) is problematic in that Vico (1688–1744), having preceded Kant (1724–1804) into and out of this world, could not well look back to him. These are errors that the proofreaders of the press should have caught.

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Ethnic conflict has re-emerged as a defining feature of international affairs. It shapes much political conflict in the world today and raises fundamental moral and political questions about the responsibilities regional and international communities have in maintaining peace and promoting humanitarian values throughout the world.

Stefan Wolff, a political scientist by training, brings together the worlds of the academic and the policymaker. The author of
11 books, Wolff is also a consultant for a variety of national and international organizations. Written as a scholarly handbook for practitioners, *Ethnic Conflicts: A Global Perspective* is a timely addition to the growing literature on ethnic conflict. Two goals lie at the heart of the book: first, to understand the causes, consequences, and dynamics of ethnic conflicts in the world today; and, second, to provide policymakers and interested lay readers with a framework for thinking about these conflicts and their resolution.

Wolff defines ethnic conflict as a form of conflict in which the goals of at least one of the parties is defined in exclusively ethnic terms and in which the primary fault line is that of ethnic distinction. Ethnic conflict thus includes a wide range of hot spots throughout the world today, from those in Northern Ireland to the Balkans, from the Middle East to Somalia, and throughout South and Southeast Asia. Ethnicity is not the only source of violent conflict in the world, of course, nor is it preordained that ethnicity inevitably leads to conflict in society. Its importance, however, is undeniable.

Wolff’s recurring theme is that ethnic conflict is the product of deliberate choices by elites to pursue political goals by violent means. Ethnic conflicts are amenable to resolution, although the process is complicated and involves a large array of domestic, regional, and international actors who are willing to take risks for the cause of peace.

The book’s major strength is that it provides a reader friendly, logical framework for thinking about the sources of ethnic conflict, its containment and possible resolution, and its relationship to terrorism and international criminal activity. Wolff’s use of examples from conflicts around the globe bring home the complexity and the horror of ethnic conflict in the early twenty-first century.

While chapters move seamlessly from one topic to another, titled subsections might have helped to organize the material for the reader a bit better. The idea of a “global perspective” could have been developed a little more clearly. And lurking in the background appears to be the assumption that something like a global humanitarian perspective exists, which finds ethnic conflicts unacceptable and champions democratic forms of governance. Whether it entails the United Nations, NATO, NGOs, or even an amorphous world public opinion, however, is unclear. Similarly, the role that an international force might play in managing or resolving ethnic conflicts in different settings needs more detailed examination. These limitations aside, this book is an insightful introduction to a troubling problem in international affairs.

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**America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy.** By Francis Fukuyama (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), xiv + 226 pp. $15.75 cloth.

At the end of the Cold War, Francis Fukuyama became famous for declaring “The End of History,” or the triumph of liberal democratic capitalism over its most serious opponents (fascism and communism) in the twentieth century. This sentiment became a credo for American neoconservatism, or the political ideology whose avatars contend that the self-interest of America lies in advancing the cause of democracy throughout the world. Since the terror attacks of 9/11 and the ongoing Iraq War, however, it is obvious that much of the world (including many Americans) does not support this version of America’s mission. It is unsurprising, then, that Fukuyama feels compelled to qualify his earlier optimism.

Once a neoconservative, Fukuyama declares that this ideology is no longer for him. While he still supports neoconservative views on the desirability of democracy-building, he sees the undesirability of relying entirely on multinational institutions (like the United Nations) for solving security problems, and the appeal of using American power to change tyrannical regimes by force if necessary—as virtues which have been turned into vices by the Iraq War. The Bush administration’s excessive hopes for the seamless democratization in Iraq and apparent contempt for its allies lead Fukuyama to declare neoconservatism a failure. (Fukuyama even goes so far as to brand Bush’s foreign policy “Leninist.”) In its place, Fukuyama offers “realistic Wilsonianism,” inspired by President
Woodrow Wilson’s respect for international institutions (like the League of Nations), the use of force to advance humanitarian goals, and the recognition that new democracies require solid traditions (e.g., the rule of law) to succeed.

Yet the invocation of Wilson’s authority is an ominous one. For much of what Fukuyama finds wanting in neoconservatism is comparable to the policies of the Wilson presidency. For it was Wilson who supported a global crusade for democracy as a rationale for America’s entry into World War I, a failed mission which ultimately provoked the resurgence of American isolationism for over two decades following the war. While Fukuyama stresses that his vision is “realistic” in patiently awaiting the eventual triumph of liberal democracy, it is not obvious that America should always find democracy the most desirable regime to support, even in the long run. Democracies can be extremely hostile to U.S. interests (e.g., Chavez in Venezuela) while tyrants can be far more malleable (e.g., Mubarak in Egypt). Already the Bush administration is discovering that democracy-building in Iraq and Afghanistan might lead to the triumph of profoundly illiberal (and anti-American) forces.

Fukuyama is quite right to argue that his mentor, the political philosopher Leo Strauss (1899–1973), would not have supported neoconservatism, despite the conspiracy-minded attempts of wags to link him to his various students working in the Bush administration. As a prudential thinker, Strauss would never pin his hopes on a policy of regime change as the automatic gateway to democracy. (Besides, as Plato argued in the Republic, democracy is one step away from tyranny.) Unlike Fukuyama, however, Strauss would have doubted that the absolute end of tyranny is either possible or desirable.

Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks’s Early Modern Europe, 1450–1789 is the second part of four in the Cambridge History of Europe, the innovative textbook series covering European history and Europe’s relationship to the rest of the world from the year 600 to the present day. The series offers both an indispensable synthesis and an original interpretation of the European past.

The author offers a clear survey of the social, political, intellectual and religious transformations in Europe in its entirety, ranging eastward to the Ottoman Empire and Russia, northward to Sweden, and southward to Portugal. It includes European colonies overseas and integrates religions, ethnicity, gender, class and regional differences. The book presents six central topics: individuals in society; politics and power; cultural and intellectual life; religion; economics and technology; Europe and the world; the Jews and the Muslims in Europe as well as gender history are explored in two chronological sections, 1450–1666 and 1600–1789 in order to shed new light on developments that were central to the formation of Europe.

Wiesner-Hanks’s opens each chapter with leading questions on what constitutes modernity in the various spheres of life, and answers them by telling history as a narrative, which allows her to show how life changed for the better. She is particularly concerned with the role of women in history, ending the volume with a question: if Albrecht Dürer, in the sixteenth century, were to travel through time to the late eighteenth century of William Blake, what changes would he have noticed and what would have seemed familiar? (478).

Her focus is on the physical bodies of individuals in contrast to Jacob Burckhardt’s intellectual focus (46). The emphasis on the human body at the various stages of life allows her to describe changing lifestyles. She discusses the political power theories of Nicolo Machiavelli, the theories of virtues of Polydore Vergil (79), and the division of state and church. She views political life as a social body, noting, for example, that the monarchies in Britain, France and Spain were built on taxation systems and bureaucracies, where parliaments guaranteed stability. But the social differences in these nations were the beginning of peasant revolutions (164).
Two new developments—the invention of the printing press by Gutenberg and the voyages of discovery of Christopher Columbus—changed the daily lives and the economic and technological realities of Europe (219). These developments led to wide-ranging commercial exchanges between Europe and its overseas territories and marked the beginning of the revolution in the conception of the individual. The Protestant Reformation shifted people’s focus from the Church to practical matters such as education and self-government. Thomas Hobbes developed a new political theory in Leviathan (253), promoting the metaphor of the body for society, in which each part was dependent on the other. For him the basis of government was not divine right but the agreement of the people, with both civil and ecclesiastical authorities ruling alongside the ruler. National crises were the result of the enormous size of armies and bureaucracies, fiscal policies and an expansionary foreign policy, which led to the French Revolution (301). Frederick II of Prussia and the Emperor Joseph II both displayed a new style of rule compared to that of Louis XIV. They saw themselves as the foremost servants of their nations and consequently their nations did not experience a revolution as in France.

According to the author The French Revolution was not caused by the Scientific Revolution of the French philosophers and their new conception of nature and the state. It was caused by the resistance to state reforms, by the marked difference in lifestyles of the rich and the poor and by Queen Marie Antoinette. The philosopher Baruch Spinoza was no pantheist (341), but knew the difference between creator and creature. It is a shame that English speaking historians know little about the history of The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation (see Hans Maier, Die ältere deutsche Staats- und Verwaltungslehre [Berlin, 1966]).

In “Religious Consolidation and Renewal” (364 ff.), the author turns to the new lifestyles of the European religious communities that settled in North America and ultimately created the United States. She discusses how the settlers dealt with European-native marriages and with managing slaves. She also discusses the new agricultural inventions in the Netherlands and industrialization in England, again focusing on women’s daily life and the social problems of the poor, but she also argues that the rich supported the social, economic and industrial developments that improved living conditions.

Early Modern Europe charts the transition from the invention of printing in the 1450s to the French Revolution 1789 by featuring texts, illustrations, maps, timelines and guides to further reading as well as a companion website with further primary sources and illustrative materials. A complementary volume to this finely written study may be T. C. W. Blanning’s, The Old Europe, 1660–1789: The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture (Cambridge, 2004).

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By Donald Bloxham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), xiv + 329 pp. £22.00 cloth.

America and the Armenian Genocide of 1915. Edited by Jay Winter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), xii + 317 pp. $45.00/£40.00 cloth.

Nearly a century later, the subject of the Armenian genocide has not gone away; indeed, it has remained prominent in contemporary scholarship as well as in public discourse, as attested to by a plethora of recent publications on this controversial topic. (Richard G. Hovanissian, in particular, the foremost scholar on modern Armenian history, has been very prolific as both author and editor: The Armenian Genocide in Perspective, 1986; The Armenian Genocide: History, Politics, Ethics, 1992; Remembrance and Denial: The Case of the Armenian Genocide, 1998; Looking Backward, Moving Forward: Confronting the Armenian Genocide, 2003.) Sharing the same emphasis on the impact—real or imagined—of international intervention in Ottoman internal affairs as a key contributory factor to the Armenian genocide, the two books under review here try, among other things, to answer one important question: why did the world let mass murder happen?
British historian Donald Bloxham (University of Edinburgh) first retraces the origins of the Eastern Question, from the beginning of the decline of the Ottoman Empire in the late seventeenth century to the nineteenth-century socio-economic reforms introduced, under pressure from the European Great Powers, by the sultans. This opening to and adoption of European values, including nationalism, was bound to have a major impact on this multi-ethnic and multi-confessional polity. The fate of the Armenians tragically illustrates this last point. As a community strengthened by the emergence of a cultural renaissance and of nationalist political parties and, furthermore, as proxies of the Great Powers (Great Britain and Russia, in particular), the Christian Armenians became the objects of suspicion, then the victims of measures of enforced cultural Turkification and, worse, of irrational plunderings and killings: between 5,000 and 6,000 were killed in the Russo-Turkish war of 1877–78, over 10,000 between 1894 and 1896, and, following the coming to power of the fiercely nationalist Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) in July 1908, around 20,000 in 1909. All these killings naturally and ominously set the mindset of victims and state alike. Yet Bloxham concludes that, in spite of this Turkish-Armenian polarization, aggravated by the population displacements at the time of the Balkan Wars (1912–13) and the ever-present fear of imperial collapse, “there is little evidence that a policy physically to destroy the community was forged prior to the First World War” (66).

The Great War (1914–18), which the Ottoman Empire joined in the fall of 1914 on the side of the Central Powers, precipitated the events. The passing of Armenian civilians and soldiers to the Russian side, the Franco-British assault on the Dardanelles in early 1915 and the Entente threat, in response to a declaration of jihad (November 1914), to hold Ottoman leaders and officials accountable for atrocities committed against Christians convinced different Turkish quarters (especially CUP members, eager to establish a connection between the development of a Turkish ethnicity and violent population engineering, and the Army) to press for a final reckoning with the Armenians. Thus their suspicions of Armenian ethnic enmity justified the deportations and killings of this internal alien element. In other words, the transition from ethnic cleansing to outright genocide (which cost the lives of at least one million Ottoman Armenians—half of the pre-war population) was for them purely a matter of security.

Do the facts that imperial Germany was the main ally of the Ottoman Empire during the war and that it did not, in any significant way, impede the destruction process, make it guilty? Bloxham does not think so. True, the Germans showed a lack of humanitarian consideration, but they played no role in the formation of the genocidal policy and there is no evidence “of German diplomatic approval of the Turkish measures once it was known what they ultimately meant” (128). Furthermore, given that the terms of the alliance limited Germany’s interference with the Ottoman Empire’s internal affairs to the prescribed military sphere, the German diplomatic representatives “could do very little to back up their protests against the ongoing genocide” (131). For their part, the Entente Powers, avid to conclude secret agreements that would allocate each of them spheres of influence in a defeated Ottoman Empire, attached a low priority to the Armenian question. Not unexpectedly, their approach remained the same in the wake of the Great War: indeed, with the impact of both the Russian Revolution and the nationalist resurgence under Mustafa Kemal threatening their—and Greece’s as well—core imperial interests in the Middle East and the Caucasus, the Armenians again, this time at Lausanne in 1923, found themselves “in the position of powerless supplicants to the Great Powers” (167).

Bloxham concludes his book with a look at how states have, up to the present day, interacted with the international Armenian community and Turkey over the delicate questions of genocide and denial. In the process, he also makes some interesting comparisons with the Holocaust. For obvious reasons—the need to secure Anatolian land, to fight off external intervention in Turkish affairs and the spectre of some possible compensation to Armenians—denial “was and is for Turkey the final phase of the Armenian question itself” (207). For political and economic reasons—the need to keep a stable Turkey in the Western camp at the time of the Cold War, for example—Great Britain and the
United States have colluded in the Turkish denial process and thereby manipulated to their own advantage the aspirations of a small and vulnerable people. Clearly, in a context of great power realpolitik, Turkey mattered (and matters) more in a material sense than Armenia and the Armenians.

The linguistic abilities of the author are very impressive: he has used published German and Ottoman primary sources and done research in the diplomatic archives of Austria, Great Britain, France, Germany, and the United States. Copious endnotes also reveal a solid mastery of the extensive literature on the subject of the genocide. Nevertheless, this informative and important book is a rather difficult one to read, largely because the author has included two interludes—“The Genocide in Context” and “New Minority Questions in the New Near East”—that break the flow of the story of the Armenian genocide and add, at least for this reviewer, to the uneasy feeling of a book made up of a collection of articles stitched together around a common general theme. A less choppy, more focused, and better structured presentation would have improved the quality of this book.

Conference volumes commonly suffer from uneven quality and America and the Armenian Genocide of 1915 provides a good example of this cliche. Since total war entailed the obliteration of the distinction between civilian and military targets and the ruthless use of terror against domestic groups suspected of offering the enemy any—tacit or active—support, Jay Winter (“Under Cover of War: The Armenian Genocide in the Context of Total War”) convincingly argues that it provided the space in which the Armenian genocide took place. Vahakn N. Dadrian (“The Armenian Genocide: An Interpretation”), the Armenian pioneer of genocide studies, holds the CUP responsible for the Armenian genocide—an idea that antedated the outbreak of World War I and benefited from a tradition of impunity that allowed the principle of license for murder to prevail over the principles of accountability and responsibility. Suzanne E. Moranian (“The Armenian Genocide and American Missionary Relief Efforts”), Susan B. Harper (“Mary Louise Graffam: Witness to Genocide”), and Peter Balakian (“From Ezra Pound to Theodore Roosevelt: American Intellectual and Cultural Responses to the Armenian Genocide”) attest to the generosity and compassion of individuals and institutions in their reaction to this human tragedy. The story is a very different one, though, as far as the governmental authorities are concerned, a reality well illustrated by John M. Cooper (“A Friend in Power? Woodrow Wilson and Armenia”) and Lloyd E. Ambrosius (“Wilsonian Diplomacy and Armenia: The Limits of Power and Ideology”). Through the many reports of his ambassadors and consuls, Woodrow Wilson, the American president, knew early about the Armenian massacres. He sympathized with the plight of the Armenians and really wanted to do something to help them, but he did not intervene to try to stop the atrocities. The reasons for this official inaction are, first, the absence of an American declaration of war against the Ottoman Empire, a restraint, Wilson believed, that “could give him leverage over the Allies and curb their imperialistic appetites in the Near East” (110); and, second, the unwillingness of the American public, which Wilson was becoming more and more aware of, to assume the political responsibility and the financial costs of an American presence in that area. Indeed, although it contained a few eloquent champions of the Armenian cause, the U.S. Congress rejected the idea of assuming a League of Nations mandate over Armenia.

Both books give useful insights into the topic; furthermore, they have the great merit to emphasize the universal significance of the first genocide of the twentieth century and to illustrate the limitations of a world order that believes in social-Darwinist life-or-death struggles and that legitimizes the pursuit and primacy of national interests over and above any serious consideration for ethical issues. The respect for human rights remains the litmus test for a just international order.

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Writing introductory texts is an ungrateful job. The main question authors of such texts face is not, of course, what to include in the text, but what to exclude. The field is huge, but the text can’t be. Then there is the question of depth and width. Deep analyses require a lot of space and thus exclude discussion of other themes. One also wants to be detailed, but not tedious, to give an overview, but not to be shallow. And whatever you include, many will be surprised—nay, disappointed and shocked—that you did not discuss their own favorite topic, the one which they have been working on for the past few years. Thus, writing a good introductory text requires mastery of the art of balance, and the product can always be easily criticized. Readers should not ask themselves whether there are topics that could have been included (there always are), but whether there are topics that are a must but are not included. And of course, the text should also be up to date, clear, and last but not least, interesting. Introductory texts, as I see them, are mostly invitations to further thought and study on the topics they discuss. This, perhaps, is their principal, and insufficiently acknowledged, goal.

The present volume fulfills these criteria very well. It starts out with a meta-discussion about the nature and rationale of women’s studies, and—wisely—is very open about the difficulty of deciding about these issues in this new field of research still at its formative stage. Then it moves to more specific discussions, first by considering women as individuals, then within families, and finally in the context of society as a whole. This order could have biased the discussion towards individualist and atomistic methodological presuppositions (starting from the other end could equally bias the discussion in the other direction, towards holism). But as the discussion in the book makes very clear, the authors are aware of this danger, and present both the weaknesses and advantages of these attitudes, as well as the close and interactive relations among the social, familial, and individual dimensions.

Unlike some other introductory texts on women studies, this book de-emphasizes disciplinary boundaries. Thus, we do not have here a chapter on, for example, sociology and women studies, another on psychology and women studies, and a third on economics and women studies, but a development of issues discussed from a variety of perspectives. Again unlike some other introductions, and in contrast to its previous editions, the present text is very sensitive to the differences among women (at certain points I even asked myself whether it was not perhaps oversensitive to these differences, and whether unifying themes should not be emphasized a bit more). Perspectives of different women, especially those in developing countries, are sought and emphasized.

In less than 500 pages, the authors have done a splendid job of addressing most of the important themes in contemporary feminist scholarship. I did not find any “must have been included” topic that was not there. I would have liked to see a little more discussion of philosophical issues, and the discussion seems to me slightly swayed towards the social sciences, but this may well reflect my own specific interests rather than anything else and, as mentioned above, one simply cannot include all the interesting and worthwhile issues of a field in a workable introduction.

This book meets also the other standards of a good introductory text. It shows a good balance between thoroughness and coverage, and it is very clear. No less importantly, it is interesting to read. When one finishes a chapter one feels that one understands the main questions and basic viewpoints, but also that one wants to read more. This, in short, is a very good introduction to feminist studies.

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Despite globalization and cross-border cooperation, boundaries have not lost their significance. The fall of the Iron Curtain nurtured hopes that barriers would gradually disappear and give way to more flexible regimes of interaction between states. The collapse of the Soviet Union and of Yugoslavia, however, brought about a different reality (as is described in the chapter by Pavlakovich-Kochi in this book). In 1994, already, the Czech
anthropologist Peter Skalnik reminded us that prior to 1990, he had to cross one border only on his way from Prague to Leningrad, whereas afterward this would have meant six boundaries (Skalnik, 391). Life has not necessarily become easier. This example demonstrates that the newly emerged states needed boundaries to affirm themselves as separate socio-political systems and as a means to develop their own identities. Although the European Union has abolished borders (and inside the Schengen Treaty area also border controls), the member states are still states in their own right, and the boundaries still delimit the range of action of national law. When travelling from Basel (Switzerland) to Trier (Germany) through France and Luxemburg some time ago, the reviewer was issued with two return tickets: one from Basel to the Luxemburg-German border station, and one from the border station to Trier. Politicians can eliminate boundaries, but railway companies have their own practices.

Despite the revival or the lingering on of boundaries, the past fifty years have shown highly varied processes in the boundary context. Far from being long-term static phenomena, boundaries have experienced considerable dynamics, even if the man in the street does not always profit from them. International organizations, free trade areas, bi- and multilateral cooperation agreements etc. have gradually undermined the once rigid fragmentation of the world into single political agents. The steady expansion of international law is a sign that problems are looked at from a transborder perspective and that most states increasingly share the same or similar values.

State boundaries have also lost most (not all) of their conflict potential. The best example is furnished by Africa where the Organization of African Unity explicitly recognized the state boundaries drawn by the former colonial powers, although they did not reflect the regional cultural reality. This decision was extremely wise, because it transferred the solution of border issues from the battlefield to the International Court of Justice. The bloody war between Ethiopia and Eritrea (1998) is no counter proof: it just illustrates how difficult it is to implement it in the field.

Challenged borderlands: the title of this collection of papers underlines the changing perception of boundaries in a dynamic world. Boundaries as lines and (trans)border regions (or borderlands) as areas are intimately connected with the hopes of the people, the interests of the economy, the fears of the political-ideological system, and at the same time the problems of integration and exclusion. Such issues are discussed particularly in parts 2 and 3 of the present book. The concept of borderlands has moved away from the mere quasi-empty periphery to potentially key development areas, and border regions in many parts of the globe have undergone substantial transformations. This book focuses on two particular regions, the U.S.-Mexico border and the former Iron Curtain. These two examples illustrate two different processes: the economic ties (and contrasts) between the United States and its neighbour to the south, and the effects of the collapse of the Soviet bloc and of former Yugoslavia. In the former case, the boundary still assumes a strong separating role as far as immigrants are concerned. In the latter case, we notice a rapprochement between Europe and countries that had temporarily been separated from the western part of the continent. At the same time, the “curtain” is being displaced eastwards, thus creating the “European fortress” (see the contribution by Richard Welch). The two regions stand for two fundamentally different boundaries: between the First and the Third World, and between the First and the Second World.

A fundamental point that inevitably turns up explicitly or implicitly is the role of the nation-state in an age of globalization, and of the emergence of the region-state. Regions as actors are indeed important players in transborder relations, especially because they are usually more flexible in developing contacts and partnerships than the rather clumsy state apparatuses. However, the current debate on the nation-state is essentially conducted from an economic (neoliberal) perspective. The state is first and foremost an instrument of socio-spatial organization, not an end in itself; hence it has its primary responsibilities towards the people, the society, as well as (to a lesser degree) to the economy (which is also part of the society). On a second level, the state holds a monopoly in certain fields, and it is the monopoly that is nowadays questioned. However, the state (represented through the government) remains an important agent in globalization: it is engaged in the process of
bargaining with the TNCs on the location of enterprises and economic development. Conflict and cooperation characterized a process of two “parties who have different interests and who intend to strike the best possible deal” (Cordey 2005, 111). The region-state exists within the context of the nation-state; if the latter disappears, the former may face the same fate. Both are defined by political-administrative criteria, and these criteria have to be considered also in the context of regional economic integration. Thus, functional integration (as described by Pablo Wong González) still needs some degree of formal integration; the two occur on different spatial scales: formal integration requires political agreements between partner states, and functional integration, on the other hand, is much more pragmatic and depends on the intentions of the economic actors and the potential a borderland offers.

Regional (economic, but also social and cultural) integration depends to a large extent on the freedom of action a partner region has in political and legal terms. Not to be neglected is the perception of the local populations who may be the direct beneficiaries or sufferers of a border situation and decisions on transborder cooperation. In the case of well-established and permeable boundaries, such initiatives may meet with success (although the role of U.S. immigration policy on the U.S.-Mexico border is not clarified in the various contributions on that area). Where boundaries have been newly created and/or have changed their separating role, the situation for the border population can be quite dramatic, as the four chapters on regions on the former Austro-Hungarian boundary and the Slovenia-Croatia border demonstrate. Boundaries are social phenomena, often multicultural, and as such dependent on human images, actions and decisions. The accession of Hungary and Slovenia to the European Union (which is hinted at several times as imminent) has again changed the border situation in some of the study areas—another sign of the relevance and dynamics of the border issue.

The very instructive and thought-provoking volume comprises a general introduction, three introductory chapters on the theme of borders, boundaries and border spaces; five on international and national forces redefining ‘we’ and ‘others’; and six contributions on living with changing borders. An epilogue on implications for policy and decision-making rounds the book off.

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Marguerite Yourcenar en poésie: Archéologie d’un silence. By Achmy Halley (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), 604 pp. €120.00, $150.00 cloth.

This new work by Achmy Halley is a study of the relationship of Marguerite Yourcenar to world poetry. Yourcenar spent a great deal of her life reading, writing, translating, and criticising poetry. The book is a development of a doctorate, and its method is to combine an exploration of her personal library with her correspondence, interviews and other previously unedited materials in order to uncover her poetic interests and prejudices. Halley points out that, whatever we may think of Yourcenar as a poet, she herself saw poetry as central to her life, and saw herself as, above all else, a poet.

The first theme, Yourcenar as reader and critic, delves into her discovery of poetry in childhood under the influence of her father, Michel de Crayencour. Yourcenar was an only child whose mother died from complications shortly after her birth. There is rather less biographical material in this volume than novices may need, but such readers are well served by Josyane Savigneau, Marguerite Yourcenar: L’Invention d’une vie (1990).
Prestigious ancestors and education at home by her father and tutors were her lot in life. She was a voracious reader and autodidact. This allowed for the development of literary tastes that were both traditional and idiosyncratic. She was also published very early as a result of the encouragement and financial backing of an indulgent father. Her library is explored exhaustively and reveals eclectic tastes, including a broad range of world literature, with an underlying bed of classics. Halley excludes Greece and Rome from the analysis of the library, rather disappointingly, but does show her substantial acquaintance with the great figures of the French tradition (Racine, Victor Hugo, Baudelaire and Rimbaud, to name a few), and some surprising choices from elsewhere. There were forays into both Indian and Japanese literature, which reflected her developing interest in Eastern thought. The analysis throughout emphasises that poetry was the main focus, and that for Yourcenar a great writer was a great poet. Certain figures are pulled out of the library and given greater prominence because of statements derived from the extensive documentary materials. Her attitudes to modern poetry were heterodox, and tend to place her at the end of the nineteenth century tradition of French poetry, but there were signs of a break with early conservatism at the end of a long life.

The second half of the book treats Yourcenar’s writing and translation. There is an extended treatment of her early work, which makes clear its very limited appeal. Her later poetry is examined and assessed in its context, and is rated higher. The relationship of poetry to her prose writings is explored. As a translator, Yourcenar herself adopts a self-deprecating approach to her early translations of Pindar, but far more significant was her translation of Cavafy. As a translator Yourcenar had fixed views on her role as intermediary, and these emerge clearly from Halley’s treatment. Overall, this is a long book, which treats its themes exhaustively. It shows its ancestry as a thesis, but also provides a new way of regarding the works of Yourcenar.

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The Creation of the British Atlantic World. Edited by Elizabeth Mancke and Carole Shammas (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), viii + 400 pp. $52.00 cloth.

In only a few centuries, the world has seen Britain’s profound influence in the Atlantic world as it aided a movement of people and ideas to the “New World,” thus setting the foundations for new countries, numerous conflicts, and a different way of life for inhabitants and immigrants alike. While many have sought to explain the history of Britain’s influence and involvement in the Americas, the contributors to The Creation of the British Atlantic World seek something deeper. As one of the editors—Carole Shammas—says, “The authors are less interested in a descriptive history of the Atlantic world and more concerned with exploring the transformation of peoples, institutions, and ideas as they circulate around and across the ocean” (6–7). The deeper purpose and commitment to uncovering these transformations are what make this book an important addition to scholarly works on the British Atlantic world and a vital read for one who seeks a more complete understanding of it.

The Creation of the British Atlantic World explores these transformations by focusing its sections and chapters on the less familiar parts of Atlantic history. Each contributor uses specific people and events to show how the British Atlantic world was created. The chapters are centered on specific examples that cover early African migration to British territories, slavery and national identity of natives, sovereignty issues with Portugal and other colonizers, Catholicism among African immigrants, law of the sea and legal issues in the colonies, the Enlightenment and Protestant progression, the growth of the Lutheran Church in the northern colonies, chartered enterprise growth, seed planting in Florida, the British empire portrayed through art, and the use of genealogy to create both British and American identities. With the use of specific examples, the authors create a multidisciplinary volume that helps the reader understand Britain’s role in shaping the Atlantic world and the formation and transformation of the ideas and peoples therein.

Yet while these authors combine their works to form a collection of pieces to the British Atlantic puzzle, they all have different
styles and tones. This can be refreshing, but the voice of the writing changes from chapter to chapter. Some chapters are more interesting than others. Furthermore, the specific nature of the book requires that the reader have a fairly strong background on the subject, without which the writers’ focus is essentially ineffective.

However, the authors’ purpose was not to create another history book that focuses on what many people already know about the British Atlantic. Their goal was to provide something more than the ordinary and basic—something detailed enough to refer to specific individuals and cases, but general enough to be applicable to the British Atlantic as a whole. This is what the authors successfully accomplish. Those who want to expand their understanding of this area and time period should consider *The Creation of the British Atlantic World* to do so.

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Through the lives of extraordinary women, this book looks at a time of great change—roughly from 1789 until the coronation of Victoria in 1837. This was when women’s rights were severely restricted. It took a private act of Parliament to get a divorce. An etching depicts a rally for universal suffrage outside Manchester in 1819 in which at least eleven people were killed and hundreds wounded by a local militia. France had erupted into revolution. England’s face-to-face culture was being replaced by one defined by print. The art world was changing as the book explains, “Romantic artists prize the emotional over the rational, finding heroes in madmen and, generally, in the members of the social body who suffer most.” Written and visual sketches of women who broke huge barriers provide a view of a period usually only associated with male heroes. Intended for the general reader, the book is footnoted with sources leading to more titles. This is augmented with a short reading list. The writing is crisp and lively. And the visual materials drawn mainly from the New York Public Library’s extensive collections are outstanding. The vivid images include traditional portraits, miniatures, satirical cartoons, caricatures, letters, books, and scandal mongering gazettes.

Some of the women are familiar. Mary Wollstonecraft (1745–1833) challenged the legal and social restrictions under which women lived in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792). This was preceded by her *Vindication of the Rights of Men*, which was a reply to conservative parliamentarian Edmund Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790). In Chapter 2 she is compared with Hannah More (1745–1833), who was called “the first Victorian” because of her enthusiastically religious, steadfastly conservative life. More was friends with William Wilberforce (1759–1833), the evangelical Member of Parliament who led the fight against the slave trade. Jane Austen (1775–1817) is also compared with More. The sketch about her expounds: “Austen dramas are ethical, not merely conjugal. The same could be said for Hannah More, but where More’s single interest is the morals, Austen’s vision is multiple, as she develops the moral, social, economic, and intellectual lives of her characters.” Wollstonecraft’s daughter, Mary Shelley (1797–1851), author of *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus* (1818), the most famous and most-often-read piece of Romantic literature is in the same chapter as is Austen—Chapter 5, “Stronger Passions of the Mind: Women in Literature and the Visual Arts.”

Now-obscure women are also profiled. Caroline Norton (1808–77) used her dreadful experience with the English legal system to succeed in changing the custody law. Her husband, George Norton, a wife beater, left her taking their three sons with him. Then, he brought a lawsuit for criminal conversation, i.e. adultery, against her and Lord Melbourne, then the Whig Prime Minister. The jury did not even have to leave the jury box to decide in her favor. But her life still did not improve. Notwithstanding the verdict, the *Crim. Con. Gazette*, a scandal mongering paper, costing two pence, smeared her with a story of her and Lord Melbourne. And her husband retained custody of their sons. Like Mary Wollstonecraft, she fought back, not through writing, but through her political and
publishing connections. She wrote impassioned pamphlets in which she drew extensively and eloquently on her personal experiences. In 1839 Parliament passed the Infant Custody Act, which gave married women custody of young children.

Another lesser known woman featured in Chapter 6, “Rational Dames and Ladies on Horseback: Scientists and Travelers,” is Anna Atkins (1799–1871). She worked as an amateur scientist. The book describes her great work, *Photographs of British Algae: Cyanotype Impressions* (1843–53), which illustrates hundreds of different species of seaweed, as “so beautiful that its images hover on the boundary between science and art.” Three lovely examples are shown in the book. The cyanotype process is now used only for blueprints. What is remarkable about the accomplishments of Atkins and the other women scientists of her time is that then science education was not taught much at the still all-male universities.

Other chapters, not mentioned above, are Chapter 1, “Mary Robinson, Eighteenth Century Romantic,” Chapter 3, “Not Quite Good Enough: Three Imperfect Lives,” Chapter 4, “The Modern Venus, or, Improper Ladies and Others,” and Chapter 7, “The Youngest Romantics.” The last chapter covers four women, including Queen Victoria (1819–1901), who came of age in the latter part of the Romantic era and made the transition into the Victorian period. The others are Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–61), Charlotte Brontë (1816–55), and George Eliot (1819–80). The book opens with the life story of Mary Robinson (1757–1800), who is depicted as an actress, mistress, poet, mother, and novelist. The first paragraph of this chapter gives the reader a flavor of things to come:

[Robinson’s] early life was conducted according to eighteenth-century possibilities and expectations: beginning as a virtuous wife, she became an actress famous for her beauty, and, in the best tradition of royal courtesans, had an affair with the Prince of Wales. She soon discovered that she had placed herself outside respectable English society: a woman’s sexual reputation, once stained, was treated like a signboard on which any sort of rumor might be posted, and London gossips provided plenty of material without too much reference to its validity.

The third chapter tells the story of women who were raised to see motherhood as heroic and wifehood as a profession. The fourth takes the opposite tack as it looks at women who were, in the public view, decidedly improper. Perhaps surprisingly, the cartoons and drawings accompanying the text are quite racy, even by contemporary standards. In general, the cartoons and caricatures of the Romantic era are more biting and complex than their modern counterparts.

I recommend this book for the general reader as well as for anyone interested in exploring Romantic literature and the early roots of feminism in more detail. The writing hones in on the lives and times of these extraordinary women and connects their ideas one to another and to our times. The graphic material richly supplements the writing. It is a book the reader can go back to time after time, learning, seeing and enjoying it more and more.

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War Aims in the Second World War: The War Aims of the Key Belligerents, 1939–1945. By Victor Rothwell (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), xii + 244 pp. $25.00 paper; $75.00 cloth.

The literature on the Second World War has grown so extensive that the unguided undergraduate could easily become lost between detailed monographs on obscure aspects of the war and popular accounts which regurgitate many of the myths since corrected by more recent scholarship. Why then, do we need yet another book, particularly one based heavily on published secondary sources? Victor Rothwell provides a succinct synthesis of a wide range of works dealing with the war aims of the major belligerents, attempting to place the Second World War within the context of a European history by highlighting continuities of war aims and national strategy. Rothwell attempts to strike a balance between ideological motivations and traditional concerns of seven of the major states fighting the Second World War: Germany, Italy, Japan, Britain, France, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.
Rothwell begins with an examination of the concept of war aims, noting a shift from “dynastic” aims to economic and strategic aims beginning in the sixteenth century. He argues that a sophisticated English model developed under Elizabeth I, incorporating the concept of “national interest” as the new driving force in English policy. On the continent, Rothwell’s monolithic “Germany” and tsarist Russia also began to adopt modern war aims, although he argues that they were simply concerned with territorial expansion as opposed to the more complex British policies incorporating diplomatic and economic components.

Beginning with a brief examination of German war aims, Rothwell succeeds in doing what A. J. P. Taylor failed to do: to place Nazi aims within a broader European context, without ignoring the racial-ideological element of Nazism and its role in driving Nazi foreign policy and military strategy. Unfortunately Rothwell’s slender volume does not address much of the literature and debate on this topic, such as the contradictions and inconsistencies between stated policies and practice in the Third Reich, the relationship between opportunism and a program of expansion and conquest (Stufenplan), or the role of Hitler as a driving force of policy within Germany. Readers interested in a detailed survey of this literature would do well to start with Ian Kershaw’s The Nazi Dictatorship (1985).

Rothwell is on firmer ground in dealing with British war aims, arguing that Britain was initially concerned with avoiding loss and security of the empire as opposed to supporting a particular ideology (although one could pose the counterargument that British imperialism was the ideal it was struggling to uphold). Rothwell describes U.S. war aims as initially an odd blend of anti-imperialist ideals and economic imperialism, which later shifted to security concerns. Interestingly, Rothwell suggests that the American desire to break up the British and the French trade monopolies, and to expand an American economic empire across the globe was of greater significance in driving policy than the idealistic goal of defeating Nazi Germany. The contradiction between American anti-imperialist ideology and the need for strategic bases worldwide was resolved in favor of security interests. The United States acquired overseas bases in the Pacific, while pressuring Britain and France to move towards decolonization of their own empires in Africa and Asia.

In Rothwell’s interpretation, Soviet war aims were a mix between Russian security concerns and Stalin’s criminal-paranoid personality. Rothwell notes a Soviet appreciation of British war efforts (160) and argues that the Cold War was neither inevitable nor the result of Stalin’s intransigence. Interestingly, Rothwell does not engage with the Icebreaker controversy and the argument that Stalin saw the 1939 Non-Aggression Pact as a truce allowing time to prepare for a coming Soviet-German conflict. Soviet war aims in the period 1939–41 are all but ignored, as Rothwell chooses to focus on the later period of the war and plans for annexation or control of territory bordering the Soviet Union.

Rothwell does a fine job of melding various sources of strategic war aims, such as ideology, economy, racism, finance, security, and geography into a coherent package. He shows the mix of idealism and opportunism that was behind many of the war aims of the major belligerent states, although he tends to emphasize the Machiavellian opportunism of the individual leaders and minimize the role of structural factors and ideology in the formulation of state policies. He successfully integrates both the European and Pacific conflicts as well as global issues into his treatment of this topic. While not a comprehensive survey, this text serves well as an introduction to the subject. Rothwell identifies many of the major issues, while leaving it to students to explore these in depth in the classroom or through research projects. Recommended for any comprehensive collection dealing with modern diplomatic history or the Second World War.

**William Mengel**

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**The Shadow-Walkers: Jacob Grimm’s Mythology of the Monstrous.** Edited by Tom Shippey (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), xi + 433 pp. $42.00/£32.00 cloth.

Tom Shippey has provided an amazingly rich and fantastic banquet of scholarship on the mythology and monster figures which first
appeared in Jacob Grimm’s work. The result of several panels at the Kalamazoo and Leeds medieval congresses, Shippey has assembled a series of outstanding scholars who plumb new depths and rework material regarding a wide variety of Grimm’s figures: trolls, dwarfs, giants, elves, dragons, and weise frauen (disir, valkyries, volur, Norns) and werewolves are examined, as well as Grendel and a variety of shapeshifting gods and humans in mythology, fairy tales, and folklore.

Shippey provides an introductory essay in which he outlines Grimm’s contribution to mythological studies, how these developed in the latter nineteenth century, and how the Deutsche Mythologie has functioned as a foundational text but is in need of drastic reworking at this point. He also provides an afterword in which he suggests that a “new set of ‘Grimm’s Laws’ which would explain mythology... with the rigor and potentially universal applicability of the laws of consonant-shifts and vowel-mutations” (379) will always be just beyond our grasp, though Grimm “must have got something right” since his work—and that of his brother—continue to “remain part of the mental furniture of... almost everyone in the Western world, and many people outside it” (381). He also suggests, in his own essay in the body of the collection, that the question of elves must be approached from a multidisciplinary perspective to satisfactorily answer questions concerning them, rather than the standard approach “from a framework of strict disciplinary separation” (159). Following his suggestion, he discovers that elves do not easily fit into any one category of non-human actors but are too pervasive to be dismissed as a category of “actors.”

Many surprises reward the readers of the other essays. We discover that trolls, rather than being the wizened old male figures which hide under bridges in the modern illustrations of children’s picture books, are the great and terrible female figures that personify death, destruction and chaos that afflict society. We learn that Norse gods assume animal form primarily for practical purposes—Odin becomes an eagle to fly to another locale—whereas in the fairy tales humans are afflicted with animal shapes not freely chosen and as punishments (sometimes for no clearly given reason). We learn of the possible ancient identity of werewolves with criminals exiled from human society and trace their sad devolution into the modern figures of camp and silliness.

This collection is excellent for scholars, students, and the interested public. Jargon is avoided and concepts are explained quickly and simply for those not familiar with previous scholarship in the area. All the essays extend our appreciation of Grimm’s work while vastly enlarging our knowledge of these figures. So much more is now known of the language and social history of the regions where Grimm obtained the tales and poems on which he based his studies that it would be easy to simply deride his work as something long outgrown and outmoded. Rather, we come away with plenty to chew on from both Grimm’s work and modern scholarship. Truly, we are able to “live happily ever after” as we continue to deepen our understanding of these formative tales and characters of western civilization.

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Heretics or Daughters of Israel is a painstakingly researched and carefully edited book. The notes and sources are also most helpful. The evidence is taken mainly from Archives of fifteenth-sixteenth-century Notaries, now at the Archivo National in Madrid, of Trials and Processos from Spanish Inquisition Documents. Renée Levine Melammed carefully navigates the lives of women with Jewish Converso links, some with stronger Jewish beliefs than others, charting their day-to-day, often precarious lives, in the period both before and after 1492.

As one reads Heretics and Daughters of Israel, going back so many centuries in time, one often feels exceptionally close to the lives of the hidden Jews, how they ran their businesses, managed their employees both in commercial life and within their homes. We are of course dealing with an age when workers and especially servants were often ill treated, mostly working under what we see today as dreadful conditions, although acts of kindness are also recorded.
Levine Melammed highlights how the Crypto Jews ate, cooked, cleaned and tended to the needs of their families, employers and friends yet at the same time were torn by doubts and fears not only for themselves but also for those around them. The reader witnesses how argumentative many of them were in various situations full of petty jealousies with constant rows and disagreements. Most importantly, one realizes how small illegal acts could have serious consequences, as, for example, dismissing a domestic servant because of petty theft or a wife’s suspicion of an attraction between a housemaid and the master of the house. Such events often instigated actions from those dismissed from their employment to give damning evidence when summoned to appear before the Inquisition and to speak out against their former employers. By examining how the trials were conducted, the book illustrates an important facet of such trials, which is generally overlooked in other history books.

When a person was detained by the Inquisition and prior to the opening of the trial, they or their families were given a list of names of those known as denouncers, who would later be summoned to give evidence against them in court. Somewhat surprising is the fact that the defence had the right to object to these witnesses and to show that their testimonies were often not without prejudices or were motivated by vendettas. Instances are cited of witnesses who were eventually dismissed from the hearings in which cases the defendants were released. However, even in such cases the defendants often continued to be hounded and suspected by the Inquisition’s spies, which even many years later could end up with yet another conviction.

Personal details are supported with ample background material and research. Various examples include the ways hidden Jews tried to observe and whenever possible to celebrate their religious festivals. The Inquisitors interviews illustrate their anguish and conscience-stricken feelings regarding Jewish customs and how to commemorate them out of respect for the memories and wishes of their parents, especially if they were no longer alive, and when they themselves were outwardly, willingly or unwillingly, already committed to a Catholic way of life, but nevertheless felt the pull of their Jewish past.

Particularly sharp in focus are the descriptions of the forbidden Hadas ceremony on the 8th day after a child’s birth. This ritual was banned by the Inquisition very early on as a positive sign of Judaism, yet we know it persisted into modern times in small backwaters of the Hispanic world. Most importantly, it was frequently cited as damning evidence, yet today, at the other end of the pendulum, admittance of this custom before Rabbis and Conversion Courts is regarded as a sure sign of a family being Jewish.

Heretics or Daughters of Israel is highly recommended to all students of Marranos-Anusim culture and history.

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Democracy beyond Borders: Justice and Representations in Global Institutions. By Andrew Kuper (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), x + 228 pp. £ 44.00/$ 95.00 cloth; £18.99/$ 25.00 paper.

One would have to go back a long way in the history of thought to discover a case in which disciples of a major philosopher—actual and spiritual—vehemently rejected one of their master’s final efforts as incompatible with the whole thrust of his work. But this is what has happened to John Rawls on the subject of international justice. One of his later essays, which he developed into the book The Law of Peoples (1999), made clear that throughout his works he considered the nation-state the proper forum for thinking through the requirements of justice; his famous principles would therefore not apply directly to the international scene. Students of his like Martha Nussbaum and Thomas Pogge did not allow their loyalty to force them to follow their teacher on this issue, and Andrew Kuper’s book is, like their ongoing work, a full-scale attempt to imagine what the principles of justice would look like if the world were seen as a collection of free and equal citizens, with theory not forced to stop at historically constructed and morally irrelevant national frontiers.

What is unusual and attractive about Kuper’s book (one may compare it to Nussbaum’s Frontiers of Justice [2005] in this regard, which also takes up demands of global
Justice) is that, after the theoretical exercises familiar in contemporary academic philosophy, Kuper insists that philosophy also engage in formulating principles of institutional design or even institutional reform. (Kuper has more recently edited a book, Global Responsibilities: Who Must Deliver on Human Rights? [2006] in which he pursues the debate with a number of the leading moral and political theorists of the day.) Kuper’s project is at its most novel here, even if it shows that academic philosophy may have a long way to go if high principles are to meet the realities of practice.

Following an opening chapter that, among other things, shows why Rawls was wrong to restrict justice to the national forum, Kuper goes on to criticize Jürgen Habermas’s ideal of deliberation, in the name of a representative ideal that Kuper dubs “responsive democracy.” He then proceeds to a positive chapter sketching this alternative. The gist of the difference is that responsive democracy purports to be more realistic: the requirements of full inclusion and mutual recognition of all citizens by other citizens upon which Habermas insists, Kuper says, cannot possibly be vindicated on the scale of global democracy: “No institutional account,” as he puts it, “can redeem the requirements that flow from the conceptual structure and ideals of deliberative theory” (71). Already, then, in the theoretical work, realism is an important constraint. But this does not mean the nation state is the only alternative. Kuper concludes, in his longest chapter, by sketching what transformation of global institutions would be required if his philosophical defense of global representative democracy were accepted.

Anyone interested in academic political theory should read Kuper’s account of responsive democracy: it shines for its careful exposition and judicious comparisons to rival theories. Others will be most provoked by Kuper’s criticism of his discipline for failing to envisage concrete reforms. Yet his response—he analyzes the prospective extension of the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice before moving to the United Nations and its possible reform—leaves much to be desired. It omits the topic (here, Kuper is wholly in line with academic political theory) of how such changes are to be brought about, where political will comes from and how resistance is overcome, especially when global representation would have to be linked to global economic justice. The cover of the book is an image of the world as a conference table, with notables discussing its fate. One wonders whether what is in the end a simple plea for these notables to become representative rather than oligarchic is so realistic a proposal after all.

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“Perhaps not all the stories that follow are true. They could, however, be true, and the Reader is invited to ponder this.” So begins Chapter 1 of Insurmountable Simplicities, an imaginative and witty book comprising thirty-nine philosophical conundrums encapsulated in short dialogues, stories and epistolary exchanges involving two main characters (“He” and “She”) and a diverse additional cast including most regularly “The Meddler.”

A broad range of themes is covered, including personal identity, causality and responsibility, fortune, the nature of things, the paradoxes of time and space, and the interface between logic and language. Chapter 1, for example, includes a correspondence between a “Time Machine” Research Group and the Review Committee that refuses its grant application, and also a letter to a friend from a puzzled young man who has been visited by a time traveller from the future and who learns that he is to become “possibly the greatest poet of the twentieth century.” The time traveller leaves behind some of the poems for which the young man would become famous, and the young man writes to his friend: “What I don’t understand is how I can write poems that read as beautifully as the ones I have found in my Opera Omnia. Look, let me copy out the first one in full, so you can see for yourself” (10). The chapter concludes with “The Chain of Events Leading Up to the Goal,” in which “He” and “She” discuss the top-scorer lists in soccer and, in particular, what credit should go to the original kicker of the
ball when there is a deflection off a defender or a team-mate before the ball goes into the net.

The authors note that philosophy is often the offshoot of unexpected conceptual tensions—“of difficulties that arise when we try to apply the concepts we are most familiar with to situations that are not familiar at all. We have to test the elasticity of our conceptual scheme, but in order to do that, we sometimes have to envisage fantastic scenarios in which our concepts are stretched to the limit” (13). Some of the scenarios that occur in subsequent chapters are truly fantastic, including a series of letters between amoebas on the theme of identity; a conversation involving numbers 1 to 44 on logic; and a discussion among a hand, a pen, the ball at the tip of the pen, the ink and a pen cap on the philosophy of language.

A few philosophers—including, for example, Plato, Descartes, Wittgenstein and Paul Grice—are referenced explicitly in stories, and the authors also provide a list of classic and modern philosophical authors who have put forward the thoughts they have asked their characters to represent. The list includes, for example, Jean Buridan (on the liar paradox), Andrea Borghini (on the property of being interesting), and David Chalmers (on consciousness).

Versions of many of these stories appeared originally in the Italian newspaper La Stampa, and this volume is a translation of the original Italian book, published in 2004. The dialogues are included in eight chapters, each of which commences with a very brief reflection on the previous chapter and an even briefer introduction to the chapter to follow (the thirty-ninth conundrum, on logic, is presented in a “Coda”).

The authors tell us that their short parables “aim at no solution” but that “the Reader will see the point behind it all” (83). This will certainly be the case for the philosophically educated, and many of the stories would serve as entertaining introductions to parts of formal philosophy courses. The book would also be a stimulating read for the general reader with even only a passing interest in philosophy.

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According to the editors’ introductory essay, the “misalignment” between membership and belonging typical of contemporary liberal democratic states threatens the democratic character of their citizenship laws. The editors mean that citizenship laws have failed to grow in complexity to meet the novel challenges posed by a globalizing world in which individuals’ identities are constituted by multiple links of belonging. Contemporary liberal-democratic states have inherited from the eighteenth century a sense of citizenship as essentially linked to nationality. Even when, as in the case of classical liberalism, nationhood was not understood according to a strong ethnic interpretation, the domination of the idea of the nation prioritised unity over diversity. The essays that make up this volume contest the historical veracity of the idea of the unitary nation and pose fundamental problems for political philosophies which assume its necessity as the foundation of citizenship.

The eight essays that follow Sicakkan and Lithman’s introduction are divided into historical and theoretical sections. The essays by Sicakkan, Overland, and Lithman examine the historical development of conceptions of citizenship and various tensions between communities these developments have occasioned in Europe, the United States, and Canada. The next group of essays, by Oncu and Kocan, Mouritsen, and Bader, expose and examine the limits of republican, liberal, and communitarian interpretations of the relationship between nation and citizenship. A concluding essay by the editors draws out the through-line connecting the preceding contributions and poses a general set of alternatives better adapted to contemporary global conditions. I will concentrate in what follows on the general thematic links that exist between the essays of each section.

The three historical essays contest what Benedict Anderson famously called the “imaginary” nature of national communities. While the idea that modern nation-states were
constructed, not “found” as natural entities, is not novel, its restatement in a historical context where the contingent nature of nations has not yet penetrated public policy and consciousness is most welcome. Each of the essays is compelling in its own right as a critical narrative of definite national histories, but their real power comes through when the reader reflects upon their shared implication. As the recent mass protests in the United States over “illegal immigration” reveal, the question of who constitutes a “real” citizen remains a pressing issue of political practice. In reminding us that these debates have been with us for centuries, and that groups whose civic status was yesterday suspect can be today the rulers who cultivate suspicion, the historical essays clear away naive assumptions and debunk myths of national purity.

The theoretical essays draw out at greater philosophical depth the problems concretely highlighted in the preceding papers. Once it has been made clear that nations are constructed communities, historically traversed by multiple forms of conflict, the way is clear for critiques of the dominant theoretical frameworks in which citizenship has been understood. The key problem that links the three theoretical essays is the limitations of traditional liberal, republican, and communitarian understandings of the relationship between the multiplicity of identities always active in the public sphere and the unitary conception of the citizen that each theory in its own way demands. While liberal theories of citizenship, which purport to champion state neutrality between divergent conceptions of the good, might seem to have escaped from this problem, it becomes obvious upon reading the theoretical essays that this is not the case. As Bader’s essay especially makes clear, too often state neutrality is a mask for the oppression of non-white, non-male, non-heterosexual groups. Political philosophy is thus faced with the task of fundamentally rethinking the categorical links between identity, citizenship, and justice.

The concluding essay begins this task of fundamental rethinking by arguing that the deep conceptual condition for a changed basis of citizenship is an “inclusive ontology”: a theory of social composition that recognizes the complexity and contradictions that necessarily characterise the various belongings that determine the identities of the members of actual liberal democratic states. Rather than insisting that legitimate citizenship be contingent upon the citizen accepting some unitary national identity, the authors argue that citizenship can only be inclusive and democratic if it values the diversity and complexity of people’s belongings. What is needed is an expansion of the grounds of citizenship beyond membership in a particular nation state. There are thus strong overtones of recent “cosmopolitan” conceptions of citizenship, although the authors do not concentrate upon those links.

While I can agree that at a deep conceptual level social philosophy must break the link between a strong conception of national identity and legitimate citizenship, conceptual transformations do not translate in any easy sense to the area of policy. If I have a complaint against the book it is that it tends to move at a high degree of theoretical abstraction. In itself theoretical abstraction is not a fault, but it becomes one when it does not link back to possibilities of changed practice. The arguments are, for the most part, short on explanations of how that which it is claimed is theoretically desirable can be translated into political practice. Moreover, they do not investigate what might be the most serious challenge to reformed conceptions of citizenship, namely, the stubborn persistence of the power of nationalism, not just amongst manipulative rulers, but within public consciousness. Current citizens ever prove jealous of their status and few countries have not witnessed public outcries against so-called “queue jumpers” and illegal immigrants. It is not only theory that is the problem but deep-seated public fears and anxieties. Any argument that wants to change the nature of citizenship has to tackle the hard question of how to change the understanding of citizenship that dominates the consciousness of actual citizens.

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Towards a Transcultural Future: Literature and Society in a 'Post'-Colonial World. Edited by Geoffrey V. Davis, Peter H. Marsden, Benedicte Ledent, and Marc Delrez (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004), xiv + 317 pp. €70.00/$88.00 paper.
Towards a Transcultural Future is a collection of essays presented at the 23rd Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of the New Literatures in English (ASNEL) and retains all the advantages and drawbacks of conference proceedings. The main benefit of such a form is that the essays collected present a wide plethora of approaches to, and variations of, one theme: the future of postcolonial studies, literatures and peoples. It aptly starts with Hena Maes-Jelinek’s study which traces the development of what used to be Commonwealth Studies and then evolved into Postcolonial research. The essay emphasizes the need to deconstruct the notion of eurocentrism: as Maes-Jelinek states, Europe has never been a unified entity—an observation that often escapes North American scholars.

As the title suggests, the authors of the volume concentrate on the future, yet the directions they propose seem well-rehearsed, if generally correct: Virginia Richter advises, “we have to focus on concrete texts and cultural practices outside the narrow circle of European literature” (103); Sandra Ponzanesi advocates steering “towards a transcendence of marginality in order to envision a more planetary form of social justice” (46). One way of escaping banality is a withdrawal from designating trends for the future ex cathedra and observing the present instead: Frank Schulze-Engler comments on “the resurgence of modernity” (62), while Graham Huggan describes his endeavor as “synthesizing the work of some of postcolonialism’s ablest synthesizers” (33), the aim at once humble (it is only synthesizing, after all) and overconfident (accomplishing what the ablest have not managed to achieve). Though not groundbreaking, both Schulze-Engler’s and Huggan’s essays analyze intersections between the theories of postcoloniality and globalization in an insightful way.

Essays that might interest readers of The European Legacy are those that point to the authors and works considered as cornerstones of European literature and discuss them from a wider perspective (such as Bernth Lindfors’s presentation of one translation of Shakespeare into Kiswahili), or those showing migrants who struggle with European notions of identity and nationality when confronted with exile (Anna J. Smith’s discussion of Kapka Kasabova and Julia Kristeva).

An interesting feature of Towards a Transcultural Future is that it combines critical work with fiction: the latter may be inspiring (Jan Kemp, Andrew Sant or Vincent O’Sullivan) or derivative (Sujay Sood), but in general the book presents a sample of the postcolonial artistic activity that the conference attempted to discuss. Belonging to the Cross/Culture series, the book duly combines not only the verbal but also the visual creations of postcolonial authors, with the choice of the cover images of Matseluca (Matsemela Manaka and Luca Gansser) paintings.

The general drawback of the collection is that at times the division of essays into groups seems strained. For instance, Ilka Saal’s well-reasoned discussion of The Tempest and its postcolonial rewritings is included under the “Translation and Interculturalism” heading, whereas it might provide an interesting polemical counterpart of Haike Frank’s lucid presentation of Post-Apartheid South African Theatre, grouped in the section “Syncretism in the Theatre.”

It seems that we can write about the future only with the benefit of hindsight. If approached with this reservation, the book may provide many noteworthy observations and prove useful to both students and scholars of postcolonial literatures.

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H. M. Scott presents a superb panorama of European international relations in the late eighteenth century, seamlessly integrating the histories of the Eastern Powers with those of the Imperial States of the Atlantic World. Scott’s impressive study begins with a survey of the European state system in 1740, and then chronicles the impact of the War of Austrian Succession, followed by an expert treatment of the Diplomatic Revolution and the Origins of the Seven Years War. The author then examines aspects of the eighteenth-century international system—the diplomatic network, the nature of diplomacy, and the rise of foreign offices—before offering a stimulating
perspective on Russian dominance in Eastern Europe and Anglo-Bourbon rivalry both in Europe and overseas. Scott concludes with a thorough account of the French Revolution’s impact on the European state system and offers a glimpse into the eighteenth-century origins of the nineteenth-century Great Power System which emerged from the Vienna settlement of the Napoleonic Wars.

What distinguishes Scott’s international history from previous accounts is its emphasis on military and naval warfare as the catalyst of broader political change. As he phrases it, “Warfare—and warfare on an increasing scale and, ultimately, of a wholly novel decisiveness—was central to the processes by which the European states of 1740 became the Great Powers of 1815” (7). Indeed, Scott suggests that it would be accurate to label the period 1744–1815 as a “‘Seventy Years War’” because “so continuous was the rivalry during those decades and so extensive and frequent the periods of open warfare” (74). Scott persuasively demonstrates that the nineteenth-century international system “grew organically” out of its eighteenth-century predecessor (364). He points to the “political reunification” of Europe at the end of this period, as the fault lines separating the western from the eastern powers, which had deepened after 1763, were effaced.

Scott’s new book is a significant revision and expansion of sections of his earlier study (with Derek McKay) *The Rise of the Great Powers, 1648–1815* (1983). It deftly incorporates, and responds to, the insights of recent scholars, including Paul Schroeder’s seminal *Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848* (1994). This book will appeal to a broad audience, from advanced undergraduates to scholars, due to its admirable clarity, rigor, perspicacity and breadth.

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In this brief book, many pages of which involve (rather poor-quality) illustrations and which marches from Charlemagne to the current computer age, Theodore K. Rabb undertakes as his main task to answer the question why the Renaissance in Europe came to an end. He devotes two chapters to the periods preceding the Renaissance, four chapters to the Renaissance and its “end,” and a final chapter to its successor: Revolution and Modernity. He indicates that, because he is concerned primarily with periodization, he aims to determine “a succession of fundamental shifts in historical periods from the Middle Ages to the present, with special attention to the time when the Renaissance dissolved [in the later seventeenth century] into the Age of Revolution” (xxii). He identifies what he calls “the distinctive unities” of the various periods in order to show that, as one period dissolves, new unities emerge (41). In the last paragraph of his book Rabb writes: “I have argued that periodization is the essential armature on which all of history rests, and that the great transitions that began and ended the Renaissance remain the fundamental landmarks in the story of Europe since the fall of the Roman Empire” (226). While Rabb seems to feel that presently we live in an age of gloom, still it is his belief that with the past as our guide, “it will eventually become clear how the world wishes to move forward, and the coherences of the age will take shape anew” (226).

Rabb identifies the crucial events that ultimately proved destructive of the ideals of the Renaissance with what he calls “a revolution in attitudes toward war and the supernatural” (161). Surely, however, it is ironic that, in support of his conclusion that it is important to be aware “of the major presiding assumptions of our past, and of the movements for change that undermined them and brought us to where we are,” he paraphrases the Book of Proverbs: “knowledge increases strength” (226–27). I say ironic because, while citing the Bible as his own guide to historical understanding, Rabb fails to see that it was precisely the revelation that knowledge is power, to adopt the formulation of Francis Bacon (one of the great Renaissance luminaries), that increasingly allowed thinkers in the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the early modern period to demonstrate the efficacy of biblical critique. Rabb perceptively describes the radical ways in which warfare changed, in terms at once technical and social, in the centuries that both created and brought the Renaissance to an end.
(as we ponder how and why in the age of Scientific Revolution there took place the great wars of religion that engulfed the continent no less than the British Isles, not to mention the craze of witch burnings). That he provides, however, no thread by which to understand what underlies the constant formation and dissolution of what he calls cultural unities is reflected in his concept of the “supernatural.” Rabb finds that it is in the later seventeenth century that “the belief system that had seemed beyond question ever since Christianity had conquered Europe” is first openly questioned (151). He notes that Spinoza in “his writings in the 1650s… was openly scathing about divine influence in earthly matters. Though he certainly believed in the existence of God, his conception of the deity has been summed up as ‘a God who is not separate from his creation, who has no anthropomorphic properties, who is not concerned with the fate of humanity, who is not a lawgiver or judge, and whose power is manifested in a deterministic universe.’” Rabb adds that no Christian or Jewish believer “could have regarded those views as anything but a travesty of religion” (151–52).

It is precisely in his treatment of Spinoza that the limitations of his approach to explaining the end of the Renaissance become evident. It is unfortunate that he has the facts wrong (Spinoza’s major works were published in the 1670s). More seriously, Rabb does not provide the source of the quoted opinion on Spinoza’s views of the “supernatural.” (Indeed, nowhere in his book does he give information on his quoted sources, whether primary or secondary.) But what is of the utmost seriousness is that Rabb provides no analysis of the key issues involved here. What does it mean that Spinoza believes in the existence of God, yet in a God who, not separated from his creation (i.e. humanity) but not anthropomorphic, manifests his power “in a deterministic universe”? What Rabb does not acknowledge is that Spinoza, like Proverbs, like himself, like all of us if we are to learn from history, believes that knowledge is power (that power is knowledge). Rabb does not see that Spinoza belongs to the great tradition of the biblical critique of idolatry, which, by the Renaissance and the seventeenth century, involved a wholesale critique of Christendom. I adopt the term “Christendom” from Kierkegaard, who uses it to designate a Christianity rationalized as paganism and whose ontological basis is the supernatural tradition of Neoplatonism, an unstable amalgam of Platonism, Aristotelianism, and Stoicism, whose basic notions included finite teleology and the Great Chain of Being. As distinct from the ancient Greek inheritance, the ontological and ethical legacy of the Bible does not involve a God who is “supernatural” or human beings who are “natural.” Rather, for those who have critical insight into the biblical tradition, God and human beings are together spirit, as we learn from Erasmus and Shakespeare, etc., not to mention Spinoza. (Hegel will coolly note that the true and only miracle is spirit; for, while spirit is in nature, it is not of nature.) As a determined advocate of freedom, Spinoza is the world’s first systematic theorist of democracy, the source of which, he explicitly recognizes, is the biblical covenant whose God commands love of neighbor as the highest service of human life. Knowledge of God for Spinoza means human empowerment, which is what Kant will call self-determination (at once ethical and political).

Rabb argues conventionally that the Renaissance called for a return to classical (pagan) antiquity. But he fails to see that it is those humanists who, in articulating a concept of history, begin to distinguish systematically between biblical values and ancient pagan values. It is precisely this concept of historical consciousness that is absent from medieval thinkers and is not acknowledged as fundamental by Rabb. Yet he does recognize that the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century overturned the ancient picture of the world that we associate with Aristotle and Ptolemy. But he fails, then, to ask how we are to explain the origins of modern science if they cannot be located in the ontology of the ancients (in the ideas of teleology and the Great Chain of Being). He does not see what Bacon, Descartes, Galileo, Pascal, Huygens, Spinoza, Newton, and Leibniz see: that human beings, as created in the image of God, are empowered to account freely and lovingly for their place in the world or, in the words of Milton in Paradise Lost, to justify the ways of God to man (with the risk, always, that the human will to power will threaten to become the new idolatry by reducing human spirit to nature). Paradoxically, then, what Rabb does not see is that in key ways religion is taken more seriously, more
intently, more historically, and more practically in the seventeenth century than in the Middle Ages. For the dynamically radical (both new and old) assumption is that human beings, as they find themselves increasingly empowered to liberate themselves from scholastic and social hierarchies, are imitating God in their commitment to the demonstration that knowledge expresses and involves the power of creation.

It is important, therefore, to see that Rabb misquotes Montaigne when he writes: “As Montaigne put it in a famous statement, ‘I may contradict myself, but I always speak the truth’” (116). (As per usual, Rabb provides no reference for this citation.) What Montaigne actually wrote in his essay “Of Repentance” was: “So, all in all, I may indeed contradict myself now and then, but truth . . . . I do not contradict.” Consistent with his late, mature essays, Montaigne is here no skeptic, as Rabb conventionally views him; rather, Montaigne shows a profound commitment to the will to truth. He knows that knowledge is power, that it is only in being constant in willing the truth that he can account for, repentantly, his own contradictions, his own errors, his own sins. So, all in all, it is precisely the biblical story with its commitment to the truth of liberation that provides the historical thread that allows us to gain a perspective simultaneously on our past and on our future, a perspective that is at once empowering and humbling.

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This volume presents a comprehensive picture of the Turkish economy in the light of full membership of the EU based on the authors’ views and some empirical studies. It contains detailed sectoral and macro analyses of the Turkish economy before and after becoming an EU member. Adoption of the acquis communautaire and meeting the Maastricht criteria are indicated as common requirements. Generally, the World Bank and IMF’s well known economic and trade policies are clearly reflected in all papers. What Turkey needs in order to enjoy the benefits of EU membership and to be more competitive in the EU and in the world market are structural policies to improve her infrastructure. The unanswered question is whether Turkey’s full EU membership really depends on a list of common criteria applied to all candidates or whether the EU has a containment policy specifically for Turkey.

This book is a co-publication of the World Bank and the Center for Economic Policy Research. Its 14 essays fall into four parts with an overview which presents a brief summary of the themes and key findings of the papers. The overview also includes a brief evaluation of the implications of Turkey’s accession to the EU for other developing countries.

Only one paper in Part 1—by S. Togan and H. Erse—presents an analysis of macroeconomic policies for Turkey before and after full EU membership. The authors suggest that despite some remarkable improvements the macroeconomic challenges for Turkey remain substantial, the main challenge being meeting the Maastricht criteria for fiscal monetary and exchange rate policies.

Part 2 includes 7 papers which present sectoral evaluations. The first paper, by S. Togan, A. Bayener, and J. Nash, analyzes the impact of introducing the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) using a partial equilibrium model of the agricultural sector, and discusses institutional developments. The capacity of the chosen model to evaluate impacts must be considered limited not only because of CAP’s changing structure but because of the model’s assumptions themselves. According to the authors, adoption of the CAP will lead to substantial changes in producer income, consumer welfare and government budget. They propose the Turkish Agricultural Reform Implementation Project supported by the World Bank and the IMF as a good starting point for adjusting Turkish agriculture to EU standards.

In the second paper, S. Togan, H. Nebioglu, and S. Dogan discuss possible effects of EU integration on the manufacturing sector, focusing on trade issues. They indicate that the free movement of industrial goods between EU and Turkey could not be realized until 2003 despite the custom union starting in 1996, and emphasize the responsibility of the Turkish side to implement the acquis communautaire.
J. Francois discusses the implications of Turkey’s accession to the EU by focusing on the transportation sector. He argues that because of the custom union a significant income gain from the transport sector is not expected. The fourth paper, by E. Akdemir, E. Basci, and G. Lockskey, compares the Turkish telecommunication sector with the EU. They indicate that Turkey is in a good condition when compared with the EU candidate countries in terms of some telecommunication indicators despite some need for improvement.

The potential impact of Turkey’s accession to the EU on the banking sector is addressed by C. Pazarbasioglu in the fifth paper. He argues that Turkey has fulfilled most of the conditions required of the banking sector to comply with the EU.

The authors who analyze the Turkish electricity sector in the following paper, I. Atiyas and M. Dutz, attempt to evaluate the reform process in the light of the regulatory framework at the EU level. They conclude that electricity reform in Turkey has some uncertainties and needs time to show expected benefits.

In the final paper, M. R. Mazzanti and A. Biancardi focus on natural gas markets and related reforms adopted to liberalize the sector. They suggest that Turkey has a strategic position as a transit country between the countries of oil and gas and the EU. They also point to the need of improving the domestic market and of regulatory reforms.

The economic challenges faced by Turkey mainly in the labor market, foreign direct investment and the environment legislations are analyzed in Part 3. E. Taymaz and S. Ozler discuss the labor market and underline the importance of adopting and implementing the EU acquis and discuss the possible consequences of full EU membership for workers and the long run performance of the whole economy.

According to M. Dutz, M. Us and K. Yılmaz, the prospects of Turkey’s accession to EU membership should make it very attractive for foreign direct investment (FDI). They underline also that FDI’s inflows to Turkey have been extremely low compared with those of the CEE countries, pointing to insufficient clarity of legal arrangements and certain judicial constraints as the main obstacles.

In the following paper, A. Markandya analyzes Turkey’s environmental challenges, which he sees as a major part of the approximation process, and thus proposes a medium term accession program. He estimates that 1–1.25% of Turkey’s GDP is the required investment cost for the environment to be spread over 18–19 years.

Part 4 presents the economic implications of Turkey’s membership both for Turkey and for the EU. S. Togan presents a general evaluation based on the previous papers and argues that Turkey will benefit from adapting EU legislation in the various sectors which will lead to a considerable increase in household real incomes. He suggests that Turkey’s integration in the EU will boost allocative efficiency within the economy. However, this welfare gain would be achieved at the cost of implementing EU policies and compliance with its legislations.

According to R. Baldwin and M. Widgren, Turkey’s EU membership may have considerable impact on EU voting depending on the voting rules.

H. Flam in the third and final paper of the book discusses the possible consequences of Turkey’s EU membership, arguing that these should be related to her size, per capita income and dependence on agriculture. The expected effects of Turkey’s accession to the EU are immigration and EU budget transfer. It is estimated, for example, that about 1.3 million people will migrate to Germany over a thirty-year period.

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Physiognomy in Profile: Lavater’s Impact on European Culture. Edited by Melissa Percival and Graeme Tytler (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 2005), 258 pp. £36.50 cloth.

A conference at the University of Exeter, England, in 2001 on the occasion of the bicentenary of the death of Johann Caspar Lavater (1741–1801), marked the origin of this intriguing illustrated collection of fourteen essays, introduced by Melissa Percival. Lavater, a Swiss theologian, may not be the household name today in intellectual and literary circles that he was in the later
eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but infallibly associated with him—he also wrote religious treatises, sermons, and letters—is the (pseudo)science of physiognomy. Lavater’s main work, the Physiognomic Fragments, 1775–78, is the epitome of a multifaceted enlightenment inquiry mediating between rational scientific aspiration, classical speculative, and Renaissance dogmatic legacies, tinged with the spiritual and sentimental elements also present at the time. Percival’s introduction provides an excellent sense of Lavater’s *magnum opus* in its changing historical contexts and scholarly evaluations since its appearance in the European world of letters almost simultaneously in German (original), French, and English to great acclaim. As were past practitioners of physiognomy, the authors of the present study, too, are keenly aware of the trans-disciplinary nature of Lavater studies. The essays, organized chronologically, thus have several foci.

The first, arising from physiognomy’s basic premise of reading the outside of a body (face) as revealing the inner qualities of the person, is the question of representation, of semiotics, but also of material-spiritual correlations. Kevin Berland’s and Maximilian Bergengruen’s contributions are centered on these issues. While both authors deal predominantly with scholarly arguments predating and influencing Lavater, Caroline Warman’s inquiry focuses on Lavater’s own time and highlights the role physiognomists came to play in the contemporary medical-anatomical debates between the “mechanists” and the “vitalists.” The former “looked at the body in terms of a machine or mechanism,” the latter insisted that only a “dedicated science of ‘life’” (98) could reveal how the body really works. Physiognomy came to serve that function. Mary Lynn Johnson’s discussion of Lavater’s reading of a bust of Lord Chatham provides a concrete example of the very master’s practice—and reveals its latent circularity: Lavater finds in Chatham’s features what he already knew about the great statesman.

The second cluster of related essays emphasizes the links between physiognomy and visual art. The historical framework is lucidly presented by Ross Woodrow in his “Lavater and the Drawing Manuals.” Woodrow describes the shift in these manuals and contemporary textbooks on the art of drawing from an anatomical emphasis to a more physiognomy-based representation of external form that broadened the possibilities of artistic expression and typological representation. This, in turn, fit well with the tenets of the emerging realist and naturalist modes. John House, linking Lavater to Degas and Manet, and Edward Aiken, stressing physiognomic aspects in the work of the twentieth-century German photographer August Sander, each provide concrete instances of Lavater’s lasting influence.

The third area of inquiry demonstrates how Lavater’s views blend into sociology as an emerging scholarly discipline in the 1830s, developed by Auguste Comte, and how they find a new field of application in the incipient urbanism of the first half of the century. The sociological link is addressed by Martina Lauster. Democratization, the emergence of an industrial class society, and the demands of sociology required new ways of reading and interpreting people as foreigners who appeared increasingly “illegible” in the growing cities (Paris). A new type of writing emerged, too, the “journalistic” or physiognomic sketch” (161), which was also used by writers—Dickens among them. The topic of modernity is pursued by Michael Gamper, who investigates the modern urban need “to relate the outward appearance to the inner being” (150) of people encountering each other in growing numbers and anonymity in the city. Physiognomy appeared a suitable tool. There were available on the (French) market large numbers of helpful “pop-Lavater” books of physiognomic interpretation, such as “Le Lavater historique des femmes célèbres; Le Lavater des Dames; Le Lavater portative, or Le Lavater moral” (151).

The largest cluster of essays investigates Lavater’s influence on literature. Graeme Tytler’s essay shows how Lavater’s ideas permeate Sir Walter Scott’s writing and much of British fiction at the time. John Plews’s account focuses on the German context and Eduard Mörike, whose artist figure, the physically attractive painter Nolten is, thanks to the implied physiognomic assumption of *kalokogathia*, naturally assumed to have higher creative powers than his physically inferior counterpart Wispel. Christopher Rivers’s contribution applies a Lavaterian reading to French fiction and juxtaposes the deceitful Madame de

Overall, *Physiognomy in Profile* reflects the eclecticism of the subject it treats. In this case, however, this is very much part of the method itself, which is trans-disciplinary and historically extensive. It reflects the current standard of Lavater research and provides stimulating reading but requires for its full appreciation readers with a broad intellectual outlook and historical curiosity.

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*Colette*. By Julia Kristeva (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), ix + 521 pp. $20.00/£13.00 paper.

This book is part of the Series in Social Thought and Cultural Criticism published by Columbia University Press, which much favours the work of the author, Julia Kristeva, judging from the titles published so far. Those looking for a biography of Colette would be somewhat disappointed by this work, which does not attempt to deal either with her life or with her work in any conventional sense.

The postmodernist and psychoanalytical emphasis does not make for easy reading, and the book is very long, partly due to the many passages from Colette’s works which Kristeva quotes verbatim. Admittedly, this does demonstrate that the author is correct when she maintains that Colette created a style uniquely her own, but is it necessary to quote so many passages to make this point? The book includes a few pictures of Colette, all very flattering and obviously having no bearing on the woman she became after the Second World War when she grew so obese that two people had to carry her upstairs. However, it does not contain photographs of the important people in her life, which would have added interest for the reader.

Colette was a part of the *belle époque* morality and was hurt by her husbands’ repeated infidelities. From her unfaithful husbands, she extracted a unique revenge. In the case of Willy, her first husband, she undertook a homosexual liaison with the woman who was his mistress. Her revenge on her second husband was in a way even more extreme. She began an affair with his son, her stepson. She was then forty-seven and he seventeen. The narrating of such incidents lends credibility to Colette’s oft-proclaimed statements that she had no imagination but was merely recounting her own experiences in her novels. Of course Colette often boasted that she was a liar, so one is not quite sure how much of her life and her books are fiction and how much is fact.

The book is of more interest to the specialist psychologist than to the ordinary reader for whom there is too much psycho-analysis of Colette’s works and her fictional characters. It is one thing to do this to the author herself but another to do this to her work. Why has Claudine no mother, the author asks? The answer is really simple: a mother might have put a spanner in the works and Claudine might not have got into so much mischief if a mother had been present in the Claudine books. In any case, Colette’s first husband had a great influence on the writing of the Claudine books. How can we be sure that it was not he who told Colette to write the story in this way? Surely, an analysis of Colette’s relationship with her own mother is not necessary to explain this. So I am not sure that so much analysis does anything to make us, Colette’s readers, more knowledgeable about her work.

The author also deals with Colette’s dubious attitude during the German Occupation of Paris and the disinheriting of her only child. It is revealing of Colette, not so much through the Freudian analysis but through the acts of her own life which show that she was a neglectful and uncaring mother, treated her husbands and her friends with equal disdain and was singularly uncourageous in Occupied Paris during the Second World War.

The author manages to enchant us again with Colette’s writing but the subject herself does not emerge as a very likeable character.
Brilliant perhaps, but not even psychoanalysis can make her likeable.

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We are used to trying to place political change in the context of some sort of teleological framework, and never more so when it comes to the former East European communist countries that are apparently in “transition” to capitalist democracy. Robert Service will have none of this. His opening epigraph accurately sums up the tone of the book: “There are no roads in Russia, only directions.” Russia manages the unusual feat of moving in several different directions at the same time, and there are few better travelling companions on this strange journey than such a knowledgeable and wise scholar as Service. His analysis of contemporary politics is deeply embedded in a historical context. His work is not political science, but political history of the highest order. One may, however, wonder for whom the book is intended, since it is too detailed for the general reader, and too general for the specialist.

The prose style is typically demotic, but by the same token thankfully free of superfluous jargon. It is also free of any profound medita- tion on the meaning of this great experiment in freeing a people from the tyranny of a past system, while remaining in thrall to numerous spectres from the past. Like ghosts, these stalk the contemporary Russian mind—with elite debates seized by ideas of past imperial grandeur, Eurasianist longings, civilisational aspirations, and the vision, glimpsed out of the corner of the collective eye, that somewhere there is a better world than the tawdry materialist, individualist and competitive one that is now struggling to be born.

The title talks of an “experiment with a people,” but Service never quite tells us what experiment he has in mind. The Soviet period is often described in terms of an experiment, and as the psychologist Pavlov is reported to have said in 1919, at least psychiatrists experiment with animals first, unlike the Bolsheviks who tried out their grandiose scheme to build communism on a whole people. After 1991 we can assume that the experiment Service has in mind is the creation of a market democracy from scratch. This certainly was another large-scale piece of social engineering, and its uncertain outcomes are well-described in this book. This is a wide-ranging analysis, taking in culture, the media, the individual, the realm of symbols as well as the big questions of economic and political reform. The overall logic of his argument is reminiscent of the contemporary Russian anecdote: “Russia demonstrated that communism does not work, and it is now proving the same for capitalism.”

When it comes to the details, we get balanced accounts of the October 1993 events, when Yeltsin turned his tanks against his own parliament, but we lack any sense of the profound systemic issues involved. Similarly, although Service is exceptionally balanced in his analysis of the Chechen wars, the import of the Khasavyurt agreement of August 1996 escapes him. In short, this is a book that can be read with great profit by all, with much to be learnt about Russia’s democratic and communist experiments, but the author’s judgement that “Democratisation and marketisation have spectacularly failed the Russians” (336) is rather premature.

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Given the unexpected turn of events wrought by the summer 2006 clash of Israeli and Hezbollah forces in Lebanon, along with the frustration of Israeli forces once again involved in Gaza, this 2004 nuanced account of life in Gaza and the West Bank is a must-read for any of us eager to better understand these matters. If every Israeli and Palestinian read and discussed the book’s many insights, especially if they could do so together, the
chances of soon achieving a pragmatic accommodation would be much greater than at any time since the 1948 birth of Israel (an event understandably seen as a disaster by the Palestinians).

Told from the bottom up, that is, from the perspective of ordinary Palestinian youth whose entire lives have been spent in what they perceived as exile, the book makes painfully clear the psychic, psychological, moral, and spiritual toll of such an unnatural and pathological state of existence. Laetitia Bucaille, a French sociologist, lived intermittently from 1999 through 2002 in the Occupied Territories. She befriended three young militants wanted by the Israeli Army, each of whom had spent time being schooled in Israeli prisons by hardened militants. She also shares colorful accounts in revealing details of several others of different classes, politics, and gender—none of whom would seem to have enviable, fulfilling, or rewarding lives. Instead, the whole scene is one of anxiety, dread, uncertainty, and loss—punctuated by moments of chaos, revenge, betrayal, and warfare.

Especially revealing is an analysis of the Palestinian social order run by traditional elite families, complete with secretive power rivalries, class resentments, and tactical alliances. Of comparable worth is an analysis of the little-known power of retired officers of the Israeli military and secret service, as they have ties with Palestinians of considerable dollar-making power. These and many other related factors help explain the irrelevance at present of democracy in Palestine, and the inevitable struggle for power between a repressive and fault-ridden Fatah regime, a wily and violent Hamas organization, and a zealous and unrelenting Islamic Jihad movement.

While decidedly pro-Palestinian, the author shares insights into their plight unlikely to please many of their closed-minded European and American Left supporters: for example, “for many young people, the collective political failure [of the Palestinians] is the mirror of their own shipwreck. By adopting this posture, they can decline all responsibility for their own lack of success and blame the occupying power for their personal misfortunes” (119). Similarly provocative is her contention that “the proximity and density of relations between Israel and the embryonic Palestinian state encourage a process of mutual imitation and strengthening along the same lines” (109).

Translated from the French by Anthony Roberts with grace and flair, the book is engaging and fast-moving, albeit rich in detailed personal portraits and much history. Offered as an ethnographic account, it is quite one-sided: Israelis are pictured only as crude brutish louts guilty of many (alleged) horrific acts. As this is a Palestinian version of reality it can serve to sober any outside the Middle East who cannot understand why a half century has gone thus far into a war without end. More challenging yet is the writer’s seeming indifference to the fierce anti-Israeli rhetoric of Hamas, with its pledge to totally eliminate Israel and raise the banner of Allah over every inch of Palestine. As long as Hamas hoves to such ideological goals, along with “its preferred option of armed resistance” (162), and the Palestinian world remains as deeply divided as Bucaille details, the Palestinian situation will leave much to be desired.

The author notes in the final sentence of her 2005 afterword that “the renunciation of arms will last only so long as Israeli-Palestinian negotiations seem to bear fruit” (162). While in 2006 this proved bitter fruit, the book’s account of the average Palestinian’s fervent wish for an end to the Nightmare, and for the achievement of a stable win-win peace, leaves room for cautious optimism (Hamas notwithstanding and to the contrary). Given that the post-Hezbollah confrontation is earning a new Israeli assessment of its options, one can hope Bucaille may soon have reason to write a follow-up detailing brighter and better young Palestinian lives.

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**Memory Practices in the Sciences.** By Geoffrey C. Bowker (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), xi + 261 pp. $34.95/£22.95 cloth.

Geoffrey Bowker’s latest book rings true for this sympathetic scientist. Building on a biological analogy “that all life... transform[s] its environment by leaving memory traces in
it” (19), Bowker declares: “If we want to understand memory practices in the sciences or in other spheres, I am suggesting, then we need to look elsewhere. My goal in this book is to begin to trace some delineations of this elsewhere” (21). In “elsewhere,” feedback is called “memory traces,” niche conversion becomes “transformations,” and life itself is “evolution.”

Chapter 1 details how, “Through the mediation of the creation of the profession of geologist in the image of the middle management of a thriving business, [Charles] Lyell inscribed the same time scientifically onto the history of the earth as others inscribed socially onto industrial society” (70). In Chapter 2, Bowker argues that “the history of all science of all humanity, and often of the universe is recapitulated within the development of the science of cybernetics...so that, first, there was a complete reworking of all of science in a different medium (a new language), and, second, truths about the history of science and humanity were also, within cybernetics, truths about the world” (92). Bowker then proceeds to examine the “resonance between the history of civilization and the insides of cybernetics” (98). Surprisingly, “the destruction of memory is the temporal extension of the central notion of feedback” (102), while “the stories that made real sense—would be stories of sameness: difference was to be banished as noise and distraction” (103).

Chapter 3 provides “a consideration of the archival practices of scientists” (109) as Homo sapiens attempts “to create (we call it ‘preserve,’ ‘conserve,’ ‘maintain’)...the history recorded in our databases” (127). Chapter 4 then looks at things that are hard to classify, things that do not get classified, and things that get classified in multiple ways. As it turns out, “a set of data structures and information retrieval models are set up so that a particular, skewed view of the world can be easily represented” (151). Bowker boldly summarizes the notional and quotidian, the scientific and political, the ecological and systematic problems for naming systems in botany with their adjunct to biodiversity management, the maintenance of context for “legacy data,” problems of geochronology, and ethnographies of ownership with respect to intellectual property rights.

The “rubber hits the road” in Chapter 5 where Bowker prescribes how money or values (the sum of use and option value) and lists or maps (generating the tree of life and statistics) might “manipulate ontologically diverse data” (199) in order to live in a biodiverse world. The problems are profound: “We talk about preservation and conservation, not potentiating dynamic change” (208); and as “complex historical time [breaks down] into regular, calculable units,” natural objects are incorporated into stable, cultural and ethnocentric discourse, and “stable tokens beget tokenism” (218)!

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**Re-imagining Language and Literature for the Twenty-First Century.** Edited by Suthira Duangsamosorn, et al. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), 414 pp. €80.00/$100.00 cloth.

We are offered 414 pages of convincing (not necessarily unbiased) essays about language, literature, and the teaching thereof, 28 in all, with emphasis on non-European examples, predictable as the pieces consist of a selection from 130 delivered at the 22nd International Congress of FILLM (International Federation for Modern Languages and Literatures), held in Bangkok, Thailand, at Assumption University, 19–23 August 2004. The keynote address (which pretty much sets the tone for the book’s contents, in concept if not always degree) was given by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak of Columbia University, New York, whose usual, well-known anti-imperialist stance is the need, in this particular essay, to abandon comparative literature studies featuring European or (especially) U.S. writers. Emphasize global aspects, she urges, African/Asian in particular.

The rest of the volume is organized under four subthemes: ethical (five papers), social (seven), technological (six), and innovative (nine), each with its own plenary speaker. The speakers themselves are preponderantly non-European, though France, Finland, Slovenia, the Netherlands, Canada, the UK, even the US (a short offering, one of two in the collection written in French) are represented.
Despite the downplaying of the English/American language and literature, all the selections save the two above, both short, appear in English.

So much for facts. Now for a few general observations about the nature of so many of the essays here presented. A common thread consists of accusations against the evils decried. One can sense a certain air of futility. These are the evils most liberals everywhere have condemned; disapproval seems never to overcome them. Who has not deplored the parlous state of the humanities, in decline proportionately to the rise of the so-called corporate (capitalist) university; the chase for the almighty dollar; widespread immorality infecting all literary endeavor; the triumph of technology over these pesky pandemics? Well, this volume puts them on stage once more. The tone is strongly advocative, mostly absent solutions.

But we Westerners must not shun the rest of the world for reiterating facts in reality international, however stereotypical, however much they may blame us for causing them. Some of the contributors even see the same problems appearing in their own regimes. Some of the essayists, as well, rise above the obvious, notably Vridhagiri Ganeshan (Hyderabad, India), a plenary speaker, who gives a fresh twist to the charge against the dying of a religious, moral base for the humanities, deploring globalization among other aspects. His words may not always be really new, but the sermon is vigorous and quite convincing (41–54). H. P. van Coller (the University of the Free State, South Africa) examines an unusual subject, the status of the African university, finding that exclusively African institutions presently are not viable (103). The whole section III, devoted to technological innovation, involves concepts less commonly discussed in most educational circles. Consider especially Antoine Compagnon (University of Paris) as he opposes the computer against the author. Others have treated aspects of this confrontation; I know of no other as sharply stated as this one (217–32), arguably the volume’s most significant contribution.

As allies or competitors, volens-nolens, these 28 contributors are helping us make our case by demanding a better role for the humanities. It is most encouraging that it is made in Thailand, so far from our usual venues. Here is a volume well worth a long, careful read.

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Verlaine, poète de l’indécidable. By Alan English (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2005), xi + 345 pp. €70.00/$91.00 cloth.

Le seul titre du livre nous déciderait à en faire l’emplette. L’apposition « poète de l’indécidable » a si bien piqué ma curiosité que je n’ai eu de cesse d’arriver au pourquoi du terme qui, en mathématiques, s’applique à une proposition qui n’est pas démontrable, non plus que son contraire, offrant non pas une impasse, mais un éventail d’univers potentiels dissemblables... Quelle définition Alan English attribue-t-il au terme « indécidable » et à quoi dans l’œuvre de Verlaine pourrait-il s’appliquer ?

Disons d’abord que tout amateur ou critique de poésie, nonobstant son indifférence à Verlaine, devrait se procurer le livre, ne serait-ce que pour l’historique, bien documenté, de la versification française qui en fait un ouvrage de référence facile à consulter. Dans le premier chapitre (dit introduction), l’auteur examine diverses conceptions modernes de la mesure, des coupes, de la place de la césure. Cette discussion prépare le lecteur à mieux comprendre le rôle du rythme dans la poésie de Verlaine.

Au chapitre 2, Alan English identifie l’originalité du poète, c’est-à-dire les recettes de sa non-conformité au moule traditionnel: ambivalence, ambiguïté, indécidabilité. Selon ces principes, consacrant un chapitre à chaque mètre, il étudie les vers pairs (décasyllabes, dodécasyllabes, octosyllabes), les vers impairs, de sept, neuf et onze syllabes, et les vers libres, en commençant chaque fois par l’historique.

Dans la troisième partie de l’ouvrage, l’auteur envisage le vers comme microstructure ayant un rapport déconcertant avec le contexte de la strophe ou du poème. Au chapitre 9, sont analysés en détail neuf poèmes dont il fait ressortir le caractère d’indécidabilité. La conclusion souligne la participation active du lecteur à la création poétique, et inclut des réflexions de brillants linguistes sur l’ambiguïté.
de la langue. À la suite d’appendices variés, une abondante bibliographie complète le livre.

Alan English écrit élégamment, avec le souci de varier le vocabulaire technique, et questionne sans imposer son point de vue.

En ce qui concerne l’harmonie des vers (Introduction), l’auteur fait appel à plusieurs critiques dont le lecteur appréciera le jugement selon sa propre sensibilité, tout en leur sachant gré de nous éveiller à une jouissance nouvelle du vers français, car la place de la césure s’est greffée de nous éveiller à une jouissance nouvelle selon sa propre sensibilité, tout en leur sachant abondante bibliographie complète le livre.

« Lorsque Verlaine s’adresse à Robert Langlois dans le vers parlé (199): 

Peut-être bien, sans doute, et quoique et puisque, en somme,

y a-t-il là des « problèmes d’interprétation » à cause des sous-entendus ? Quel condensé de toute une relation d’amitié, sujette au doute, à la concession, à la certitude, à la réconciliation, à la tolérance ! Chacun pressent des options selon son vécu.

La notion d’indécidabilité, English l’applique aux structures syntaxiques. De même que Verlaine « bouleverse les rythmes attendus », il nous surprend par le cheminement de la phrase. English examine par exemple (198) l’enjambement dans les vers suivants, où le lecteur s’attend à ce que fort soit un adjectif qualifiant cé:

Tu m’as donné, non point à tort,
Ce surnom d’Infernal, c’est fort
Bien: n’as-tu pas toujours raison?

Or, on s’aperçoit, au rejet, que fort est un adverbe qui modifie bien. Indécidabilité provisoire, désolante; le lecteur ajoute comme malgré lui un point d’exclamation à fort en bout de ligne. Ainsi participe-t-il de la création.

Je voudrais conclure par quelques commentaires au sujet du deuxième poème étudié au chapitre 9, « Mon rêve familier », que l’auteur étudie selon le principe d’indécidabilité, et qu’on peut interpréter différemment—en vertu du même principe.

Le titre lui-même est indécidable: au premier abord, « familier » signifie « habituel », ce qui semble être confirmé par les premiers mots du poème, « Je fais souvent ce rêve »; mais on sera obligé plus loin de corriger cette impression. La femme unique des quatrains devient plurielle dans les tercets: « blonde, brune, ou rousse », « aimés que la Vie exila », « statues », « voix chères ». Au risque de rompre l’unité de cette femme irréelle à laquelle le poète rêve, je suggère que « les voix chères qui se sont tues » sont celles des femmes de sa famille qui l’ont aimé et qu’il a aimées. « Familiar » prend un tout autre sens, plus personnel, plus sentimental.

Le rythme des vers 11 et 12 est indécidable:

Et, pour sa voix, lointaine, et grave, et calme,
eh, elle a
L’inflexion des voix chères qui se sont tues.

English propose trois scansion pour le vers onze. Je leur préfère une quatrième: 4-2-2-2-2.

En effet, les trois adjectifs, égaux en nombre de syllabes et bien séparés par des virgules, donnent au vers un rythme qui suggère
l’effort de mémoire. Du point de vue sémantique, lointaine est d’ordre temporel; grave introduit l’ambiguïté: s’agit-il du timbre de la voix, ou bien doit-on anticiper un drame? Mais calme nous rassure. Ensemble ils rendent la femme présente au souvenir du poète, d’où émerge, favorisée par l’enjambement, l’inflexion «des voix chères».

Des deux scansiones que propose l’auteur pour le dernier vers, 6-6 et 4-8, la coupe 4-8 me semble préférable, car elle permet, à la fin du sonnet, une cadence majeure très appréciable, et en même temps, le bloc des huit syllabes évoque le cercle des femmes de son passé.

Cependant cette scansion n’exprime pas la tension entre le souvenir affectueux et vivant (chères) et la mort (tues). Une longue pause (plusieurs secondes?) avant «qui se sont tues», serait éloquente. Je constate ici mon désaccord avec certains critiques au sujet de la conception de la césure (10). La césure, disent-ils, comme le vide, n’existe pas; elle n’est rien. Au contraire, elle peut être essentielle. Que seraient les premières mesures de la Cinquième de Beethoven sans les silences?

Et puis, le vers est-il dodécasyllabe ou décasyllabe? Ne serait-on pas plus fidèles à Verlaine, qui narguait les règles, en optant pour le schéma 6-4, «L’inflex(i)on des voix chér(es)/qui se sont tues»? En effet, «qui se sont tues» est comme un marteau qui s’assez sur les voix, c’est un tout indécoupable, une fin implacable.

Ou, s’agirait-il d’un alexandrin auquel la voix manque aux deux dernières syllabes?

On lira avec plaisir l’analyse de «L’échelonnement des haies» (239), qui met en valeur le rôle que joue l’indécidabilité sémantique et syntaxique dans le charme du poème. Alan English est très sensible à l’humour avec lequel le poète se joue de nous.

Ce traité raffine notre évaluation du génie de Verlaine grâce au principe nouveau de l’indécidabilité—rythmique, syntaxique et sémantique—à la lumière duquel nous sommes curieux de relire son œuvre, beaucoup plus variée que les deux ou trois poèmes, toujours les mêmes, qu’on trouve dans les anthologies.

M adeleine Sou dée
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George Esenwein, an eminent scholar of the Spanish Civil War, has provided a superb book for those who wish to understand that complicated story of never ending interest. This is not intended as a monographic study. Rather, it is a highly sophisticated textbook for students of the war. It provides numerous, mostly primary, documents, placed within an analytical narrative. On the one hand, the war was what we might call a traditional Spanish event: a right-wing coup led by General Francisco Franco against the Republic. But, on the other, taking place in 1936, it was played out against, as well as being transformed by, the international situation. The Republic was unstable and lacked the necessary unity to fight effectively against Fascism in a world threatened by Germany and Italy, whose regimes enthusiastically supported Franco. The Soviet Union too fished in these troubled waters, being almost alone in backing the Republic in order to pursue its own policies. Britain, France and the United States wished to isolate the struggle and to prevent a general war. There were divisions within both camps, but Franco managed to subdue those on his side. He needed to contain the monarchists as well as the native Fascist movement, the Falange. But the Republic was caught up to a greater extent in paradoxes that might have provided strengths but failed to do so. Anarchists entered the Government, social revolutions took place to a degree that seemed to suggest a world worth fighting for. Intense rivalries and conflicting ideologies, however, created divisions that made the Government far less effective. Left fought left, most notably on the streets of Barcelona in May 1937. The Republic, committed to some form of democracy, lacked a leader who could provide effective and powerful direction.

Through his combination of narrative and documents, Esenwein vividly recreates and analyzes the war. He deals extensively with internal politics, the battles, the international situation, the roles of race, religion and gender. At times the reader could have been told a little more about the particular writer, not always clear from the document, in order to have a
better sense of what is likely to be the point of view presented. Through reading these documents, and the surrounding narrative, students who use this book will be able to make sense of a war that was seen by many at the time as a clear battle between good and evil. It was something far more complicated. It is made clear here how many different shades were actually present. Civil war is a conflict tearing up one’s own country, Spaniard against Spaniard, assisted by foreigners. The deaths, the brutalities, and a dictatorship that lasted until 1975 make this a tragic story. Esenwein has enabled his readers to come to a far fuller understanding of what happened during the war in Spain from 1936 to 1939.

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Essay collections amply illustrate G. E. Moore’s principle of organic unities: the value of a whole need not equal the value of its parts. When done well, such volumes capture the essence of an issue, debate, or evolution of a line of thought perspicuously, and the editorial comments provide sufficient context to allow for satisfying reflection in a way that the separate articles do not. When done poorly, they can minimize the significance of the issue, provide a caricature of the debate, or present an intellectual evolution as little more than a series of disparate essays. France in the Era of Fascism is an example of the latter.

The book is unapologetically polemic—aimed against what Brian Jenkins describes as the orthodox view of the relationship between Fascism and France in the 1930s: that the former had negligible effect on the latter, due to France’s unique political ideology (the “immunity thesis”).

It consists of five essays book-ended by editorial comment. “Morphology of Fascism in France” by Zeev Sternhell, and Michel Dobry’s “February 1934 and the Discovery of French Society’s Allergy to the ‘Fascist Revolution’” are both translated from French by Jenkins for this volume. The latter, originally published in 1989 in Revue française de sociologie, is a well-regarded classic in this debate, while the former is an abridgement of the new preface for a reprint of Sternhell’s controversial classic, Ni droite ni gauche. Also reprinted is an updated version of Robert O. Paxton’s “Five Myths of Fascism,” first published in the Journal of Modern History in 1998. The two remaining chapters are previously unpublished: Robert Soucy’s “Fascism in France: Problematising the Immunity Thesis,” and Kevin Passmore’s “The Construction of Crisis in Interwar France.”

Sternhell first charts a historical account of the origin and maturation of the immunity thesis, attending particularly to the works of André Siegfried and René Rémond. Thereafter, he argues that their research paradigm allows for oversimplified conclusions regarding the only right-wing political ideologies possible given France’s intellectual history, and their resistance to Fascism: one must ignore the possibility of political ideologies evolving, and adopt an unrealistic definition of Fascism for the immunity thesis to be plausible. Denying this paradigm allows one to see clearly that the “intellectual and moral conditions were already in place that would allow fascist ideology to take shape [in France].”

Should it be shown that a significant political party in 1930s France was fascist, then the immunity thesis would stand on shaky ground. The Parti Social Français is the most obvious political party to be called Fascist, but a variety of arguments have been posited to suggest otherwise. Soucy takes issue with various arguments marshalled in support of the view that the Party was not Fascist. He suggests that the arguments miss the mark for a variety of reasons, most prominent among which is that many of these arguments would also show that Mussolini or Italy was not fascist in the 20s and 30s.

Paxton suggests that the difficulty in defining Fascism is both practical and theoretical. Practically, for example, Fascism is problematic due to its relative lack of theoretical foundation and its relativism: contrast fascism with liberalism, which has both a theoretical foundation and universalistic inclinations, and it is unsurprising that the latter is more amendable to definition. Theoretically, both the methodological tendencies of defining a term by identifying its necessary
conditions, and a failure to examine the socio-political surroundings of fascist movements further exacerbate the difficulty. He proposes instead to examine fascist movements as historical developments in an effort to compare and contrast their successes and failures. In so doing, he concludes that Fascism ought to be defined formally, not substantively: “Fascism promises to perform functions that neither conservatives, liberals, nor socialists can perform: to impose unity, energy and purity” (121–22).

Dobry argues against using outcomes of crises in order to determine their essence. Such backwards induction, it is contended, inevitably leads to a biased selection of relevant facts which lead to the outcome and to a biased interpretation of the significance of those facts. Proponents of the immunity thesis follow this method: as there was no fascist revolution, then there was no significant fascist movement in France (as opposed to countries with similar crises that did have a significant fascist movement and did end up with a fascist government). Using those committed to the immunity thesis as a case in point, he repeatedly illustrates that their arguments only look plausible if one is already committed to the immunity thesis.

Passmore examines the “stalemate society” thesis according to which France’s political landscape of the 1930s was ideologically fractured, leading to a politically expedient compromise which in turn suppressed modernization in a fashion unique to France. While Passmore suggests that this thesis is central to the narratives of most historians of recent French history, he criticizes its teleological presuppositions, its belief that “normally functioning” societies must possess a common set of beliefs, and its inadequate account of empirical facts, among other failings.

Jenkins’ introduction is a standard outlining of the background of the debate surrounding the collection of essays and brief summary of the papers. The conclusion briefly suggests the gains made against the orthodoxy on the relationship between France and Fascism while also noting that the debate is, at times, semantic, depending upon the definition of Fascism. He dwells at greater length on the similarities and dissimilarities of each contributor’s conclusions and methods, thereby making clear the fractured nature of this volume as well as the debate that gave rise to it.

The significant methodological differences among the authors are evidence of this text’s main failing: it is a volume conceived from an agenda. The conclusion that one ought to “reject the notion that French society had somehow been rendered ‘immune’…to fascism by an historical Sonderweg and a peculiarly resistant political culture” (205) is the tie that binds these contributors. The orthodoxy is portrayed by Jenkins as having its roots in postwar France’s desire to gloss over its wartime collaboration and promote national self-respect in the war’s aftermath. The contemporary allegiance to this position is left almost completely unexplained, with only a brief insinuation that solidarity within the French academic community may be to blame. A serious historian, engaged in serious debate, should find such a remark unworthy. This leaves one wondering if this debate (given the debaters) is worthwhile, and obviously this has implications for the worth of the volume. The orthodoxy is characterized by Jenkins as biased, hostile, and unwilling to listen to reason. The introduction and conclusion leave little evidence from which to conclude that the heterodoxy is any different.

The volume also does not seem to recommend itself to any particular audience. Adopting a polemic tenor renders it unfit for those unacquainted with the debate already: as severely biased an introductory volume as this one is would be unconscionable. Those opposed to the thesis of this volume are, by Jenkins’ own supposition, unwilling to listen to the force of reason. Those who agree with the conclusion must already be familiar with the majority of the papers in this text.

This ought not to be taken to reflect badly on the papers within the volume. The translation into English of Sternhell’s and Dobry’s papers is valuable in itself. The value of the whole does not have to equal the value of the parts. But the whole does not capture the essence of the debate, nor shed new light on its significance, nor chart the evolution of historical accounts of France in the 1930s perspicuously.

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Venice Triumphant: The Horizons of a Myth. By Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan. Translated by Lydia G. Cochrane (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), xxi + 386 pp. $45.00 cloth; $24.95 paper.

Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan, a professor of medieval history at the Sorbonne, has produced a multifaceted history of Venice from Roman times to the sixteenth century. Lydia G. Cochrane, who has translated three previous books for Johns Hopkins, has provided an elegant translation of this complex work, which contains six chapters densely packed with facts and analyses of past and present historical accounts of Venice as well as myths associated with this unique and beautiful city. The book contains eight maps necessary for understanding the topography, buildings, churches, commerce, and administrative divisions of the city. Although the black-and-white illustrations add to the narrative, they are rather small and one can hardly envision the splendor of Venetian life by looking at them. One would need to consult an art book or a more lavishly illustrated history of the city. The glossary of terms is absolutely necessary, especially for general readers, unfamiliar with Venetian history. Crouzet-Pavan has meticulously documented her study with annotated notes encompassing some 56 pages, and the bibliography also reflects the extent of her impressive research.

In the introduction, the author begins with a question: “Yet another book about Venice?” (ix). Although there have been an endless succession of works, the present volume fills an important niche. Rather than “telling everything” about Venice, Crouzet-Pavan has written a subjective history of the city. The author modestly states that the book is an attempt “to discuss what has been published, discovered, and subjected to criticism in recent years and to give each writer his or her due,” but she makes no claim that the narrative is exhaustive. Furthermore, the work is not exclusively for historians of Venice, but she hopes that “historians can view the book without excessive irritation” (x). In her analysis Crouzet-Pavan compares Venice with other Medieval and Renaissance Italian cities. Although chronology is certainly not ignored, a thematic approach is used effectively. She begins by looking at a famous map of Venice in the Vatican, which is more symbolic and imaginary than geographical; but it reflects how fifteenth-century Venetians and travelers viewed the city, born in the water and sheltered by the lagoon. Chapter 1 recounts the origins of the city, the long series of labors involved in its creation, labors repeated over and over again to maintain the complex ecological equilibrium in the lagoons, which is still uncertain to this day.

Chapter 2 first traces the commercial expansion of Venice and then looks at the causes and bases of Venetian power. Of course, the chapter includes a discussion of the importance of the relics of St. Mark, translated in 828. There is an impressive account of the complex development of Venetian commerce from its humble beginnings, through various wars, including the crusades to the sixteenth century when the center of gravity of Europe shifted north, but Venice still continued to enjoy prosperity. The final section of the chapter deals with the fleet, the primary basis of its power together with Venetian practical inventiveness in commerce, where the state played a crucial role: “In Venice collaboration between the political and economic spheres was so strong that they blended into one” (92).

In chapter 3 the focus shifts to the Italian mainland. The author notes, “A fascination with the distant horizons makes us forget that the city on the lagoon was closely dependent on its hinterland” (102). Crouzet-Pavan shows that the frontier between the mainland and Venice was less closed than traditional depictions would have us believe. Venetian conquests on the mainland transformed the city into one of the main land powers of Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries: “In short, the lagoon lived breathing the salt water, but it and its inhabitants lived on and off the nearby land as well” (115).

Chapter 4 concentrates on how the various domains and spheres of Venetian activity combined. After an examination of the merchandise that flowed into and out of Venice from land and sea, the author describes daily life in a brilliant and evocative fashion. In chapter 5, the author examines the rules and customs of politics and the Venetian institutions, whose mechanisms are extremely complex, difficult to describe succinctly and mixed with a myth of false immutability, whereas there were
numerous changes and shifts in the locus of power. The final chapter, which is perhaps the most compelling, looks at the human scene—the people of the city as they go about their daily activities. We see them with their families; we catch glimpses of women from different classes and how they function within the male culture. The confraternities, a manifestation of Venetian devotional life, were extremely influential to the life of the city in numerous ways beyond that of assistance societies. They also “brought large segments of the social body into one heterogeneous but united group” (264). The chapter concludes with a discussion of the great public rituals, religious celebrations, processions, and finally the significance of the Piazza San Marco, “A space whose meaning it was to be the space of all the spaces of their city” (273).

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The Holy Grail: Imagination and Belief.

In the kind of lucid narrative that characterizes, medievalist, Richard Barber’s books, the author provides a reliable guide to the Holy Grail as the concept evolved from Chrétien de Troyes to the twentieth century. Not all scholars will agree with Barber’s Christian reading of the Grail, but his arguments are persuasive. Now that the volume is available in paperback, it should attract a wider readership and act as a corrective to the more recent debasement of the concept in which anything alluding to an almost unattainable perfection from science to advertising is referred to as “the holy grail.” In addition, although the book was originally published before The Da Vinci Code craze, Barber does offer a succinct critique of the conspiracy theory of history and the Grail as found in Holy Blood, Holy Grail as well as spurious links between the Grail, the Cathars and the Templars (310–17).

The first part of the book, “Creating the Grail: Authors and Texts,” consists of the first six chapters and focuses on the medieval texts from The Story of the Grail by Chrétien de Troyes, who probably invented the concept, to Wolfram von Eschenbach’s Parzival. Barber begins the first chapter with a fictional account. “In a room, a man is writing. We cannot see the room clearly, nor do we know where it is: a private house, a monastery, a castle? It may be somewhere in north–east France. There is a parchment, a blackish-brown ink, a writer’s quill. With it a story is being written down” (10). The imagined figure is Chrétien de Troyes. Barber uses fictional scenes to open five other chapters. This may not appeal to all readers, but I found the approach appealing.

Although it is possible to read Chrétien’s unfinished work as ironic, Barber argues that The Story of the Grail should be taken at face value, a representation of contemporary court life with the development of a knight’s character as the theme. In addition, Barber stresses the hermit’s interpretation that “the Grail is such a holy thing” containing the host (23). In fact, what Perceval learns is “the power of the Mass and of the consecrated Host” (25). Chapter 2 looks at the four verse continuations as well as the various Prologues, none of which exhibit any great leaps of the imagination, but do reinforce the religious connotations found in The Story of the Grail. Robert de Born is the focus of the third chapter. For Robert, the focal point is not Perceval, but the Grail itself. Much of his poem is based on the Apocrypha. The new Grail hero is Joseph of Arimathea, who collects the blood that flowed from Christ’s wounds in the vessel used at the Last Supper, which Robert calls the Grail. The fourth chapter studies Perlesvaus, a work also suffused with “a fierce and elementary Christianity” (52). The Lancelot-Grail prose cycle, with its emphasis on the healing power of the Grail, is the subject of chapter 5. In the final chapter of part 1, Barber offers a summary and analysis of Wolfram von Eschenbach’s Parzival, together with long quotations from the work.

The second part, “The Nature of the Grail: Apocrypha, Theology, Romance,” consisting of chapters 7–16, with its theoretical approach, is original and useful. In chapter 7, Barber points out that Chrétien did not invent the word “grail.” It is simply a large platter. In the romances, it gradually comes to be called the “Holy Grail.” Robert de Born refers to the Grail as the dish in which Joseph of Arimathea gathered the blood of Jesus. In the Perlesvaus, the Grail is a chalice. The Grail, however, did not always appear in a religious context. At times it is a source of healing and a provider of...
food. The richness of the remainder of the second part can only be hinted at by mentioning the topics discussed in the chapters: the setting of the Grail (chapter 8), obscure histories based especially on the so-called Gospel of Nicodemus and dubious relics of the Holy Blood connected with the Grail (chapter 9), the Eucharist and the Grail (chapter 10), the Cistercian theology of Robert de Born (chapter 11), the secret of the Grail, which Barber identifies with the ritual of the Mass (chapter 12), the Church and the Grail (chapter 13), a further analysis of Wolfram von Eschenbach’s Parzival, which Barber considers the greatest of all Grail poems (chapter 14), the later German romances (chapter 15), and the last flowering, especially in Sir Thomas Malory’s Morte Darthur (chapter 16). Barber notes that the Grail stories were dramatically challenged in the early sixteenth century: “The coming of the Reformation was the moment at which the Grail vanished from the poetic imagination” (223).

The third part, “New Grails for Old: Secular Images of the Grail,” looks at the revival of interest in the Grail from the late eighteenth century to the present (chapters 17–21). In chapter 17, Barber presents a summary and provides an analysis of scholarly research on the Grail. He repeats his argument that the Grail’s sources are to be found in Christianity rather than in Celtic and Oriental sources. He also rejects folkloric approaches such as that of Jesse Weston. Barber asserts that the Grail is not a single concept, but a literary symbol that developed over the years. The danger, he believes, “is that scholars place far too much emphasis on the sources behind this development.” The Grail, he concludes, is the creation of “the poetic imagination” (255). The revival of the Grail in the nineteenth century is the subject of chapter 18, with special emphasis on Richard Wagner’s last opera, Parsifal. Not all scholars will agree with Barber’s view that the opera “is not a religious work, but an opera about religion” (286). Chapter 19, which deals with secret knowledge, the occult, the Templars, the Cathars, and the conspiracy theory as found in Holy Blood, Holy Grail, as well as the New Age enthusiasm for the Grail, is especially useful in light of recent popular literature such as The Da Vinci Code and the popularity of the Indiana Jones films, for example. In chapter 20, Barber looks at the Grail today and concludes that the “Grail assumes a chameleon-like character” and that “there are very few modern examples of Grail literature where Christian belief is at the center” (321). Barber plays a game with the readers in the concluding chapter by pretending to offer an answer to the Grail and then discounts those very arguments (361–65). He insists that the Grail is a mystery, a historical and literary puzzle: “There is no one ‘truth’ about the Grail” (365). Creative thought invented the Grail. It was the product of “the interplay between imagination and belief” (365). This very interesting book also includes four appendices and an extensive bibliography, which unfortunately makes no distinction between primary and secondary sources.

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In his history of the “improved pub” movement in twentieth-century England, David W. Gutzke makes a two-pronged argument. First, he contends that Progressivism, typically associated with the United States, was in fact a broad Anglo-American reform movement in which middle-class professionals on both sides of the Atlantic sought “to apply their scientific expertise to solving society’s ills with government intervention” at the turn of the century (17). Second, he argues that Progressive ideals motivated and informed brewer efforts to transform English pubs into sites of middle-class decorum and respectability. While Progressivism declined in significance at the national, political level by the 1920s, its ideas and goals remained the driving force behind the reinvention of pubs during the interwar years.

From the late-nineteenth–century Progressive viewpoint, the English pub had become nothing more than a vice-ridden watering hole—a social blight as in need of reform as inadequate working-class housing. Early Progressive efforts focused on limiting drunkenness by removing the profit motive
from both investors and publicans. “Trust houses” capped profits at a guaranteed 5% to investors, and they hired salaried and, thus, “disinterested” managers to run the pubs. Progressives also altered the environment—offering food, non-alcoholic beverages, games, tables and chairs—so as to both attract a middle-class clientele and “uplift” regular working-class patrons. Though limited in success by the early 1900s, Progressives directly influenced the Liquor Traffic Central Control Board during World War I. As the state assumed management of nearly 400 pubs in areas pivotal to the war effort, the Board pursued Progressive reforms.

It was the success of these government reforms in producing “respectable” pubs and attracting the middle class, Gutzke contends, that in fact transformed numerous, major brewers into Progressives themselves. Hoping to improve the reputation of public drinking and thereby secure a broader customer base, these brewers spent considerable sums to improve pubs during the 1920s and 1930s. Kitchen facilities, table service in well-furnished interiors, gardens, and tea rooms became common features of the “improved pub.” Rather than dreading government intervention in their industry, these brewers actively sought government assistance, particularly in matters of licensing, to achieve their ideals.

Gutzke convincingly challenges the notion that the “improved pub” was the preventive reaction of an industry fearing state reforms. He shows that many brewers were themselves sincere in their desire to transform the image and experience of public drinking in England, and his impressive quantitative analysis of building projects and expenses elucidates his conclusions.

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The concept of cosmopolitanism offers a compelling frame for understanding the history of twentieth-century art. The cosmopolitan, or “citizen of the world,” may reside anywhere and seeks dialogues with cultures beyond her or his own. If we view art (and culture generally) as consisting of such dialogues, we can rewrite art history so that the artists, critics, and cultural institutions residing outside the cultural centers have as much a place as those residing within them. Indeed, cosmopolitanism offers a promising viable alternative to conventional chronological surveys of twentieth-century art, which even in their most recent permutations have remained by and large focused on stylistic innovations within European and American cultural centers (a case in point is Art since 1900 by Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Yve-Alain Bois, and Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, published by Thames and Hudson in 2004).

Cosmopolitan Modernisms is therefore an excellent choice, in theory, for the first volume of a new series called Annotating Art’s Histories. Each contributor to this volume discusses—some directly, others indirectly—a particular dialogue between global and local culture. Michael Richardson considers the international appeal of Surrealism and its local expressions in the work of a handful of Caribbean artists. Lowery Stokes Sims, in a carefully researched and thoughtful essay, views the art of the well-known Cuban painter Wifredo Lam as reconciling modernism (the global) with his Afro-Cuban heritage (the local). Ann Gibson, in a scholarly study containing some fascinating archival materials, focuses on the tension between the painter Norman Lewis’s expressed aim to create a universal art and the particularities of his African-American identity. Kobena Mercer insightfully examines this same tension and its eventual resolution in the work of Romare Bearden. In addition to these studies (mostly of painting) are: Paul Overy’s analysis of internationalist vs. nationalist interpretations of modernist architecture in Germany; Michael Asbury’s sobering conclusion—in his discussion of the Brazilian writer Ferreira Gullar’s theory of the “non-object”—that the harsh realities of politics and history can derail cosmopolitanism; David Craven’s assessment of the Caribbean critic C. L. R. James’ view of Jackson Pollock as playing a “transnational” role; and Partha Mitter’s interview about (among many other things) his current book project on the “virtual cosmopolitanism” of artists at the periphery who possess an awareness of metropolitan culture.
The editor’s useful innovation in this volume is to apply the ancient notion of cosmopolitanism—as revived during the 1990s by philosopher Martha Nussbaum, critical theorist Homi Bhabha, and anthropologist James Clifford—to the history of art. A close review of the literature of art history, however, would show that the seeds of this sort of cross-cultural approach reside not only outside, but within the discipline, notably in Robert Rosenblum’s groundbreaking Transformations in Late Eighteenth-Century Art (Princeton, 1967). While Mercer’s approach can (and no doubt will) open doors to further study, it misses the opportunity to serve in the classroom as a corrective companion to the existing, Europe-centered textbooks on twentieth-century art (which I admit was my hope for this book). First, Mercer’s volume is itself lopsided in ways he does not fully acknowledge; for instance, in his book women are not among the citizens of the world. Second, some of the essays would have benefited from a rigorous, careful reading at the editor’s desk. (A few conspicuous examples: Overy mentions three times that high contrast black-and-white photographs led to the mistaken belief that the walls of modernist edifices were white, when once would have been sufficient and appropriate; and Mercer does not adequately clarify the difference between Bearden’s collages and his Photostats, misdates Goya’s Disasters of War, gives the wrong title to a Picasso painting, and misspells the name of Alois Riegl despite the fact that Riegl’s concept of Kunstwollen appears in the title of Mercer’s essay.) Still, Mercer’s volume will prove useful to art historians who seek a practicable way to reframe the history of modern art as what Kwame Anthony Appiah ironically calls, in Cosmopolitanisms: Ethics in a World of Strangers (Norton, 2006), the “contamination” of culture.

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Tear Off the Masks! Identity and Imposture in Twentieth-Century Russia.

Sheila Fitzpatrick has built a reputation as one of the most innovative and exciting historians of Russian/Soviet social history of her generation. Her Ph.D. students, many of whom are imbued with her imaginative vision of the pre-World War II Soviet Union and are doing much to shape the current debates on the evolution of Soviet social and political history, have extended her influence on the current generation of scholars still further. Princeton University Press has published this collection of Fitzpatrick’s articles, edited and with an important introduction by her and in doing so has given us an insight into how one of Russia’s foremost historians practices her craft.

The collection is divided into five parts with each section concentrating on different aspects of a common overriding theme: that the Soviet Union was a manufactured society in which the Party/State sought to remould society from the depths of its class structure to the inner workings of its population’s “collective” (as opposed to individual) identities. That is, Fitzpatrick seeks to understand how people relocated themselves in a social group or context in the post-revolutionary Soviet Union.

In the first section entitled “Class Identities” the author describes how the realisation that class in the USSR was a matter of classification led her to reinterpret the dynamics of Soviet society. Fitzpatrick argues that the devastating impact of the Revolution and the Civil War decimated Russia’s Marxist-type class structure (such as it existed), which by the early 1920s had virtually ceased to exist. During the 1920s and more so during the 1930s, as part of his “Revolution from Above” Stalin “invented” new classes by means of class liquidation on the one hand, and class creation on the other; these new classes displayed the attributes of traditional estates rather than those of the familiar classes which compose industrial society.

This is the most important section of the book: the articles are highly suggestive and reveal Fitzpatrick’s analytical skills at their best. While some historians of the Soviet Union may not agree with Fitzpatrick’s conclusions they will not be able to ignore them.

How Soviet citizens managed to convince their Soviet masters or, for that matter, convinced themselves that they did indeed belong to one of these “new” officially
sanctioned safe classes, and the effects of this sociological engineering on the complexion of Soviet life are the subjects discussed in the remaining chapters.

These chapters reveal the breadth of the author’s research though they vary in depth. As Fitzpatrick herself notes, some of them require more research and were written to suggest lines of research that still need to be thoroughly investigated (259). They cover seemingly disparate themes ranging from: Russian and Jewish (Osip Bender) tricksters and conmen; denunciations of all sorts; relationships between clients and patrons; and letters from supplicants. But they all portray post-1917 Russia as a society in flux where all Russians were required by the Party/State to reinvent themselves in response to the mass identity crisis caused by the revolutionary upheaval and the Party/State’s call for the “Construction of Socialism.” Thus, Soviet citizens were forced to transform themselves into the New Soviet Man/Woman. Ultimately, Fitzpatrick shows how Stalin’s “imagined society” became real.

In the Soviet environment that came into existence citizens became chameleon-like, changing into some one else as a matter of survival, discarding their old personae to make themselves conform to the Party/State’s image of the society it was building on the one hand, and to make themselves, to use Fitzpatrick’s word, “useable” to that society on the other hand.

According to one of the final articles in this collection, the same sort of transformation took place after 1991 when another revolution forced Russians to reinvent themselves again. Since reinventing their personalities had become a way of life for Russia’s citizenry, this last (?) transformation process proved to be relatively easy for them if not less confusing for observers of post-Soviet society.

Fitzpatrick’s work offers new insights into Russian social history as well as to contemporary Russian society. Indeed, the complexions of Soviet and post-Soviet societies may be far more difficult—not that they were ever easy—to decipher than previously thought. As one elderly Russian citizen admitted, she felt that she had lived “someone else’s life,” not the life she was born to live (152).

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