



# The European Legacy

## Toward New Paradigms

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## Book Reviews

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## BOOK REVIEWS

**Rediscovering Antiquity: Karl Weber and the Excavation of Herculaneum, Pompeii and Stabiae.** By Christopher Charles Parslow (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995, paperback 1998), xx + 394 pp. £17.95 paper.

This book, as emphasized by the author, is a history of the earliest excavations of the Roman towns in Campania which were destroyed by the volcanic eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in A.D. 79. It results from Parslow's rigorous research in the archives in Naples, research facilitated by a catalogue, published in 1979, of the documentation from the 1739–1861 excavations of Pompeii, Herculaneum and Stabiae, held in Archivio di Stato. The excavation history begins in 1709 with the Duc d'Elbeuf's discoveries of antiquities through well-digging in the area later identified as Herculaneum, but it concentrates on the excavations between 1750 and 1764 and the work of Karl Jakob Weber. Weber was a Swiss military engineer employed to supervise the excavations during this period. As Parslow is quick to point out, Weber was not the main protagonist in these investigations and this book is not his biography. However, through this book, Parslow endeavors to convince us of the major contribution which Weber's work has made in initiating excavation processes and documentation procedures which constitute the main and most useful information on these excavations for today's scholars. The other major players in this story are: Rocque Joaquin de Alcubierre, chief director of the royal excavations from about 1738 until his death in 1780; Camillo Paderni, director of the Museum Herculaneum until his death in 1781; Padre Antonio Piaggio, a priest who was brought from Rome to decipher the papyrus roles from the Villa dei Papiri and who was a supporter of Weber against his enemies; Marchese Bernardo Tanucci who created the Reale Accademia Ercolanese di Archeologia in 1755 to oversee publications of the excavations; and finally La Vega who eventually took over Weber's post,

Alcubierre's position and that of Paderni. This history takes us through the processes of these early excavations: the difficulties of excavating through meters of volcanic material under contemporary housing in Resina to investigate Herculaneum; the problems of disturbing cultivable land to excavate in Pompeii; and the ensuing health hazards from long periods underground in damp conditions. These processes were greatly impacted upon by the relationships between these men, their individual beliefs about the purposes of these excavations and the best methods to realize them, and the needs of each to ensure that his own role received recognition in the Bourbon court. The Bourbon Kings, Alcubierre and Paderni were carrying out the excavations to produce ancient works of art to furnish the royal collections in Portici and Naples. To collect this material they dug haphazardly around the site looking for valuable sculptural finds, back-filling immediately afterwards to prevent collapse. They were concerned to protect these assets by restricting access from the outside world. They even resorted to destroying or mutilating any duplicate works of art to ensure the value of their own collection. Weber, on the other hand, was determined to produce accurate maps of layout of the towns and individual buildings and to record the precise contexts in which works of art were found. He believed that the excavated areas should be left exposed to facilitate comprehension by visitors, but at the same time damage to habitation and cultivatable areas should be minimized. He believed that it was important to inform the European scholarly community of the significance of these remains. Thus, this book presents the conflicts, intrigues and jealousies that clouded much of the excavation process in Herculaneum, Pompeii and Stabiae. This book provides much detail on the major excavations of this period: those of the Villa di Papiri in Herculaneum, the Theatre in Herculaneum, the Praedia di Juliae Felicis in Pompeii and the Villa di San Marco in Stabiae. Weber played a major role in the excavations of these buildings and produced comprehen-

sive and annotated plans of all of them. The book is divided into three parts although the division of the last two seems somewhat artificial as they appear to cover similar ground. It is undoubtedly rather difficult to separate out the excavation methodology from its documentation and still follow the process in a meaningful manner. The first part, "The Historical Background," presents biographical information on Weber; the work of Weber's predecessors, particularly that of Alcubierre and Pierre Bardet de Villeneuve; and Weber's first project, the completion of a map of the Bay of Naples, the so-called Cratere Maritimo map. The second part, "Excavations and Methodology," traces the discovery of the Villa of the Papiri, the role of the Accademia Ercolanese in publishing the finds; the excavation and documentation of the Praedia di Juliae Felicis; and the excavation of the so-called "Temples" at Herculaneum. The third part, "Documentation," deals with Weber's attempts to gain membership of the Accademia Ercolanese through publication of his work; relationships between the Naples court and the outside world over the excavations, particularly as articulated through the writings of J. J. Winckelmann; the excavations and documentations of the theatre at Herculaneum; and an epilogue of Weber's death in 1764 and the subsequent interest in and publication of his work. The main section is followed by four appendices consisting of transcriptions of the texts on Weber's draft and axonometric plans of Praedia di Juliae Felicis, and of the texts of his monograph and a missing plan of the Villa di San Marco in Stabiae. Regrettably, these appendices are not cross-referenced to the related illustrations and discussions in the main text. This is particularly important for Appendix 2 which would appear to be the same text as that on the plans illustrated as Figures 48–49, despite the apparently different dimensions and catalogue number of the drawing. The contents of this book—the details of the results of these excavations, their processes and the relationships between the protagonists—provide an essential resource for those carrying out further research on these monuments as well as a useful sourcebook for scholars interested in the history and politics of these the earliest large-scale excavations in the Western world. Weber's legacy was that "his notions about publishing the archaeological sites and

making them accessible to a broader public were years ahead of their time" (280).

PENELOPE M. ALLISON

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**What Have We Learned About Science and Technology from the Russian Experience?** By Loren R. Graham (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), xiii + 177 pp. \$39.50/£27.95 cloth, \$14.95/£10.95 paper.

This book, which originated in his 1995 Donald M. Kendall lectures at Stanford University, is described by the author as "a small book about big questions." The big questions are: is science a social construction? Are science and technology Westernizing influences? How robust is science under stress? How willing are scientists to reform their own institutions? And, who should control science? Big questions indeed, and questions that clearly cannot be answered in such a slim volume. Nevertheless, in the restricted space available Graham manages to raise the issues surrounding these questions in a way that leaves the reader sensitized both to their complexity and to their relevance to other contexts.

Loren Graham has studied science and technology in the former Soviet Union for many years, and this book draws upon much of his earlier work. The premise for his analysis is that the Soviet Union was both close enough to Western science *and* far enough away to render comparison particularly fruitful. So, for example, the fact that Russian science is recognizably Western, but has enjoyed three centuries of separate development, should enable us to comment on some of the claims made by analysts of a social constructivist persuasion. Similarly, the particular stresses placed on individuals and institutions during the Soviet period and the subsequent economic chaos should allow us to examine the resilience of science to external pressures. And the very different approaches to the control of technology in the former Soviet Union and the West ought to throw light on many problematic planning and environmental issues.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, none of the questions raised has any clear answer. On construc-

tivism, for example, Graham adheres to the middle ground:

Contrary to the views of many natural scientists, the influence of social factors extends to the core of science itself, the theories of explanation around which the scientists of a field frequently unite. But natural science deals with objective reality to a much higher degree than the humanities, and therefore empirical evidence is much more influential. The leash that ties scientific theories to reality is far longer and slacker than most people know, but it does exist. (127–8)

In support of this he examines, amongst others, the work of the psychologist Vygotsky and the mathematician Kolmogorov, and concludes that their work—in some cases more highly praised today in the West than ever before—was fundamentally influenced by dialectical materialism. In the Lysenko affair, however, Graham sees not only an extreme instance of the social construction of science, but also the dangers of an excessively constructivist analysis: ultimately, he argues, Lysenkoism was displaced by Western genetics because the latter offered a much better model of reality, not because of any social construction.

The other questions raised reveal similar tensions. The persecution of Soviet scientists and engineers under Stalin, and the crippling economic and financial conditions of the 1990s, have twice in this century subjected Russian science to a trauma completely unknown in the West. Our reaction is a mixture of admiration at what was achieved under such constraints, and distaste—if not downright horror—at the circumstances. For those tempted to assume that high-quality scientific activity is inextricably linked to democracy, freedom and enlightened principles, the Soviet system of combining scientific and technical research with slave labor and prison camps is a salutary reminder to the contrary. What is more, now that the interests of many Russian scientists are threatened by post-Soviet economic collapse, there is a real danger of some scientific groupings forging a dangerous alliance with anti-Western and nondemocratic elements.

The chapters on Westernization, institutional reform and the control of technology

cast a similarly disturbing light on our own society. The Soviet examples of the remarkable—and often counterproductive—resistance to change that organizations and institutions can possess, and the economic and environmental disasters that can arise from the cult of the expert, have all too often found their counterparts in the West. Indeed, the real value of this short book is summed up by the author in his closing remarks:

We can understand how much *our* science and *our* culture are conditioned by *our* society only if we have another society and another culture with which we can appropriately draw comparisons. The Soviet Union may well have been one of the last modern alternatives to dominant Western patterns with which such comparisons can be made. In that sense, the study of Soviet science is also a study of *our* science. (135)

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**Shaping History: Ordinary People in European Politics, 1500–1700.** By Wayne Te Brake (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), xiii + 221 pp. \$40.00/£30.00 cloth, \$15.95/£11.95 paper.

Wayne Te Brake has had the happy idea of writing a short general study of the extent to which and the ways in which ordinary people participated in politics in Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The main part of his study consists of a narrative of popular revolt in three chronological chapters dealing in turn with “the world of Charles V” (*comuneros* Spain and peasant war in Germany), with the late sixteenth-century civil wars in France and The Netherlands, and finally with the seventeenth century, mainly the so-called “revolutions” of the 1640s in England, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy and elsewhere. These narratives are sandwiched between two briefer analytical chapters. Te Brake shows himself to be well informed, especially about the recent secondary literature in English and Dutch. His narrative is crisp and clear, while his commentary is perceptive, sophisticated, and informed by sociology and political science (especially

the work of James Scott, Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow). Particularly valuable is his analysis of popular movements in terms of shifting coalitions, “reforming,” “revolutionary,” “counter-revolutionary” and so on.

Three absences from this study may be worth underlining. The first is the absence of quotation, except in the epigraphs to each chapter. The study seems a little bloodless because we rarely hear the voices of ordinary people themselves, whether in manifestos, comments in journals or graffiti on walls. The second is the absence of Eastern Europe, which might have allowed him to enrich his general picture. Besides obedience and resistance (in “everyday” form or in the form of rebellion), the serfs of Eastern Europe, like the slaves of the New World, sometimes exercised a third option, flight, founding new, free communities like the Zaporozhian Cossacks on their island in the river Dnieper. The third absence to be regretted is that of any serious discussion of the media of communication, especially print—the Twelve articles of the German peasants in 1525, the pamphlets and printed songs which contributed to the Dutch Revolt, and so on. In forming popular political consciousness and in transmitting memories of revolt from one generation to another, printed texts surely played a crucial role. All the same, *Shaping History* is in most respects an admirable introductory study for students of early modern Europe, whether to add a popular dimension to the study of politics or a political dimension to the study of popular culture.

PETER BURKE

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**Sade: A Biographical Essay.** By Laurence L. Bongie (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), xii + 336 pp. \$29.00/£23.25 cloth.

This very well-researched biography of the Marquis de Sade (1740–1814) corrects many misconceptions concerning the life of the Marquis de Sade and demonstrates convincingly that many of his most important novels contain extensive borrowings from the works of other authors. Until well into the twentieth

century, the critical reception of Sade’s works was fairly consistent. Commentators argued that Sade had led a rakish life, had taken perverse pleasure in humiliating women both in his own life and in his novels, and had written pornographic novels in an exceedingly elegant style. The basic disagreement among critics was whether Sade should be viewed as a criminal, as the literary critic Jules Janin thought, or as a madman, as the novelist Anatole France believed. In his 1886 Latin study of sexual pathology entitled *Psychopathia Sexualis*,

a German doctor named Richard von Krafft-Ebing created the neologism “sadismus” to describe the mental disorder of men who obtained sexual stimulation through the physical or psychological humiliation of women. Soon after its creation is Latin, the word “sadism” and the adjective “sadistic” entered numerous modern languages.

Laurence Bongie explains very carefully that many twentieth-century critics and writers have attempted to rewrite history by portraying Sade as a defender of freedom of speech, a social critic of oppressive political regimes, and as a profound novelist whose works did not merit the relative oblivion into which they had fallen. While admitting that Sade wrote very well, Laurence Bongie shows that Sade had been imprisoned both before and after the French Revolution not for his political beliefs but for the crimes of rape and sexual battery against women. Laurence Bongie undertook extensive research in Parisian libraries and archives and proved that Sade was a sexual predator from his adolescence until well beyond his middle age. Laurence Bongie quotes extensively and judiciously from police and judicial reports which spelled out very clearly the specific crimes which the Marquis de Sade had committed against women. He also reveals a great deal of information about the Marquis de Sade’s parents. His mother Marie-Eléonore found herself in a loveless marriage with her unfaithful husband Jean-Baptiste, from whom she separated in 1752. Professor Bongie also shows that Jean-Baptiste Sade was a dishonest diplomat who had been dismissed from the

French diplomatic corps because of his overtly libertine lifestyle and his efforts to defraud the French government by receiving payment for a full year after he had left without permission his post as a French diplomat in Bonn.

Laurence Bongie expresses serious reservations about the excessive praise which has been given to such novels by the Marquis de Sade as *La Philosophie dans le boudoir* (1795) and *La Nouvelle Justine ou les Malheurs de la vertu* (1799). He demonstrates that neither is a truly original work because Sade did not hesitate to borrow extensively from the writings of others. To put it bluntly, Sade was a plagiarist whose novels are, in fact, rather boring to read. Laurence Bongie concludes this well-written book with a detailed chronology of the life of the Marquis de Sade and his parents and a thoughtful evaluation of twentieth-century critical reactions to the works of the Marquis de Sade both by detractors such as Albert Camus and Raymond Queneau, who viewed Sade as a reprehensible exploiter of women, and by defenders of Sade such as Simone de Beauvoir, Camille Paglia, and Roland Barthes, who downplayed Sade's violence against women and argued, not always convincingly, that he was a profound and fascinating novelist. Laurence Bongie ends this book by pointing out that the literary critic Roger Shattuck had compared Sade in his 1996 book *Forbidden Knowledge: From Prometheus to Pornography* to the American mass murderer Ted Bundy who had raped and then killed well over fifty women. Laurence Bongie's thoughtful biography of Sade and critical study of his works indicates that Sade's pomographic depiction of violence against women in his works of fiction is not as innocent as his modern defenders would have us believe.

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**Warfare and Agriculture in Classical Greece.** Revised Edition. By Victor Davis Hanson (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1998), xviii + 282 pp. \$35.00 cloth, \$14.95 paper.

Bellicose country squires with too much spare time? Peace-loving farmers of hard-won, mid-

dling wealth? Poorer peasants and town dwellers, placid unless a militarist demagogue offered them imperial riches? Who controlled the Greek warring states in the period sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E.?

Victor Davis Hanson answers "None of the above." Yeomen farmer-hoplites (heavily armed infantrymen) directed policy in most Hellenic *poleis* to preserve their honor and their farms. Complementing the same author's *The Other Greeks: The Family Farm and the Agrarian Roots of Western Civilization* (1995), this shorter book offers a model, necessarily somewhat simplified, of an agrarian-political-military complex dominated by farmers of small-to-middle-holding, that explains a variety of unusual phenomena in Greek history over several generations. New currents of scholarly investigation over the intervening years now place Professor Hanson's study closer to the mainstream than when its first edition appeared in 1983.

According to Hanson, who is himself an agriculturalist in California, concern for their own lands, for their orchards and vineyards, and for their annual crops, shaped the dominant class's decisions, since their familiarity with farming regularly determined the timing and character of military expeditions abroad and defensive measures at home. Most absented themselves from their estates only for brief expeditions abroad because they needed to be home for harvests and vintages. (The Spartans were exceptions because serf-like Helots did all their farm labor and even some of their fighting; this fact was offset, however, by their reluctance to march far, long, or even at all beyond the Isthmus of Corinth.)

In particular, rural ravaging was intended not to inflict grave or lasting economic damage upon an enemy nation but rather, by inflicting acute hurt more psychological than anything else, to provoke it to join battle against the invaders. The thousands of Athenians of hoplite class were thus doubly hurt in the first years of Pericles' Peloponnesian War: they were prevented from honorable combat, and knew—even saw—their lands overrun and devastated.

Hanson dispels misinformation and misunderstanding. He describes what could and what could *not* be done to attack and to defend agricultural and other rural resources of a large city-state like Athens. Some have

claimed that the Spartan devastation of Attica was so severe that the land was unproductive for decades, that the whole class of small farmers was impoverished for a generation or more. However, as Hanson points out, permanent damage to orchards, vineyards, and agricultural structures was unachievable, given the invaders' time, techniques, and other circumstances. With luck they might burn one year's entire grain harvest field by field, and reduce vintage or olive harvest drastically by lopping branches. Cutting vine stocks or tree trunks, on the other hand, was difficult on a large scale, uprooting all but impossible. Even those two years (430 and 427 B.C.E.) when the Spartans did their worst in late spring, Athenians had good use of their land thereafter. Hanson's detailed discussion of the two very different phases of the Peloponnesian War is especially enlightening: a first phase marked by provocative incursions onto Attic farmland, a second one during which, from a permanent base in central Attica, enemies denied Athens all enjoyment of her hinterland (and enticed agricultural slaves to run away by the thousands).

Unfortunately Hanson leaves the impression that during that first phase, because devastation could normally be neither very widespread nor long lasting, it did not ruin anybody. Concentrated destruction of annual crops, however, and damage to vulnerable younger perennial plants (undoing several years' work of grafting and/or propagation by cuttings) could impoverish entire families, who had neither crop insurance nor a government agency to turn to for relief. Therefore, although he is right about the improbability of enduring harm to resilient *land*, significant numbers of *farmers* who lost the past year's work and the coming year's sustenance and cash crops may well have abandoned their farms or sold them off at distress prices. Did bankers do well, while peasants lost their shirts? Or did those farmers affected little or not at all—likely the vast majority—assist their less fortunate compatriots? Evidence is lacking.

Furthermore, Chapter 4 may somewhat overstate ease of "evacuation." Hanson himself points out how difficult of access some agricultural areas were; and where ravagers would raid, or even precisely when, could seldom, if ever, be known many days before they appeared.

Throughout the entire period Hanson surveys, in fact, warfare was evolving, in its techniques and in its political-economic character. Greece itself was changing. Macedonian strategy and tactics, which developed rapidly during the middle 300s, accelerated the process, as did Philip's and Alexander's subjection of most Hellenic *poleis*. Real economic warfare began to be waged upon productive countryside by swift, lightly armed troops at about the same time that the first effective siegecraft was developed against walled towns and cities. War became less gentlemanly.

Hanson uses documentary evidence shrewdly and critically, allowing for exaggeration in comedies of Aristophanes, for example, and by the orators. Exaggeration is, however, exaggeration, not complete fantasy. There *was* a significant "peace party" in Athens that opposed the Peloponnesian War not because of pacifism, nor even because Pericles denied them their beloved hoplite battles, but because many citizens were seriously harmed, not merely inconvenienced, by the Spartan invasions *and by the likelihood that they would continue*.

Hanson himself can, however, be a bit uncritical. He cites as if it had straightforward evidentiary value a wistful choral song in Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* that claims the olive plant is unique to Attica (what it hardly was) and will recover completely from severe mutilation (as it could only if peace allowed new shoots and grafts to mature).

In sum, Hanson's analysis of circumstances and particular events when hoplite warfare was important enables us to understand much that is otherwise perplexing in fifth-century military and diplomatic history or else might be overlooked.

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**The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation.** Edited by John Barton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), xv + 338 pp. \$59.95/£37.50 cloth, \$19.95/£13.95 paper.

John Barton has edited a collection of essays that provide a scholarly guide to the current

state of biblical interpretation. The book is designed for nonspecialists, i.e. for theologians, historians, sociologists as well as those engaged in literary critiques, who are interested in the array of methods currently available to assist in interpreting the Bible. Unique to this volume are essays dealing with the prophetic, poetic and wisdom books of the Hebrew Bible as well as the contributions by James Vanderham who explores the meaning of apocalyptic literature. The essays form a comprehensive survey that reviews the literature on biblical interpretation.

Barton's accomplishment is to offer the reader a survey of the biblical methodologies useful for interpretation in the 1990s. In this volume, Barton has shown that there is still much to discover about the Bible. As he has demonstrated, primary research on such modern discoveries as the Dead Sea Scrolls can reveal the work, in which Christianity was nurtured. Archaeology has also been uncovering daily life in the ancient world. This review of the literature contains essays that are followed by a list of "further reading" as well as by a meaningful footnote apparatus. The focus of the book is to examine what biblical scholars refer to as the new paradigm for reading the text—a shift from an historical methodology to a social-historical, sociological, literary or postmodern style of reading.

Chapters 1–11 survey the aims and methods that scholars seem to be adopting. David Japers, for example, argues that recent literary approaches often seem to draw on a precritical exegesis to revive the insights into the text lost through historical criticism. Several chapters, including those by Keith Whitelam, deal with those hermeneutical perspectives that focus on locating the texts in a specific society. In such approaches the Bible is not only treated as evidence for social setting of Ancient Israel and the early church. Such a sociological perspective also examines the historical as well as the modern contexts that are the subtexts to the earlier and current reading of the Bible.

Tim Gorringer has offered a very intriguing essay analyzing how the Bible can be used politically. Scholars, he maintains correctly, must study who is reading the text and with what agenda. Such studies can make the Bible into a tool for social change rather than merely maintain it as a stabilizing instrument.

Along this line, Ann Loades has shown how feminist approaches to the Bible have been bifurcated. Some scholars, she states, are trying to rescue what they perceive as basically sound interpretations from such androcentric exegetes as Mary Daly. No matter where they are placed on the spectrum, however, a feminist critic can alert all readers to the problematic and contradictory elements in the Bible, which can easily be overlooked by more traditional scholars.

One of the problems with any interpretation, of course, is pointed out by Anthony Thiselton, who reminds scholars that the interpreters themselves are not neutral observers, but rather are rooted in their cultures. Stefan Reif's essay also concretely surfaces the fact that scholarship is culture bound. Commenting from a Jewish perspective, he shows that biblical studies taught in theological centers can be and often are permeated with Christian attitudes, in particular those rooted in supersessionism. Particularly interesting is his negative analysis of biblical criticism and his presentation of the traditional Jewish way of reading the Bible. Reif's Jewish approach to biblical studies could act as a healthy corrective to the traditional Christian perspectives, which are nurtured by philosophical or conceptual models.

Finally, John Ashton's essay should be required reading by those interested in the swirl of biblical interpretation. Actually, it probably should have been placed nearer to the beginning of this volume, except for the fact that it deals with John and the Johannine literature and not the Hebrew Bible. He distinguishes between "smooth" and "rough" readings. "Smooth" reading assumes a unity with no evidence of dislocation or inconsistencies. "Rough" reading have traditionally resulted in hypotheses about the history of the text. Although "smooth" readings may be in the ascendant, Ashton points out that we cannot seek a doctrinaire commitment to synchronic perspectives or we would lose our critical stance.

Barton's book is a superb review of the literature and will be very helpful to professional scholars and interested students of the Bible. The only flaw, and here physical space in the volume itself may be the issue, is that the scholars are primarily from Great Britain. It would be fascinating to see what specialists



from other countries could contribute to Barton's companion to biblical interpretation.

DONALD DIETRICH  
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**Ordaining Women: Culture and Conflict in Religious Organizations.** By Mark Chaves (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), x + 237 pp. \$29.95 cloth, \$16.95 paper.

An extensive bibliography and statistical tables make this historical and comparative analysis of women's ordination in the USA an invaluable background resource, since roughly 30 percent of the students in today's theological schools are women. Much of the contemporary literature generated around the ordination of women focuses on the concrete experiences of individual women. By contrast, Chaves' work concentrates on the formal policies of the 100 denominations concerned and the tentative or permanent resolutions that various churches have achieved. Chaves has analyzed sociologically and ecclesially the fact that church policies regarding female clergy frequently fail to correspond to the real world of female ministry.

Two theses form the foundation for this very thorough study. (1) A denomination ordains women, i.e. institutionalizes gender equality, only when there is no official position that bars women from ecclesial orders. The ordained women frequently may be given full clergy rights, but not formal equality, i.e. access to equal salaries, etc. (2) Many denominations, e.g. Roman Catholicism, assert that they support gender equality even while they formally deny leadership positions to women. In denominational subcultures that are based on biblical inerrancy or sacramentalism, gender equality has come to symbolize the liberal enlightenment project, i.e. modernism, that some denominations have opposed in order to sustain their own identities. Paradoxically, then, nonmodernism seems to be still quite vital even in our postmodern culture.

The inspiration of this book came from Chaves' earlier observations in 1988 that Presbyterian, Methodists and several smaller denominations instituted policies to ordain women in the 1940s and 1950s, even before

women sought ecclesial roles. Why? In brief, he has concluded that denominational leaders became aware that there was emerging a normative cultural change in the national climate with respect to gender equality. Women themselves only began to move rapidly into the ministerial ranks in the late 1960s. Once the ordination of women became fused with the principle of gender equality, many denominations began to "modernize," i.e. to ordain women, to institutionalize formal gender equality, which did not necessarily mean that they really wanted to encourage women to become clergy. A certain ambivalence seems to pervade the discussion of women's ordination in virtually all the denominations in the USA. Women's ordination has become identified with liberalism and has been associated with such equally incendiary issues as abortion and those swirling around the gay/lesbian movement.

Chaves asserts, then, that the formal rules governing women's ordination are driven much more strongly by the ways in which denominations interact with the environment than by their institutional concerns with internal organizational needs. The Catholic Church offers Chaves a good example of this thesis. This church's nonmodernism is tied to an anti-ordination position despite the institution's crying need for priests. In Protestant churches rules about female clergy frequently also seem to be more a symbolic display than any kind of "rational" solution to pragmatic organizational problems. Women who desired ordination in the nineteenth century and pre-World War II era acted individually. Then, in the mid-twentieth century, the proponents became the ecclesial elites. Now the ordination advocates belong to social movement organizations, in which women who want to be ordained are a prominent constituency. The current landscape reflects the tension involved in what has come to be called "the culture wars."

Chaves has very effectively demonstrated four themes. (1) Rules about women's ordination possess culturally symbolic significance. (2) Such rules are constructed through interaction with varied institutional environments. (3) Their adoption is influenced by organizational characteristics that help shape the intradenominational politics. (4) The creation of such rules generate conflicts within the denomination

and have the ability to mutate over time. In essence, the struggle characterizing women's ordination reflects the unique tension between the ecclesial cultures of the church and the spectrum of cultural attitudes in the USA.

Women's ordination is about something more than women in leadership. Chaves has deftly analyzed this "more." His work is a good example of sociology applied to religious practice and even demonstrates how theology can undergo permutations. It lacks some vitality, however, by ignoring the comments of the individuals engaged in the struggle for women's ordination. His sociological view ignores the human anger, hurt, and psychological suffering of the women seeking ordination, but that is inevitable because of his analytical model. He implicitly acknowledges the absence of his protagonists' passion in his analysis by providing a thorough bibliography for the reader interested in reflecting on the personal struggles involved in institutional change.

DONALD DIETRICH  
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**Religion in Hellenistic Athens.** By Jon D. Mikalson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), xii + 364 pp. \$48.00/£35.00 cloth.

There are numerous works on Greek religion, but Mikalson's is the only one to look in detail specifically at Athenian religion in the Hellenistic period. Mikalson's main point is to stress the continuities between classical and Hellenistic religion, challenging—largely successfully—the often repeated notion that the decreasing importance of the Greek city state in the Hellenistic period meant that citizens turned away from polis religion to more private cults of an exotic or foreign nature.

The first chapter, "The Age of Lycourgos" (11–45), deals with religion at Athens during the Lykourgan period (c.336–24 B.C.), concentrating on Lykourgos' expenditure on religion, and showing how little in fact is known specifically about religion at Athens in this period. The second chapter, "The Decade of Demetrios of Phaleron" (46–74), deals with the period after Lykourgos down to 307. The main religious issue in this period was whether

or not to deify Alexander. What is lacking in Mikalson's discussion is any treatment of what paying divine honors to a man meant for traditional Athenian religion, or any real discussion of any precedents (such as the cult of Lysander). The chapter is useful for the criticisms it makes of W. S. Ferguson's view (*Hellenistic Athens*, London, 1911) that religion in Hellenistic Athens was already by the close of the fourth century in irremediable decline. Mikalson is surely correct in arguing here (68–73) and throughout the book (see esp. Chapter 5) against such a view. While Ferguson's work is an important one which deals with religion in Hellenistic Athens, it is a little unnecessary perhaps to be arguing against points in such an old work. Mikalson sets out to destroy a view of Athenian religion for which, while he claims it is widespread, he returns again and again to Ferguson as his authority. The reader would have been better served to have had the views of more recent scholars discussed, criticized and analyzed.

In the third chapter, "Twenty Years of the Divine Demetrios Poliorcetes" (75–104), the main issue was the honors accorded to Demetrios and his father, Antigonos, by the Athenians, which Mikalson argues were "extensions of Athenian religious traditions" (79). In Chapter 4, "The Calm between the Storms" (105–36) dealing with 287 to 267/6, Mikalson argues that the Athenians worked to "de-Demetricize" (105) their cults, into which Demetrios had "insinuated" himself. Mikalson may well perhaps overstate the degree to which the Athenians during this period were "cleansing, re-establishing, and reorganizing" Athenian religion (135). After the expulsion of Demetrios, the religious life of the polis settled down to what it had been before. Here and elsewhere throughout the book, the degree to which the Athenians at various times consciously had a "religious program" for strengthening the religion of the polis is perhaps a little overstated.

In Chapter 5, "Again Domination, Again Independence" (137–67), covering the years down to 229, there is a useful discussion (140–1) on the citizen or noncitizen nature of the orgeones of the Thracian Bendis, and whether there were one or two of these in the Piraeus. The discussion of private religious groups (140–60), and whether these detracted away from the traditional religious life of the

polis is sound, and the conclusion, that Athenians were little interested in foreign deities, while it may be based largely on a lack of evidence for these cults, is a very important one.

Chapter 6, "Demos and the Charites" (168–207), is named for the cult that the Athenians established in the late third century, which was the major religious innovation of the period. In 168, Rome gave Delos to Athens, and Chapter 7, "Athens and Delos" (208–41), discusses how Athenians on Delos took over Delian cults. Mikalson argues that the Athenians on Delos promoted and participated in foreign cults there much more readily than they did at Athens itself.

The last chapter, "Indian Summer" (242–87), looks at the period 168–86 B.C. The important series of ephebic inscriptions of 127/6–98/7 B.C. is examined, and *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1006*, with its wealth of information about contemporary religious practice, is translated and to an extent commented upon, though some controversies, such as the procession involving taking Pallas to Phaleron, and whether this rite was part of the Plynteria (and it probably was not) are only touched upon (247). On the other hand, there are nearly one and a half pages of quotation from Plutarch's *Theseus* on the Oschophoria (250–1), while no attention is paid to the other sources for this festival or its various details. Similarly, the discussion of the ergastinai (256–8) refers to one inscription, but *IG II<sup>2</sup> 1036*, 1942–43; Hesych. s.v. ergastinai; Suid., *E.M.* s.v. Chalkeia, could easily be added. This is an understandable problem with the book: some knowledge of classical Athenian religion and the sources for it is assumed throughout, and the reader needs to turn elsewhere for accounts of these.

More needed to be said about private dedications (or the lack thereof), and of the definite changes in the anonymity of the girls and women who served the gods in ritual roles and as priestesses (but see 256–8). There was little discussion of artistic evidence, and no visual material, except for the temple of Olympian Zeus (the Olympieion) on the dust-cover (see 200). A map of the various cult centers in Attica would have been useful. Translations of both literary and epigraphic texts are sometimes provided; the Greekless reader has no difficulties with Mikalson's text.

The index was comprehensive and useful, and the bibliography was up to date.

This book is essential reading for students of classical and Hellenistic religion. Mikalson stresses the very sincere nature of Athenian religious life in the Hellenistic period, especially with respect to the well-established polis cults, and for this reason this book is indispensable for an understanding of religion in Hellenistic Athens.

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**Thucydides and the Ancient Simplicity. The Limits of Political Realism.** By Gregory Crane (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), xii + 348 pp. \$45.00/£35.00 cloth.

In this book, Crane sets out to examine the way in which Thucydides' account of the Peloponnesian War has been molded by his "political realism" (4), as well as to consider Thucydides' contribution to the development of modern political realism. He pays close attention to the text of Thucydides, and as in Crane's other works on Thucydides it is clear that the reader is in the hands of someone who knows his text well. Crane argues convincingly that Thucydides was motivated in how he reported the Peloponnesian War (431–04 B.C.) between Sparta and its allies and Athens and its allies—that ended so disastrously for Athens—by his understanding of "political realism" and that this is one of Thucydides' great strengths. Crane suggests that Thucydides sought out the motives for the behavior patterns between states, and that his narrative is imbued with the idea that the pursuit of power by states is intrinsic to their nature, and here I found Crane's analysis of the Melian dialogue particularly attractive. But Crane is almost certainly correct to argue that Thucydides' grasp of political realism is of course also a defect in his narrative, and that there are unresolved tensions within the *History*. What is also important in Crane's work is that he puts Thucydides' approach, ideas and thoughts in the context of the ideas and thoughts of his contemporaries, particularly the philosophical writers.

The work will be useful for the specialist, but Crane is clearly reaching out to a much

broader audience. When a Thucydides' scholar would have been content with a citation which was recognizable to the reader, such as Thuc. 1.140.1 (42–3) or 1.23.5–6 (36), Crane has translated the passage into English, and often makes rather general comments about the passage which are familiar to the student of Greek history. There is a little Greek here and there, but Crane largely relies on transliterations (such as *katastrephô* (77), to take one example from many).

On page 85, I could not agree that Xenophon's *Hellenika* "literally picks up where Thucydides' narrative breaks off," with a "seamless connection" to Thucydides. Certainly that Xenophon does not go over the same ground as Thucydides could be "a gesture of profound respect for Thucydides' achievement and an endorsement for his (rather than Herodotus's) program of history." But in a very real sense, Thucydides (partly through a desire to deal with contemporary events) also took up where Herodotus left off, except for the "Archaeology" (1.2–18), and Thucydides was also continued by the Oxyrhynchus Historian (who was perhaps Kratippos, known to have been a continuator of Thucydides), and by Theopompos the *Hellenika*, from 411–394 B.C.). There are many useful insights here into Herodotus, and I found these as valuable as those on Thucydides. What Crane had to say about Herodotus' conception of Sparta (see 76–85) was particularly stimulating.

Crane deals with various themes in treating Thucydides' political realism: the truest causes of the Peloponnesian War and "Thucydidean realisms" (Chapter 2), representations of power before and after Thucydides, in which he examines Herodotus and Xenophon on Spartan power (Chapter 3), the Corcyraean affair (Chapter 4), the "Archaeology" section of Thucydides (Chapter 5), Thucydides on wealth and capital (Chapter 6), the "rule of the strong," with special emphasis on Mytilene (Chapter 7), the Spartans Archidamos and Sthenelaidas who respectively opposed and promoted the war against Athens (Chapter 8), the famous and much studied Melian dialogue with its emphasis on "might is right" (Chapter 9), a discussion of the Athenian speech at Sparta (Thuc. 1.73–78) before the Peloponnesian War (Chapter 10: I think I now understand

what "Zero-Sum Game" means), and a conclusion (Chapter 11). As for Chapter 1, I failed to see any point at all in the comparison of Thucydides and Sherman, especially as Crane tells his reader that Sherman had no acquaintance with Thucydides. This chapter is a literary comparison, largely of Sherman at Atlanta and the Athenians at Melos, but the point of all of this was not clear.

There were some references to modern works, and Crane discusses the views of modern historians. But I felt that the focus on modern scholarship was sometimes a little slight, as on page 39 where two chunks of Thucydides are given in translation to illustrate the idea that Thucydides insisted upon careful reporting and criticized his predecessors and popular beliefs: Thuc. 1.20.3 points out that the notion that the Spartan kings had two votes each is wrong, with each king having only one vote, and wrong also the idea that there was a Pitante lochos (army division) at Sparta. This seems to be intended to correct Herodotus 6.57.5 (where he seems to imply that the kings had two votes) and 9.53.2 (a Pitante lochos at Sparta); Hornblower's commentary on Thucydides (1991, vol. 1, Oxford) is cited. But this is well-traveled ground: Crane needed to open up the discussion further, pointing to other possible corrections and connections, and areas in which Thucydides is (apparently) clearly indebted to Herodotus. Tyrtaeus on the First Messenian War is mentioned (78) but without an actual reference to a specific poem. On page 36 we are told that "controversy about the actual causes of the war and even about Thucydides' reliability as a source lives on," with a few examples given in a footnote to indicate this. But why should Crane be surprised at this, and why the "even"?

But these are minor points. Crane has produced a work that is new in many respects, and which even when the reader disagrees with his approach or interpretation, does force one to look more closely at the text, and to consider exactly what Thucydides was aiming to achieve with what he wrote. In many ways this is the most original treatment of Thucydides for many years, and Crane necessitates that we all look more closely at what Thucydides was actually writing.

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**Forgetful of their Sex: Female Sanctity and Society ca. 500–1100.** By Jane Tibbetts Schulenburg (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1998), xii + 587 pp. \$40.00/£31.95 cloth.

With meticulous detail and stunning critical insight, Janet Tibbetts Schulenburg surveys the lives of some 2,000 female saints during Western Christianity's formative period. The scope of this project and the depth of Schulenburg's analysis reveal medieval concepts of female sainthood with a complexity heretofore unexamined. Schulenburg weaves her central theme of gender formation with detailed analyses of demographics (esp. Chapter 8), economics, social structures and conditions, changes in canon law, and the very strategies for writing which produced saints and women in the early middle ages. Rather than produce her own hagiography of these textual women, Schulenburg maintains a disciplined critical edge in this labor of love by drawing out the contradictions in medieval thought which effectively destabilize notions of "woman" and of "saint." Sections of this book are significantly revised articles published in the late 1980s and early 1990s (xi). The publication of this single, comprehensive study gives Schulenburg's subtle and profound observations a force which has the potential to influence hagiographical studies and women's studies for generations.

Schulenburg is careful to qualify hagiography as a source for historical information. In Chapter 1 and throughout *Forgetful of Their Sex*, she is especially aware of the disproportionately small number of texts devoted to *mulieres sanctae*, didactic agendas in individual hagiographies, redactors' suspect use of contemporary and historical sources, and the erratic dissemination and preservation of redacted texts. For Schulenburg, however, hagiographic texts are "complex sources to be used with caution" (51). As historical documents, she suggests, *vitae* adhere to a different standard of historical truth (47). Their value is not in evidence of historical realities but in "unintentional evidence" which open experiences and constructions of gender as historical categories. Schulenburg's effort to broaden our historical categories to include familial ties, friendship bonds, contradictory values in medieval conceptions of motherhood and vir-

ginity, shifts in the visibility of women in medieval societies, gendered humor, gendered clothing, changing definitions of transgressive and sanctified behaviors, the spiritual and material domains of sainthood, and the *mulier sancta* as a functionary in secular communities through the unintentional evidence of saints' lives does indeed bring the reader into constant negotiation with the *vitae* throughout the book (54).

What prevents the complexity of Schulenburg's information from slipping into chaos is her commitment to the time period (500–1100) as one of conversion and reform, and her ability to analyze the intersection of historical conditions with the scripted lives of sanctified women. Schulenburg discusses female to male cross-dressing (160–4) and self-mutilation (141–2) as extreme measures to prevent physical and spiritual pollution, thus transvestite saints simultaneously followed and transgressed ecclesiastical criteria for sanctified female behavior. Schulenburg's discussions of cross-sex friendships (314–21) also reveal contradictory conceptions of gender roles in medieval thought. Here Schulenburg focuses on efforts of male monastics to make themselves "dead to earthly desires" (precisely the expectation placed on *mulieres sanctae*, 127) by forsaking the company of women, in contrast to a more liberal conception of female to male or female to female friendship. Though these discussions are part of examinations of virginity (Chapter 3) and gendered friendships (Chapter 7), Schulenburg uses both to illustrate the Church's contradictory efforts to stabilize gender by physical appearance and behavior and to maintain chastity as the ideal state for men and women in the context of a decline in female monasticism and public visibility (111–12, 115–18).

Characteristically Schulenburg makes the discussion of cross-sex and same-sex friendships more complex by the discussions that surround it. Chapter 6 pointed out that filial relationships were not only the model for monastic life, but that early missionary houses were essentially family houses composed of brothers and sisters and continued through families (274–5). The *vitae* cited in Chapter 3 ("At What Cost Virginity?") suggest that gender neutrality is a criteria for sanctification. Without drawing definitive conclusions, making sweeping generalizations about women's

lives, or forcing the *vitae* to make artificial testimony to the lives of women in the early middle ages, Schulenburg constructs a multidimensional history in which the categories for saintly women are as fluid as the didactic messages of their *vitae*. They are defined by sexual status (virgins, widows, mothers), family ties (sisters, daughters, wives), social position (queens, abbesses, falsely ordained bishops, holders of received spiritual wisdom, consorts) and behavior (patronage, relic collection, self-mutilation and preservation of virginity, prose and playwriting, proselytizing in public and private spaces, deviant or extravagant behavior, abstinence and self-mortification, and death). No one category, as Schulenburg eloquently shows, sufficiently accounts for female sanctity. This study is thus a testament to the needs of medieval writers to construct women whose lives in some way marked the spread of Christianity throughout early medieval Europe and to the women whose experiences, however altered by the rigors of discourse, forced the Church to deal with gender, sexuality, and its own criteria for sanctification. Schulenburg's final chapter, "The Celestial Gynaeceum," places the lives of these *mulieres sanctae* in the present historical moment. At the intersection between the medieval past and the present Schulenburg finds virgin martyrs whose *vitae* have yet to be written. *Forgetful of Their Sex* is an extraordinarily well-written and passionate study. It is medieval and feminist scholarship of the highest caliber.

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**Freie Erkenntnis und Philosophie der Befreiung.** By Michael Benedikt (Vienna: Turia und Kant 1997), 249 pp.

It takes an earthquake to make us aware that we have been taking the ground upon which we daily stand and walk on for unshakable, writes Habermas at the end of the second volume of his *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns: Zur Kritik der funktionalistischen Vernunft* (Frankfurt a.M., 1985, 589). Correspondingly, in Habermas the owl of Minerva only begins its flight during or following the

catastrophe. Habermas rejects its transcendental philosophical justifiability of explicit knowledge. With the argument that only a global catastrophe, i.e. the shaking up of the lifeworld and its background knowledge as a whole, could also transform the complete background knowledge, that was previously only implicit and conscious, into explicit knowledge. The social scientist should therefore keep to the small tremors in order to affirm his knowledge, step by step, earthquake by earthquake, even if, in doing so, he may always be too late.

It may seem as though Habermas' departure from transcendental reasoning problematic, in favor of communicative theoretical assurances, was thoughtlessly or rashly made. Perhaps thoughtlessly made, because hope, with the intersubjectively identified "ratio cognoscendi" of the catastrophically objective challenges of the "lifeworld" or the "ratio essendi" of its subjects, can also all too easily be objectively dampened by the modern age, which has objectively come into crisis. Perhaps rashly made, because, as accused by Benedikt, Habermas misunderstood and misquoted Kant in central points, in so far as Kant's transcendental ideal is not the furthest possible from reality, as alleged by Habermas; however, according to Kant himself (KrV B 596), only seems to be (202, 213; see above, Anthropodizee, Vienna 1995, 30, 58). However, above all, a "return to Kant" appears to be "still imperative" to Benedikt as Kant's transcendental foundation is usually only scientifically reduced or also pragmatically narrowly recited, and, as a result, the established central concern of Kantian criticism is missed. Namely, the "expansion of the use of reason within experience" (Kant), i.e. nothing other than just at the ground level of experience, is missed (54). Yet, for Kant, the purpose that this expansion serves is to establish a lifeworld, the highest good, that ensures against catastrophic destruction and therefore, remains worth living and is able to be experienced.

It is at this central point where free knowledge and a philosophy of liberation are especially combined, that Benedikt's equally concentrated and philosophically historical far-reaching reflections enter. As well as others (such as Ernst Cassirer), the credit is due to Julius Ebbinghaus of a "sacrifice of the narrow

direction of the transcendental idiom, i.e. apperception, with reference to a scientifically justifying causality through freedom." This should be founded in the "causality of freedom and its empirical pragmatic character" which should, at the same time, also be the "basis for the individualizing transcendental ideal and its causality from freedom" (9). What it therefore depends upon should be the union of technically practical reason as "instrumental causality through freedom" on the one hand and ethically pragmatic reason as "individualizing causality from freedom" (63) on the other hand. Thereby, that link of a synthesis thus originates, that, through the intelligible character's imagination in the empirical, provides for the prerequisite that the "lifeworld," that is not only terminologically strongly required in the meantime, can also remain so in the future. However, the transcendental character of reason also transforms itself in this perspective. Contrary to the dialectical version of reason in the exclusive form of being, when one is already and always with oneself, even when with others, the expansion of reason as proflexive opening towards others and other things should be necessary at that point. From the standpoint of Kant, an expansion of reason, that first of all makes a reflexive reconnection of the intelligible character to the naturally historical possible, is insisted upon, like both its specifically representing and also equally underestimated nature.

It can only be intimated at this stage as to what Benedikt puts forward, in his self-adjusted form of four far-reaching perspectives, as a transcendental anthropology. Firstly, it has to do with a renunciation of the reductions of Cartesianism (and not, as pointed out by Benedikt, already from Descartes) and the broadening outwards (already from Descartes himself) from an ethically action-theoretical perspective, in the sense of a "metaphysics of politics" (10). Secondly, the "unique character of the philosophical method and philosophical subject" is insisted upon, "opposite to the methods of physics, chemistry and bioscience and their analytically hypothetical procedure." This is, however, in view of the characteristic "strained relationship between deductive ideal and quasi inductive variation [...], in withdrawal from the dialectically descriptive representation of phenomenological social sciences and their primate" (10). Thirdly, the matter of

physics must be imagined in the "unity of nature as stratified nature and from this, natural history." Furthermore, in view of the modal powers: "origin, freedom and future" (Kant R. 5008), the "dynamics of the empirical character," that are relationally identified with Kant, should be pursued only within their intelligibility. (see 55ff.). Fourthly, it must be after all further identified in the perspective of these modal powers as to how "the ontology of nature" and "the ontology of society" (12) cross over one another in such a way that the economically semeological adjustments of the empirical character in exchange and delusion (Marx, Sohn-Rethel, Anders) also allow themselves to break out, in favor of "uniformity [...] of our freedom."

First or all, the functionalizing of our causality through freedom (that is, the apperception of knowledge), adjusted accordingly to empirical progress, through causality in freedom (founded in one of the conduct norms) from freedom [in the understanding of moral conduct that comes from others, H. E.] makes it possible for the divergence of the empirical character, his narrowing and broadening from our cosmopolitan character of the generic nature in the decisive polemos, to be achieved. The memory of going to foreign areas, the memory of the suffering of each of those who went before us, can, as we could point out with Canetti, reach the basis of that which was not yet there (13).

With Kant and Canetti, the triple dividing potential of transcendental philosophy should first be obtained through a historically social, as well as naturally economical, "concretization of the intelligible character into the pragmatic"; and that means, brought in as a version of anthropology that strives for, contrary to the reductions and one-sidedness of the empirical character, both a unity and a concretization and is also able to counter, as a critical anthropology of reduction and misjudgment of its subjects, with cosmopolitan intention. The "basis of integration of speculative theoretical natural terms in the human life-world" should, at the same time, be identified, with the "splitting of the implica-

tions of practical reason itself in the logic of research of our constructive and constitutive natural blueprints," with regards to a "unity of social synthesis and autonomous intellect"; namely, in the prospect of a "logic of humanity" (41f.) as an "expansion" that is in solidarity with the "binding nature of practical reason" (83) also "in politics and economics" (81). Benedikt's book introduces the blueprint for such an anthropologia transcendentalis as a "concept of pragmatic reason" (14).

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**What is Social Theory? The Philosophical Debates.** Ed. by Alan Sica (Blackwell Publishers, 1998), iii + 286 pp. \$27.95 paper.

*What is Social Theory?* consists of eleven essays and an introduction by Alan Sica. The essays are as follows: "Mapping Postmodern Social Theory," Robert J. Antonio; "A Thesaurus of Experience: Maurice Natanson, Phenomenology, and Social Theory," Mary F. Rogers; "From Content to Context: A Social Epistemology of the Structure-Agency Craze," Steve Fuller; "Making Normative Soup with Non-Normative Bones," Stephen Turner; "Criteria for a Theory of Knowledge," Jennifer L. Croissant; "Examples, Submerged Statements, and the Neglected Application of Philosophy to Social Theory," Stanley Lieber-son; "Loosening the Chains of Philosophical Reductionism," Steven Rytina; "Social Order and Emergent Rationality," Michael W. Macy; "Theoretical Models: Sociology's Missing Links," John Skvoretz; "Sociological Models," Paul Humphreys; and, "Culture and Social Structure," Peter M. Blau. I mention these essays because of the richness of the scope that is provided and because they all have a common goal—to show how philosophy and social theory are historically and currently related. Collectively the essays bridge the past with the present and they symbolically and intellectually testify to the evolution of social theory; an evolution which begins with Thales and embraces some of the most important minds of the human condition.

Sica's book is noteworthy for its balance and lucid treatment of the interpretative side of the discipline as well as the more formal and

mathematical modeling of the contemporary side of social theory intellectualism.

*What is Social Theory?* is rich in its scope and depth. It is a must read for anyone who is interested in the roots and contemporary dynamics of social theory.

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**Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler's Strategy of World Conquest.** By Randall L. Schweller (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1998), x + 267 pp. \$49.50 cloth, \$18.50 paper.

Neorealism and its principal proponent, Kenneth Waltz, hold that the international system of states will be more or less stable depending on the number of Great Powers existing at any particular time. A bipolar system, meaning the world dominated by the USA and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, is balanced and inherently stable; a multipolar system is not, as evidenced by 300 years of war among European nation-states from the Peace of Westphalia to the end of World War II.

The trouble with the neorealist balance-of-powers theory, Randall Schweller maintains in his original and clearly written book, is that it focuses exclusively on the system or context in which actions take place and therefore "does not explain very much" (185). Individual actors beneath the level of a worldwide political system, such as states and leaders, are left out of the picture. Acknowledging the risks of mixing levels of causality, Schweller will try to bring them back in.

At the other extreme, traditional historical accounts of the coming of the World War II have tended to a remarkable degree to place most responsibility for this global cataclysm on the shoulders of one man. To avoid neorealism's excessive abstraction as well as the oversimplification of the Hitler thesis, Schweller goes far beyond the single case suggested in the title to propose a new "balance-of-interests" theory, describing a more complex system of international relations that allows the particularities of individual states to play a role in events. In this model, states are not merely satisfied or dissatisfied, but have five possible attitudes toward the status quo: they can be unlimited-aims revi-



sionists, limited-aims revisionists, indifferent, supporters of the status quo who accept limited revision, or strong supporters of the status quo. Great Powers are divided into those weighty enough to be considered “poles,” or true Great Powers, and the “Lesser Great Powers” that lack the population, territory, economic strength, or military capability to be polar. In the 1930s, the exclusive club included only three poles: the USA, Germany, and the Soviet Union. Britain, France, Italy, and Japan did not make the grade either under Schweller’s own calculation of national power, or under the rather similar and widely used Correlates of War index.

When Schweller applies his theory to the diplomatic maneuvering and armed conflict of 1933–45, he deduces that a tripolar system is the most inherently unstable combination of all (usually because two poles can be expected to combine against the third). Hitler recognized that the world was dominated by three major powers, and engaged in a tripolar strategy to solidify his hold on the European pole, then attack first the Soviet pole and eventually confront the American one. The main theme of the book is not, despite its title, an explication of Hitler’s strategy. It is rather the development of Schweller’s notion of the dangers of tripolarity as opposed to other aggregations, through an analysis of the foreign policies of most of the major states involved in the war. It concludes with a warning that the post-Cold War world may be only temporarily unipolar, with China and Russia possible future rivals.

Since not all tripolar combinations lead automatically to instability, Schweller elaborates further, replacing neorealism’s balancing act between states with eleven types of state behavior, including bandwagoning, binding, buck passing, and so on. Inspired by Shakespeare and Machiavelli, Schweller then creates a typology of states and divides them into nine zoological categories: wolves, lions, lambs, jackals, owls, hawks, doves, foxes, and ostriches. Instability in a tripolar system depends on the what kind of state the poles are, and on their relationship to the status quo.

The characterizations are defended with evidence, although whether they can hold up over time is another question. Churchill’s Great Britain was certainly a lion, but it was quite a different animal under Chamberlain, and the American ostrich of 1933–40 pulled its

head out of the sand by 1941. Japan here is a jackal, trailing the German wolf to pick up leftover scraps, but this view overlooks the Asian side of the war, in which Japan acted quite on its own, choosing for example to attack Pearl Harbor instead of Hitler’s favored target, Vladivostok. Exactitude aside, if a state’s type can be determined only after the fact based on the actions of its leaders, this temporary and descriptive tool is not of much use for analytical or predictive purposes.

One may raise questions about the categorization of poles and Lesser Great Powers based on a formula that evaluates their war making potential, rather than their impact in the real world. The USA was a pole in the 1930s because of its economic potency, population and territory. But did that latent potential really add up to polar influence in the critical years 1938–39? In those years, the USA ranked last out of the seven top states in military power. The UK and certainly Japan affected the course of events more directly until American entry into the war. In the conclusion, Schweller seems to argue against interwar polar status for the USA when he writes, “Great powers of the first rank [i.e. poles] must score high on all of the characteristic items: economic capability, military strength, population and territory, resource endowment, and political stability” (200).

The fact that the German pole was checked at the English Channel suggests Schweller may wish to give more weight to geography and even leadership in his calculations of true Great Power status. Of course, he has already apologized for cluttering up Waltz’s elegant theory with a lot of new factors. In the end, to acknowledge that there are yet more contingencies that affected the unfolding of World War II might raise basic questions about the explanatory power of reductive formulas.

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**The King’s Midwife: A History and Mystery of Madam de Couray.** By Nina Rattner Gelbart (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), xi + 360 pp. \$35.00 cloth.

Nina Rattner Gelbart begins her study of

Madame du Couray with a section she titles "Los Angeles and France." And her conclusion bears the title "Paris and Los Angeles." This is not because she somehow wants to weave Los Angeles of the 1990s into her biography of this woman who, starting as a Paris midwife, was to become an emissary of King Louis XV teaching midwifery skills throughout the realm. Instead, her intention is to emphasize that she has entered into a conversation with the subject of her biography, one that is influenced strongly by her own concerns and perspectives.

Rattner Gelbart presents Madame du Couray as a feminist heroine—a woman who in midlife redefined herself and in so doing created a unique role in the social and political life of her era. It is an interesting story. The early life of Madame du Couray, then known as Marguerite Le Boursier, is unavailable to her biographer, and so Rattner Gelbart's narrative begins in 1740, when Le Boursier is received officially as a midwife. From the outset her story is told in the context of the struggles of women in a male dominated world. Describing the social position of midwives in the 1740s, Rattner Gelbart writes that "no official bonding is permitted among these masterless women; they already seem conspiratorial enough. Doctors and surgeons are relieved that midwives have no recognized channels for grouping together, asserting themselves, seeking legal redress, or voicing grievances" (30).

Le Boursier becomes well known in this community of women. However, this is not the platform from which she launches her national career. Rather, at the age of 36, she accepts an invitation from a provincial governor in southern France to teach the skills of midwifery to peasant women. At the time, there was public concern that France's population was declining in numbers, and it was believed that the abominable conditions in which women gave birth was a major contributing factor. Le Boursier, although still unmarried, becomes Madame du Couray, a tremendously energetic, charismatic, sympathetic and—not least of all—politically savvy teacher.

Her work was very much in the spirit of the times. A generation before the Revolution, the *philosophes* were fervent advocates of democratic values and scientific and techno-

logical progress. The course that she developed for teaching peasant women employed a highly successful textbook and a "machine" made of bones and cloth on which her students practiced the principles they were learning. Madame du Couray made and sold hundreds of these machines. Her two-month-long programs became a kind of traveling road show as she moved from locale to locale. After a decade of work, the King charged this extraordinary woman with the task of teaching midwifery throughout France. That she achieved this position is testament to her political, public relations, logistical, and entrepreneurial talents as well as to her success as a teacher, and these skills continued to serve her well in the twenty-three years, from 1760 to 1783, that she crisscrossed France.

Relying on correspondence and other historical sources, Rattner Gelbart describes Madame du Couray's developing career in careful detail. Yet, this is anything but a dry biography. The author allows herself considerable interpretative leeway. Her feminine agenda leads her to focus now so much upon her subject's successful teaching and social endeavors as upon her feelings, moods, motivations, and strategies. Here is a typical example, chosen at random:

Calm and seemingly unperturbed, she is nonetheless not at all sure she can overcome the obstacles in theirs. Or that she wants to. Shrewdly assessing her chances, she is already sending her papers and recommendations ahead to the much bigger city of Clermont. ... It is a coveted post and she perseveres. (56)

This writing combines factual detail with psychological conjecture, and while it serves her purposes and makes for interesting reading, it will not be to the liking of those who retain a more traditional view of historical scholarship.

Viewing Madame du Couray from her vantage point in Los Angeles, what she finds to be most important is that her subject made:

a bid for glory, for transcendence ... Du Couray was a consummate shaper of reality into forms that served her better; a bold, restless, mischievous teller of truths and lies; a ma-

nipulator of her own self-presentation, a maker of her own myth. It was a perilous game, to survive and even excel out in the great world by her will and skill and unflinching inventiveness. But she was a player. (282–3)

Like her subject, Rattner Gelbart also wants to break restraints and run risks. From the point of view of traditional standards of academic objectivity, she certainly has done that. This book is as much a portrayal of a role model as it is a carefully rendered biography. On the other hand, its feminist message has become a familiar one. What matters most is to achieve success and self-affirmation in the hostile world of male dominated Western social and political life. One wonders if, when viewed from this perspective, Florence Nightingale and Mother Theresa might turn out to be have been aggressive self-promoters rather than selfless helpers of people in distress.

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**Antoine Lavoisier—The Next Crucial Year, or, The Sources of his Quantitative Method in Chemistry.** By Frederic Lawrence Holmes (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), vii + 184 pp. \$35.00/£25.00 cloth.

This book concentrates almost exclusively on a single year (1773) in the professional life of one of Western science's most esteemed members. The purpose of this scholarly microscope is twofold. First, to reconstruct the initial moments that surround the emergence of Lavoisier's famous balance sheet method, (that is, before and after any chemical operation there is an equal quantity of material). A method that had a profound effect on the history of science, to say the least. Second, to reconstruct a portrait of the youthful scientist at work. Lavoisier's travails, mistakes and successes, and the emerging realizations of the significance of his method are all resurrected in a compelling way by Holmes as he meticulously works his way through the scientist's notebooks.

It is a fascinating story, and one handled deftly by the author. In doing so he enters a

well-established debate, yet is able to wend his way successfully through the various positions. He makes use where appropriate of his colleagues' observations and seems to me to be scrupulously fair in acknowledging the value of their work even when his stance differs. The result of this is that the reader gains a thorough picture of the relation between private practice and public perceptions of science. Such a picture, as Holmes modestly notes both at the opening and close of his book, is best achieved by paying strict attention to the details of the "private pursuit of science." Specifically, Holmes is interested in what he calls the "fine structure" of Lavoisier's science. His contention is that through this kind of analysis and its juxtapositioning with existing broader interpretations, the intellectual community's knowledge of this scientist will increase rather than just change. There is no doubt he is correct in this assertion, as this book testifies.

The major source materials Holmes relies on are the first two volumes of the young scientist's laboratory registers. The author sifts through all the experiments of Lavoisier between February and August of 1773, and some relevant ones of the period September 1773 until January 1774.

The basic thematic of this is to shift the emphasis from evaluating Lavoisier's work in terms of what came after it, to what produced it. As such, this whole book is a kind of reconstruction of the forces and effects that swirled around the young Lavoisier as he set about turning chemistry on its head. Indeed, Lavoisier's rush to complete and publish his findings, accounts, as Holmes notes, for the often slipshod, or less dramatically, the unevenness of the notebooks in question. In many senses the notebooks are records of the death of an established theory by experiments, yet in this slaying the notes do not of their own produce a correspondingly unified replacement theory.

Briefly, the steps Holmes takes in this attention to detail are broached over twelve chapters. He begins by detailing the historical heritage of the balance sheet method, noting other scholars' contributions to the general understanding of Lavoisier's place in the emergence of this idea. Holmes sets up another scholar's question as the peg from which he hangs his subsequent chapters: namely, how

did Lavoisier “hit upon” the “idea of the role of air in combustion” that led him to eventually establish his method?

In the succeeding chapters, Holmes describes investigations by Lavoisier and those that preceded him. Throughout he remains faithful to the specific scientific language and lexicon of the period. His argument for doing so is to place, as much as it is possible, the reader within the scientific and laboratory ambience, so to speak, of the times. He thoughtfully provides an appendix that gives the modern equivalents of the terms used. It is a brief appendix, but is very interesting.

Armed with Holmes’ insights, it is possible for the reader to successfully hammer another nail into the coffin of the idea that significant scientists start off knowing what they are going to achieve, or divine in advance the earthshaking nature of what is to follow. This is a favorite hobbyhorse of mine so I cannot resist mentioning it. Holmes makes it possible to see that Lavoisier was not a gestalt switcher (in the Kuhnian model) or an epistemological breaker (Bachelard’s more profound notion before Kuhn), although Lavoisier work was to have a lasting effect on his discipline’s dominant paradigm. In Holmes’ lexicon: there are no full endowments; no one comes on the scene with a fully and preformed scientific genius. It is refreshing to see a scholar of Holmes’ standing take the time to make this point. Indeed, his account paints a picture of a young scientist feeling his way, learning from his errors, and growing his brilliance in the process.

What results is an extremely engaging book. I have no hesitation in recommending it to science historians generally, and those specifically interested in experimental science eventually leading to theory formation.

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**Tokugawa Political Writings.** Edited by Tetsuo Najita (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998), lxxiii + 156 pp. \$18.95/£14.95 paper, \$59.95/40.00 cloth.

Since Masao Maruyama’s renowned book, *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan*, originally written in Japanese in the

early 1940s, Sorai has been considered as the key figure who introduced modern way of political thinking by his refutation of the doctrine of Chu Hsi, the only orthodoxy in early eighteenth-century Japan. This English translation, with its lengthy introduction and glossary, tries to propose an alternative reading of Sorai as well as provide a convenient help to the general English reading public for two of his major works, *Bendo*, a discourse on the Way, and *Benmei*, the clarification of names.

Following a Weberian notion of the ideal type of modernity, Maruyama found in Sorai’s apparently primitive feudalist argument the discovery of “the political” in that Sorai distinguished sharply the sphere of public and private, and in the final analysis, insisted on the subjection of the latter to the former. For Maruyama, this autonomy of “the political” in Sorai, entwined with his political absolutism sometimes reminiscent of Machiavelli, really marked the first appearance of modern political thinking under the feudal Tokugawa regime. Sorai forged his stark theory of political absolutism, Maruyama maintained, in the face of constant but urgent social crisis caused by the steady progress of commercial society under an irrelevant feudal and military regime. Obviously Maruyama did not ignore Sorai’s rich sensitivity toward the diversity of personalities in his life as a teacher as well as in his theory of history, but Maruyama considered the latter as also part of Sorai’s political centralism, and not as the recognition of cultural pluralism *per se*.

The editor of this book agrees with Maruyama that Sorai was a crisis thinker. He declares that “Sorai’s ambivalence about Pax Tokugawa is obvious” (xlv), but it is about Sorai’s high evaluation of human diversity that the editor suggests an alternative reading. According to the editor, Sorai conceived human nature as “curiously individualized” (xxxiv). The Ancient Kings, Sorai insisted, who benevolently bequeathed the ideal Way of political and ethical living to subsequent humans, recognized profoundly “a random dispersion of variable potentialities and virtues within a common social space” (xxxviii), a structure neither necessarily hierarchical nor hereditary. Consequently, “the movement of talent in and out of hierarchy was extremely important for Sorai,” since “the survival of peaceful order depended on discovering talent” (xliv). More-

over, he believed that talent rarely came from higher classes but usually from the lower classes. To protect harmonious social existence against impending but irreversible crisis, the ruling warrior aristocracy had to “renounce the norms of military rules as being no longer appropriate,” and accept an overall reshuffling of the regime through the nourishment and selection of talent from among commoners,” thereby “unifying hierarchy and community” (xlv). Thus, instead of drastically dividing politics from morality, Sorai tried to reconcile “potentially contradictory force of practical hierarchy or the ‘vertical’ requirements of governance within the ethical community, to an essentially ‘horizontal’ and communal dispersion of a wide variety of individuals with their virtues” (xxxvii). Only in this way, could the crisis be overcome, and the whole system of society built anew on the true basis of humanity. The editor epitomizes all of these arguments tersely as Sorai’s “romantic and dynamic vision of people living and working together in a ‘human community’” (xxxvii).

Now it is clear that the alternative reading that the editor proposes is to envisage the essence of Sorai’s theory as a comprehensive moral philosophy. The discussion in the introduction that focuses on this single point is extremely exquisite and fascinating. Yet I wonder if this “romantic” image may not ascribe to Sorai, a Confucian theorist, somewhat too modern a Western character though different in kind from Maruyama’s description of Sorai’s modernity. For me as a Japanese historian of Western political thought, sometimes Sorai seems to show a similarity (if any analogy can be drawn at all) to the works of the “Mirror of the Prince” tradition in the very early modern West, such as Erasmus’ *The Education of a Christian Prince*. I must say this because the primary addressees both of Sorai’s discourse on the Way and the clarification of names were the rulers of a feudal society. I believe that the editor would not ignore the fact that Sorai always made his intention explicitly known by appealing to the Ancient Kings as the model of perfectly virtuous rulers. Given the profound difference of the languages, hence of the motivation, between Western and Eastern political discourses, it seems to me to be highly misleading to apply the word “romantic” to any thinkers before Meiji period, however commercialized the

Edo society might have been. Anyway, we must always bear in mind that, while the primary concern of Western political discourse has persistently been the liberty of people, the main focus in the Eastern tradition has been not on the liberty but the safety and welfare of people, of which even Sorai could not have been the exception.

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**Finns in the Shadow of the “Aryans”:  
Race Theories and Racism.** By Aira Kemiläinen (Helsinki: Finnish Historical Society, 1998.), *Studia Historica* 59, 320 pp.

Aira Kemiläinen has earlier published a number of books on nationalism and the Finnish nation; e.g. *Nationalism* (Jyväskylä: *Studia Historica Jyväskyläensia* III, 1964), *Initiation of the Finnish People into Nationalist Thinking* (Helsinki: Finnish Historical Society, 1984), and (together with M. Hietala and P. Suunto) *Mongols or Germans?—The Finns in the Light of Race Theories* (Helsinki: Finnish Historical Society, 1985). In 1993 (reprinted in 1994) she published her major work on the Finns and race theories, *Finns, a Strange People in the North* (Helsinki: Finnish Historical Society).

This last book, published in Finnish, included just a short English summary. The present work is a revised, and updated translation of the same work. The English version is a fine achievement for Professor Kemiläinen, and a real cultural deed by the Finnish Historical Society in making this excellent book accessible to international audience. Especially those who are interested in nationalism, race theories, and this “strange” new people of the European Union, will find Kemiläinen’s book an invaluable source of deep and wide information.

Kemiläinen discusses, applying rich and well-documented material, various theories concerning the origin of Finns, and race theories that were applied to evaluate the racial quality of the Finnish people. The major purpose is to clarify the changing picture of the Finns in anthropology and describe major features of the history of anthropology and racism. Therefore, the result gives a detailed picture of the image of the Finns in the

eyes of foreigners and the self-portrait formed in the process by the population of Finland. The book is correctly suggested as a case study in the history of race theories and racism by making the origin and racial nature of Finns to exemplify this kind of thinking (11).

A rather complex historical development of the Finnish nation located between two contending versions of Christianity (originally Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox; then Lutheran Protestant and Russian Orthodox), two imperialistic superpowers (Sweden and Russia), and later between the communist East and the democratic West, has provided an elusive basis for the Finnish national identity. Furthermore, the tangible elements of national identity, investigated by Kemiläinen in the present book, have been similarly uncertain. In fact, the unknown origin of Finns and the linguistic difference between Finnish and Western European languages have made Finnish identity a highly debated issue. Outside Finland, Finns have been often discussed in the light of race theories suggested by Count Cobineau in the mid-nineteenth century. Even if those race theories have been rejected since World War II, it is not long time back when the political race theories were applied even within Finland by some Swedish-speaking "intellectuals," who maintained that there were two qualitatively hierarchical races in Finland, those who spoke Finnish and those who spoke Swedish.

In addition to the detailed historical picture, Kemiläinen pays a lot of attention to modern anthropometric and blood group examinations as well as modern genetics in order to emphasize the fact that Finns "are old Europeans" (Chapter 8). While Kemiläinen correctly emphasizes that this new picture may change as a result of new findings, she seems to take those things perhaps too seriously. Especially in the concluding chapter Kemiläinen proudly presents her patriotic values in suggesting that the Finns are a fundamentally European nation and they should be proud of it. This is not surprising, because patriotic values are rather normal in the Finnish historiography that has been a highly nationalistic and patriotic endeavor from its very beginning as the educator of the Finnish nation and citizens. A critical scholar can be, however, fully satisfied with the rich and informative content of the book, and can fully respect the

innovative contribution Aira Kemiläinen has now provided to her readers.

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**Yeats and Alchemy.** By William T. Gorski (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996), xv + 223 pp. \$57.50 cloth, \$18.95 paper.

A fascinating study of an often neglected, though undeniably critical, influence on Yeats's life and works, *Yeats and Alchemy* offers a carefully documented application of those aspects of alchemical studies which hunker beneath the surface of a broad range of the Irish Nobel Prize winner's poetry and prose. Given Yeats's eclectic nature and his tendency to revise everything from works long in print to personal letters, William T. Gorski chose for himself a task such as Yeats often described as one "most difficult/among tasks not impossible." The path through Yeats criticism sometimes proves tricky as an Irish bog, and when the ground shifts, less conscientious scholars twist what is there to prop up a preconceived thesis. Gorski does not. He treads cautiously but convincingly through Yeats's lifelong fascination with alchemical sources to present a strong case for these as a key part of the poet's attempt to forge what he called a "Unity of Being."

Gorski makes it clear from the start that Yeats was no Strindberg bent on making gold in his bathtub, but rather an alchemist determined to remake himself: "While the metallurgical aspects of alchemy were obvious anachronisms for the modern poet, the non-material concerns of alchemy—transforming, refining, uniting, perfecting—were central to Yeats's art, thought, and life" (3). For the next 220 pages, Gorski presents, argues, and documents the role of alchemy in Yeats's efforts to achieve "Unity of Being," first through an emphasis on spiritual, then through attempts to reconcile spiritual and material worlds.

The first of *Yeats and Alchemy's* five chapters, "No Mere Chemical Fantasy," establishes ground rules for the artist/chemist: "The conflict represented here between spiritual salvation and the poet's calling, or, in other

words, the conflict between transcendence and utterance, spirit and word, will be echoed throughout this entire study" (27).

The Emerald Tablet of Hermes Trismegistus, introduced in the next chapter as "The philosophical root of Yeats's alchemical studies" (35), provides a key to the poet's druidic personae. Through close analysis of such early poems as "The Two Trees," "The Stolen Child," and "The Song of the Wandering Aengus," and, inevitably, through an application of these ideas to the early stages of the infatuation with Maud Gonne, Gorski establishes Yeats's struggle with the two worlds, one spiritual and the other material, and with man's attempts to attain the impossible. This chapter bears the aptly descriptive title: "The Poem as Hermetic Laboratory."

The third section, "Avoidance and the Void," offers a detailed study of the prose piece "Rosa Alchemica," and treats Yeats's development of basic themes familiar to any enthusiastic reader of his middle and later poems: the conflict between the narrator and Michael Robartes, the dangerous passage from the visible to the invisible world, purgatorial submission to the alchemists' furnace, and the relationship of alchemy to the dance. Both the technique of working out his ideas in prose and the themes themselves also mirror Yeats's dramaturgical efforts, though Gorski tends to touch only lightly on this aspect of the poet's achievements.

Maud Gonne dominates the next chapter, "Mystical Marriage": "During this alchemical union between Yeats and Maud we see that, at least for Yeats, something new was born out of the crucible of their tempestuous interactions" (135). But again, Gorski avoids a common trap, to give Maud Gonne more than her due: "Yeats honored Maud as a sort of negative muse, whose lack of sympathetic understanding prodded him into justifying his ways to her" (136), and proceeds rather to examine "how Yeats converted biography into art" (142), not just in such traditional "Maud" poems as "No Second Troy" and "Adam's Curse," but through a delightful alchemical reading of the Crazy Jane and the Ribh poems.

In the fifth and last section, "Philosophical Stones and the Dung Heap," Gorski "argues that Yeats continued to alleviate the dialectical tension between spirit and

matter that his early work posited" and suggests: "The key, once again, is sanctification of the physical body, of sex, of instinct, and by extension, of the entire world of matter" (161–2). Rather than struggle to maintain a separation between the spiritual and material worlds, Yeats finally accepted each as part of the other: "By granting spirit's presence in matter, Yeats develops a philosophy that is drawn from the alchemist's practice of salvaging the philosopher's stone from the dung heap" (163). Obviously "Byzantium" and "Sailing to Byzantium" offer Gorski fertile ground for illumination of his thesis, as do "The Gyres" and "Lapis Lazuli."

Except for a few passing references, application to Yeats's plays of these ample alchemical influences never happens in Gorski's book, though on point after point, my marginal notes, as I journeyed through the text, make frequent connections. But perhaps Professor Gorski plans a second study or, maybe, he simply left the door open for those of us who regularly study, teach, write about, and produce Yeats's plays, and if so, that is a door we must gratefully pass through. Already my own plans to stage *The Player Queen* as a balletic opera, mixing puppets, masks, and made-up faces, have benefited immensely in light of Gorski's challenging book. Over the past decade, no new study has driven me to reevaluate, to reread, and expand my thinking about the entire Yeats canon as William T. Gorski's *Yeats and Alchemy* has done.

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### **The Marginalization of Poetry: Language Writing and Literary History.**

By Bob Perelman (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), viii + 187 pp. \$49.50/£30.00 cloth, \$18.95/£11.95 paper.

In his book *The Marginalization of Poetry*, Bob Perelman demonstrates an impressive knowledge of contemporary modes of writing, especially in the North American tradition. He merges linguistic, psychological, and political sensibilities in his analyses of poetry writing, in order to reappropriate what literature and language arts education embody in the present day. The author states the text's objective in

relation to his thesis fusing narratives and histories across the gamut of literature: "... I am interested in non-canonical or anti-canonical sets of literary narratives where literary history is created by writers ..." (32). That is what he calls "marginalised" poetry, that is, the sort of poetic writing which has not been yet incorporated by the canon, or by the official programs of literary studies.

Perelman's book seems to aim at empowering the reader with a new vision and approach to poetry. When he questions the boundaries of writing, undoubtedly contiguous to those of reading, Perelman reminds us how personal and contingent our interaction with literature is. That is a critical perspective of poetry reading, and one which is embedded in reader-response criticism. Perhaps we could also call it a "reader-writer response" criticism, in case we intend the understanding of non-canonical literature to be treated dialogically.

*The Marginalization of Poetry* is the work of an academic who writes poetry. In itself, the dual persuasion of the writer is a complex feature for any academic text, and not always reader-friendly for the uninitiated. Whereas the title of the book suggests a political manifesto in defense of a literary genre, Perelman attempts to offer his readers a provocative report on contemporary experimentation with sounds, words, and verse, all set within a critical reflection upon "language writing." The author claims to intend his work as a critique unraveling "recent received ideas of language writing as a uniform practice" (11). Literature scholars will agree with Perelman's statement that "literary history is normally a retrospective category of bureaucratic struggle and consensus, and not a site for active writing" (11). Truly, in some academic environs, it is the history of literature that appears as the most crucial article of consumption by readers/students, rather than the literary text itself. However, despite the author's stated aim that he "wants to reconfigure the categories of literary history" (*ibid.*), readers may resent the fact that there is no clear theoretical paradigm to replace the literary history model, or outdated categories of critical analysis. Unlike other critics (e.g. Gerald Graff), who have proposed that literary theories replace historic categorization, Perelman leaves his readers with the taste of deconstruction, with little to reconstruct on. His text seems to lack a peda-

gogical praxis of a critical nature, bringing some light onto the dialectic natures of literature and history.

The chapter on "Language Writing and Literary History" encompasses some of the fundamental concepts from which Perelman develops his argument. One of the central points is the distinction made between ("hierarchical") literature and "language writing" which, although established in separate areas, are permanently entangled: "the literary arena, which finally means the social arena, surrounds and constitutes each act of writing" (14).

Perelman's definition of language is unique: a range of writing sometimes nonreferential, occasionally polysyntactic, at times programmatic in construction, often politically committed, in places theoretically inclined, and enacting a critique of the literary I—in some cases (21). Consequently, he proposes that language writing be viewed as a group phenomenon, whose "primary tendency is to do away with the reader as a separable category" (31); for writers and readers use language, whether as an esthetic completion, or possibly a struggle to make some sense of the written word/world.

A critic of literary history, Perelman questions its role and purpose throughout his analysis of the language writing movements. He acknowledges the dependence of individual achievements on social conditions. He states that, instead of keeping track of literary history, language writers make it anew: "the aim is simultaneously toward a lineage and a singular point of openness" (43-4). By focusing on the question of political identity, Perelman attempts to confront the respective poetry environs inhabited by Bruce Andrews and Maya Angelou.

In Perelman's viewpoint, in order to be linguistically, poetically, pedagogically, artistically, and politically relevant, the poem demands a learned and attentive reader. For "the more fully and finally legible a poem is, the less compelling" (55). The same applies to his text. His project aims to tackle a range of writing possibilities and issues, from orthography to taste and violence as writing motives.

Given specific treatment in this book, gender works its way through configurations of self and space in the work of four women writers. Yet, Perelman fails to distinguish any



material of these four writers as exemplary of essential, gender-charged writing. The humorous and acrimonious language used in a dramatized dialogue between poet Frank O'Hara and critic Roland Barthes "in Philadelphia" closes the book. Nevertheless, it does not settle the debate over the role of language writing and literary history in the marginalization of poetry.

A few questions linger on throughout the book. Perelman does not provide a satisfactory explanation of what he considers "marginalised" poetry; he owes readers a clearer identification of the *locus* of his concern—be it the sociopolitical context of a given country, or culture. That concept may be dangerously, or provocatively, ethnocentric. In any case, *The Marginalization of Poetry* should not be confined to the Ivory Tower of academia.

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**Between Nations: Shakespeare, Spenser, Marvell, and the Question of Britain.** By David J. Baker (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), viii + 221 pp. \$39.50 cloth.

David J. Baker's *Between Nations: Shakespeare, Spenser, Marvell, and the Question of Britain* contributes to the recent interest in ideas of nationhood in early modern England. Baker's central thesis is that in early modern England, conceptions of the "nation" and "nationalism" are far from stable; in fact, they are fluid, and the nationalistic impulse to construct and constitute an "English" identity only succeeds in yielding "hybrid" forms that draw self-reflexive attention to the term's resistance to monologic definition and cultural appropriation. There is no possibility of defining an "English" identity apart from its inextricable commingling with cultures deemed "other," such as the Irish, the Scot, and the Welsh. Baker focuses on three writers to argue out his thesis—Shakespeare, Spenser, and Marvell—giving one chapter to each.

Chapter one is a reading of how the "marginal" characters in Shakespeare's *Henry V*, like MacMorris and Fluellen, do not exist

simply as figures of difference assimilated to the controlling interest of the play's patriotic and imperial theme. Baker describes Fluellen and MacMorris as "crossliminal figures" that complicate any effort expanded to think of the play as one whose ostensible aim is to celebrate "English" greatness and patriotism.

Chapter two focuses on Spenser's *A View of the Present State of Ireland*. Here Baker relates *A View*, which he finds to be "a text compounded of divided voices, no voice predominating and no voice entirely consistent with itself," to Spenser's own "in-between" cultural identity as an Englishman who had spent many years in Ireland as a colonial administrator.

In Chapter three, Baker tackles the whole thorny issue of Marvell's political (in)sincerity. Marvell is complex not only because he managed to serve three masters—two Stuart kings and one regicide—and remained intact, but also because of the radical ambiguity characteristic of his literary production. Baker accepts as a given the ambiguity of Marvell's writings, but relates this, at least as far as "An Horatian Ode" and "The Loyal Scot" are concerned, to his preoccupation with the question of Britain and the paradoxes generated through its engagement.

*Between Nations* makes use of theoretical premises that have affinities with postcolonial criticism. Baker is undoubtedly influenced—something he himself acknowledges—by Homi Bhabha's notions of "hybridity" and "liminality," which he applies to good effect in his project. There are also features in the book that suggest ties to New Historicist practice. The history related to the Irish question as well as to James I's deep desire to bring into being the political union that is "Great Britain" is foregrounded in this study and accorded tremendous importance in Baker's reading of Shakespeare, Spenser, and Marvell. *Between Nations* is finally an important contribution to recent critical studies that employ the new historiography of the sixteenth and seventeenth century to interpret engagements with the complex definitions of Britishness very much occupying the interest of different writers in the period.

Despite the obvious strengths of Baker's very important critical and historiographical study, there are times in the book when the reader feels a strained effect in the way history is invoked in meticulous detail to

shed light on and interpret the literary text. This effect is felt, for example, in Baker's highly selective choice of two poems, Marvell's "Horatian Ode" and "The Loyal Scot," to shoulder the burden of the vast argument that Marvell's "much interrupted and dislocated political career" may be explained through the unifying theme of the poet's interest in the question of Britain. Is Marvell's interest in the meaning of Britishness of such magnitude as to be capable of reasonably explaining the dislocations marking his political allegiances and the ambiguities of his literary performance?

On the whole the book reads well. Elegantly written, sensitive in its use of historical materials, and detailed in its critical analysis, *Between Nations* must not be neglected by any reader interested in the ideas of nationhood and of the vexed problem of British identity in the literature of early modern England.

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**Marxism and Human Nature.** By Sean Sayers (London/New York: Routledge, 1998), ix + 203 pp. £45.00 cloth.

Two central types of issues are raised by discussions concerning the concept of human nature in socialist thought. The first is whether there is, in fact, a human nature beyond what is merely abstracted from the currently observable behavior of actual humans, and thus whether there is any standard of humanity by which we may "measure" the success of our current social arrangements. In other words, if humans under capitalism are alienated, what are they alienated from? The second issue concerns the malleability of human nature, and particularly whether humans can put society consistently at the very center of their concerns, rather than their individual selves. What are the continuities and limits to the evident changes in human nature we can detect across the historical record? This is an issue of great practical and theoretical significance, because it concerns the very possibility of socialism.

Sean Sayers' new book concentrates on the first of these issues. It does so by developing an account of human nature as a historical,

developing reality, but an account which can nevertheless provide the grounds for a condemnation of capitalism. Sayers draws on the work of Marx—and also of Hegel, in order to explain Marx's position better. He insists that this "historicist" account of human nature avoids the problems of either attempting to find some universal and timeless human essence, or dismissing the notion of a human nature altogether. The central feature of this account draws on Marx's vision of humans as *homo faber*: productive beings who produce and transform themselves through history. History is here the story of human self-creation.

How, then, does Sayers identify the core of this evolving human nature? He sees it as a process, rather than a destination: the process of human "self-realization." The notion is drawn from Marx, and particularly from Marx's early works which were unashamedly philosophical in style and content. "Self-realization" is related to, and dependent upon, work. Work in the sense of creative production, according to Sayers, has become integral to our nature (as has its counterpart, leisure). From this starting point, and for the first half of the book, Sayers explores the meaning of work and leisure primarily by contrast to the views on these topics developed by André Gorz. These discussions within the Marxist framework, most of them first written during the 1980s, are accomplished in a theoretical sense, and yet dated and insular.

The second part of the book defends the use of a developing and changing human nature as the basis on which to build a critique of capitalism. The enemy here is relativism. To establish the cogency of a critique which insists that capitalism is, in effect, inhuman and yet also insists that there are no absolute values, Sayers relies on Marx's immanent critique. Marx's was indeed a humanist critique of capitalism, but a humanist critique of a very particular sort. It relied on a "circuit-breaker" for its account of history. The last class, the gravedigger of capitalism and the bearer of socialism—the proletariat—was a class like no other: it was the "universal" class. It did not have particular interests, like other classes, but expressed the universal interest, the interest of all humanity. For all its neatness, this fundamental move by Marx was a philosophical sleight of hand which, furthermore, had scant

empirical basis. But it was able to act, in Marx's work, as a way of holding tensions together; the proletariat and its standpoint are the origins of many a paradox in Marxism which turn out to be simple contradictions. Sayers, too, falls for universality. Thus he accepts that the moral standpoint of the proletariat is both historically particular, and correct (117–19). There may be no absolute moral standpoint from which to criticize capitalism, but the moral standpoint of the proletariat is the appropriate criticism at the present. What this standpoint might be, and who might be authorized to develop or present it are not recorded. The proletariat appears in Marxist theory—once again—as a concept.

Sayers is an accomplished thinker who knows his Marxism and writes clearly, and this work displays those virtues. But his agenda is here so limited to debates within Marxism that, for example, we get no real sense of what other aspects, besides work and leisure, constitute human nature. It may be that work, in Sayers' sense, is the essence of human nature, but I remain to be convinced. Furthermore, Marxism does seek to have it both ways: to have accepted its claims to scientific and detached analysis of capitalism, and to be part of the struggle against a capitalism it has judged inhuman. This contradiction remains at the heart of Marxism, and no appeal to the proletariat, actual or ideal, will resolve it.

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**The Augustinian Tradition.** Edited by Gareth B. Matthews (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), xix + 398 pp. \$55.00/£42.50 cloth, \$24.95/£18.95 paper.

This collection of twenty essays is designed to remind professional philosophers and scholars in related disciplines of the continuing relevance of St. Augustine of Hippo to moral, political, theological, and literary reflection at the dawn of the twenty-first century. In general, the contributors concentrate not so much on Augustine in his own late classical intellectual and social milieu as on the connection between him and later thinkers—medieval, modern, and contemporary. The philosophical

approach adopted in the volume is decidedly analytical: Augustine tends to be treated as grist for the mill of current debates in philosophy. Among the eminent scholars whose contributions—previously published, in five cases—the editor has included are Miles Burnyeat, Martha Nussbaum, and Alvin Plantinga.

As with all such collections, it is natural to raise two questions. The first is: are the individual contributions to the volume meritorious? The answer in this instance is unreservedly affirmative. The papers here are of uniformly high quality, demonstrating the clarity, rigor, and precision which is the hallmark of analytical philosophy. Several chapters deserve special mention for exemplifying the virtues of this approach. In "Romancing the Good," Marilyn McCord Adams explores how Platonist themes drawn from Augustine shape St. Anselm's conception of God's relation to created human nature. Almost alone amongst the volume's contributors, Adams recognizes that similarities and differences in the historical settings of the two saints—for example, the fact that they both lived in "client-patron" societies or that Anselm enjoyed monastic experiences foreign to Augustine—frame their philosophical convergences and divergences.

Another chapter, "The Emergence of the Logic of the Will in Medieval Thought" by Simo Knuuttila, effectively challenges the commonplace view that Augustine was the first thinker to formulate the "modern" idea of the will. Knuuttila shows that Augustine was in some ways closer to his philosophical predecessors in antiquity than has been acknowledged. Consequently, the articulation of volition in a recognizably modern sense occurred as an outgrowth of the medieval reception and reinterpretation of certain Augustinian themes and language.

Also persuasive is Robert Holmes' claim in "St. Augustine and the Just War Theory" that we need to reevaluate the conventional ascription to Augustine of an original philosophical position regarding the legitimization of military conflict on Christian grounds. Intriguingly, Holmes teases from Augustine's scattered remarks about warfare an account that—at least in practicalities—resembles modern political realism more closely than Christian just war theory. While not disengaging

Augustine entirely from the just war tradition, Holmes does much to temper the more extensive and enthusiastic claims for the saint's principles.

To my mind, the least satisfying chapter in *The Augustinian Tradition* is Paul Weithman's "Toward an Augustinian Liberalism." It is not Weithman's basic project that is problematic. After all, scholars such as William Connolly and Jean Bethke Elshtain have already mined the writings of St. Augustine in related ways. Rather, the difficulty lies with Weithman's entirely undefended decision, in view of the supposedly "unsystematic" character of Augustine's account of pride, to employ St. Thomas Aquinas as an authentic (and "developed") spokesman for Augustine (308). Given the range of philosophical and historical differences that distance Augustine from Aquinas, it seems dubious (if not absurd) to construct a version of "Augustinian liberalism" built upon a careful reading of St. Thomas. Perhaps Weithman's paper should have been held back for some future companion volume on the Thomist tradition.

I have deferred mention of a second question that must be posed about a volume of this sort: to what degree do the parts work to form a whole? Is there some overarching coherence to the book as a entity? On this score, I fear, the answer is more negative. Plantinga's provocative opening broadside against the epistemic claims of secular philosophy and on behalf of Augustine's version of theologically informed philosophical criticism sets a strident tone that most of the other chapters fail to follow. The editor's own, brief introduction (ix–xiii) is little more than a set of abstracts of the succeeding papers, affording the reader little insight into the threads that hold the book together or the themes that unify the collection. Unlike most of the other volumes published in the University of California Press "Philosophical Traditions" series, the focus of the present contribution demands a thorough and explicit statement that is lacking. Matthews's book reads, truthfully, more like a journal "special issue" than a self-contained and cohesive tome.

For Augustine scholars, *The Augustinian Tradition* will no doubt occupy a useful place in the body of scholarly literature. Among a more general academic audience, the

volume is less likely to attract very much attention.

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**Scenes from the Marriage of Louis XIV: Nuptial Fictions and the Making of Absolutist Power.** By Abby E Zanger (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), xv + 244 pp. \$45.00/£30.00 cloth.

This is an intriguing combination of insights, drawn from semiotics, gender studies, anthropology and critical theory, into a particular historical event—the marriage of Louis XIV to Marie-Thérèse, the infanta of Spain, in July 1660. However, as might be expected, the book is much more than a factual account of that event; it is in addition, and especially, an exemplification of a method of interpreting the iconography and symbolism surrounding the marriage and the creation of nuptial fictions associated with it. These fictions, part of the political propaganda inspired and engineered by Mazarin and Louis, are produced to secure the position of the young king on the throne in the years leading up to his rule as absolute monarch. The fictions have been largely neglected in other studies of this early period of Louis's reign, situated and overshadowed as it is between the major events of the *Fronde* and Louis's absolute reign, which began shortly after the marriage. However, their position, at a junction where instability gives way to the stability of absolutism, proves to be highly significant in explaining subsequent developments. The large corpus of material generated by the marriage is listed in the bibliography and stretches over twenty pages. However, only a small selection of items is actually discussed in the book—which demonstrates that the book is more the enactment of a method than a traditional historical survey, a postmodern interpretation of a small array of material rather than an exhaustive analysis of all the data available. Although this approach could disturb some readers, the author's skill in presenting her case makes for fascinating reading and she is persuasive in her argumentation. The choice of items for examination as fiction formers is diverse, varying from almanacs and pamphlets to a treatise on fireworks and a

machine play. But all have the same purpose—to act as “ceremonies of information,” projecting a powerful image of a king in his acquisition and demonstration of power, and to show how the queen’s sexual, mortal body is vital to ensure dynastic continuity. The first two chapters present the central images of the marriage. The first chapter achieves this through an examination of almanac engravings presenting a number of representations of the king’s military triumphs, which look forward to and promise both military and matrimonial success: much attention is focused on the king’s body, healthy and virile, a guarantee of his political strength. In the second chapter, the representation of the infanta in certain pamphlets is analyzed. The symbolic value of exchanging Spanish fashion for French fashion (abandoning the farthingale), the symbolic value of her bodily excretions, suggesting a potential as childbearer (“the queen was dripping with sweat because of the weight of her clothing, of her gems and of her large cape” (*La Pompe*, quoted, 57); “The turbulent eddies such energy gives off produce the dialectic at the center of nuptial fictions” (67)) are brought out most graphically. The second two chapters demonstrate how these images were exploited and disseminated to boost the position of the king. Chapter 3 deals with the circulation of printed material, pamphlets again, concerning the marriage and examines the relationships between writers and publishers and censorship and the granting of the authorization to publish by the state; it concentrates on accounts of the early contacts between king and infanta at the time of the signing of the peace treaty preceding the marriage, and shows how the king has to be the center of attention: he “needed to fix the gaze of others on himself” (96) while the infanta, in a subordinate position, is depicted as gazing at him. The last two chapters concentrate on analyzing the contribution of other media to the propagation and elaboration of the fictions—through a fireworks display choreographed to commemorate the entry of the king and queen into Paris in August 1660 and a baroque machine play by Pierre Corneille, *La Conquête de la Toison d’or*, based on the legend of Jason and Medea, performed in the autumn of the same year, and from a different perspective, because beyond the control of the state, in the introduction to *Céline*,

a novel by Madame de Scudéry, published in 1661. The interest of the last text is that five months have elapsed since the marriage, and the author is concerned to discuss the topic of curiosity about the event: the implication is that the fictions have served their purpose, the king is taking power and no longer needs their support or indeed that of the queen. All in all, Zanger has succeeded in constructing a lively examination and fascinating interpretation of the fictions surrounding the marriage. These fictions may not be central to our understanding of Louis XIV’s reign, but they are an important indication of the way it was developing.

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**The Reformation of the Twelfth Century.**

By Giles Constable (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996; paperback edition, 1998), £17.95 paper.

Based on the Trevelyan Lectures given at the University of Cambridge in 1985, this book paints a complex synchronic picture of European religious institutions and experiences from the late eleventh century to the third quarter of the twelfth. Although special attention is paid to the various reformist movements and some of their potential underlying causes, the overall treatment does not wholly justify the audacious wink in the book’s title: the twelfth century might parallel the Renaissance just as easily as it could the Reformation, yet it also deserves understanding on its own terms. And this is precisely what Professor Constable does very well, without too many grand historical theses to cloud the issue. These 386 pages are packed with examples and anecdotes portraying a vast range of not just monastic orders of monks, canons and nuns, but also the military orders, hermits, recluses, wandering preachers, crusaders, and penitents that gave a less organized expression to the spirituality of the age. Attention to this range of characters is designed, we are told, to put “the individual religious experience in the centre, surrounded by various forms of religious life” (86). Whether or not one buys into that methodological precept, whether or not that religious center is really there or is

merely grafted onto the material, the tales of myriad individual people are certainly there, inviting us to live with the diversity rather than reduce it to theses.

Yet this discursive strength, coupled with avowedly synchronic ambitions, at times makes the going tough, producing more of a patchwork of anecdotes than a coherent progression. Individual chapters look at the variety of reformers, the types of reform, the “rhetoric” and “realities” of reform, the various types of communities, and finally the underlying spirituality in its broader historical setting. In a sense, the work spirals towards greater generality, yet the thematic zigzagging tends to confuse dialectic strands in such a way that the General Index at the end becomes one’s best chance of finding one’s way. Points are made, examples are cut and pasted to illustrate the issue, then we are often given counter examples to show the phenomenon was not universal, and finally we might be reminded that this, whatever the individual point may be, did not apply in other institutions or in other countries. Methodologically, as the chapter thematics increasingly overlap, it becomes difficult to know how any of this could possibly be quantitatively testable or perhaps just plain wrong. Is there a point at which the nonce example becomes irrelevant? In this kind of spiritual history, with individual experience as the grail, obviously not. The values of erudition, with copious footnotes and references on each page, win out over all else.

More seriously, the synchronic approach willfully abolishes national and social borders with a decidedly spiritual ease, such that if we wanted to test some more general deterministic hypothesis concerning economic development or social structures it would be extremely difficult to do so. Professor Constable is manifestly uninterested in such things, declaring at the end of the work the general point that his methodology has been making all along: “As part of human nature, and perhaps its deepest part, religion is not simply a variable reaction to other aspects of human experience” (328). The passage goes on to synthesize what is considered to be the particular twelfth-century spirituality: “the rhetoric of the recovery of lost perfection, the ideal of personal reformation, and the details of monastic life were the essence of what religion

meant as a way of expressing a commitment to God and Jesus” (328). The flavor is remarkably proto-Protestant, and typically at odds with the values expressed just one page previously, where it is rather a question of the “optimism, confidence and joyful love of twelfth-century spirituality” (327). Given the extreme diversity of all that has preceded it, coupled with the eschewal of any careful step-by-step system, such suspiciously arbitrary conclusions may belong more to Professor Constable’s spiritual interests than to the vast offerings of his historical research. This reviewer found himself reading much of the work as a rather fascinating novel, wishing that a little more chronology had been preserved for the sake of plot.

ANTHONY PYM

*Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Spain*

**Grooming, Gossip, and the Evolution of Language.** By Robin Dunbar (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996; paperback edition, 1998), 230 pp. \$14.00 paper.

The “grooming” of this book’s title is when primates leisurely go over each other’s fur and skin, picking and pinching in a practice that produces not only mutual pleasure but also social bonding. The “gossip” is supposed to be what happens when humans do much the same thing with language. And the “evolution” gets us from one stage to the other through what Dunbar summarizes as his four key points:

- 1) among primates, social group size appears to be limited by the size of the species’ neocortex; 2) the size of human social networks appears to be limited for similar reasons to a value of around 150; 3) the time devoted to social grooming by primates is directly related to group size because it plays a crucial role in bonding groups; and finally 4) it is suggested that language evolved among humans to replace social grooming because the grooming time required by our large groups made impossible demands on our time. (192)

As such, the argument draws on numerous disciplines and sets of data, stitched into a patchwork where hard evidence becomes

difficult to separate from anecdotes. For example, the data on skull sizes supports the reasonable-sounding hypothesis that the neocortex is directly related to the size of the social group, since a bigger brain is needed to remember complex social relations. And yet none of that particular relationship would seem to be strictly necessary for the further arguments that relate the sizes of social groups to the evolution of language, where the restricting factor is considered to be available time and not a limited neocortex. So whether or not we want actually to predict social group size from skull size is actually of little consequence for where Dunbar wants to lead us. Worse, when approach the thick of the real argument, the evidence for fixing the optimal social group for humans at about 150 is of the most anecdotal kind that would be more at home in an English pub. But then, not even that weak playing with numbers is really essential for Dunbar's main argument, which might yet survive his clearer absurdities.

So could human language have replaced grooming? This central hypothesis is important because it involves a vision of what language is all about; it may stand or fall on the strength of that vision. The idea that the fundamental role of language is gossip, as the social equivalent of grooming, accords priority to the maintenance of social networks, especially as opposed to what Dunbar terms the information-oriented "herd of bison down by the lake" theory (79). And since the latter theory is recognized as masculine (it enables men to hunt together), the gossip theory might as well be feminine, if not quite feminist. And this could indeed seem mildly revolutionary.

Tellingly, Dunbar makes no claim to being a linguist, sociolinguist or linguistic anthropologist. Indeed, when he makes claims such as the supposed universality of subject-verb-object order (105), one might doubt his grasp of quite basic linguistics. Further, even his main terms of reference tend to come unstuck when "true language" is apparently defined in terms of the "exchange of information" (151), so that gossip in fact creates and exchanges information about group membership, especially as concerns the exclusion of free-riders. This of course defeats any attempt to oppose information-based theories. In fact, the simple cooperation theory that Dunbar is using is already at the basis of much discourse

theory, relevance theory, general pragmatics, network theory and the sociolinguistics of conversation. In none of these areas would anyone be particularly surprised about the claim that language promotes mutual back-scratching, although some might be bemused that a researcher should recruit ideas about brains and group sizes to make the point.

In sum, this is an engaging farrago of ideas and anecdotes that brings little of substance beyond some lively interdisciplinary gossip. Yet Dunbar is not content to leave his performance on that level. At the end of the book we find a few confused and painfully pessimistic gestures at the internet and globalized communications, which then crystallize into some kind of prophetic message for the future: "communities of common interest no longer exist. We are exposed to the risk of exploitation by strangers" (202). So more gossip is apparently needed in order to keep out the invading but unnamed free-riders. Unfortunately, as Dunbar roams around from discipline to discipline, he might himself be seen as a free-rider destined to be excluded by the inner common interests of academic villages. One sometimes wonders why Harvard bothered to back the risk.

ANTHONY PYM

*Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Spain*

**Shaking the Pillars of Exile, "Voice of a Fool," an Early Modern Jewish Critique of Rabbinic Culture.** By Talya Fishman (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), xviii + 362 pp. \$49.50/£35.00 cloth.

This is a fascinating account of the writings of a Rabbi, Leone Modena, in fifteenth-century Venice. He wrote the text of *Kol Sakhel* under a pseudonym, (the Catholics were not the only ones to use excommunication as a threat to the unorthodox).

The account is interesting in that it shows that a thread did indeed exist from very early times until the present which tried to present a different picture of Judaism to that of the rabbinic orthodoxy. The author compares the work to the early manifestations of reform Jewry in Germany and traces the similarities and differences between the text of Rabbi Leone (Judah Aryei) Modena and the reform

movement which grew up in Germany some centuries later. The author's emphasis is on this aspect of the text, and not a great deal of attention is given to earlier Jewish "heresies," in particular that of the Karaites, although these are discussed.

The author has placed the context of Modena's text in what she believes to be an important aspect of the work, namely the political and social milieu of fifteenth-century Venice. I am not quite convinced that this was the predominant influence on the work, as the author maintains. She has not attempted to view the differences of the political milieu of the German reform movement and given us any indication that these significantly differed from those of the Venice of Modena's time. What similarities were there between the Germany of the nineteenth century and the situation in Venice in the fifteenth century which led to the ideas of a reform of rabbinical Judaism? A backward look at the Karaites and the way their views differed from those of Modena might also have been useful.

Another aspect which would have added to the work, is an analysis of what effect Modena's suggestions would have weakened or strengthened the hold that religious rituals have on the manifestation of the Jewish faith. Was Modena right to insist that such modifications would lead to a simplification of worship and thus encourage greater numbers to participate? Was he right in his assertion that if only rabbinic Judaism had not imposed the multiplicity of rituals on the faith, it would have eased non-Jewish conversion and led as Modena asserted, to the coming of the Messiah? Has rabbinic Judaism, in fact, prolonged the exile of the Jewish people?

Fishman has not attempted to answer questions of this nature and has merely limited herself to an analysis of the content of Modena's text, which is certainly fascinating, but a discussion of where its adoption might have led Judaism at that time or even later would have added to the work.

The book is divided into two sections. The first gives the historical background to Modena's text, an analysis of where the text fits into the traditional heterodoxy, and also a discussion on the likelihood of Modena being its author. The second section is an annotated translation of *Kol Sakhel*.

These two sections take up 160 of the

book's 362 pages. The rest of the work concerns itself with the provenance of the source, such as the date and place of its composition and the similarities of the text to Modena's other writings. Of course it is important to ensure that these matters are accurate but, nevertheless, one feels that the author could have made more of the text itself. Incidentally, she does not discuss important role played by Modena in the excommunication of Chiam Luzzato. It seems strange that Modena should have been behind Luzzato's excommunication when, as the author maintains Modena himself was treading on such thin ice.

The resemblances to the reform movement in Germany which grew up many years late are dealt with in detail, but there are other aspects which to my mind would have been far more fascinating had they been explored.

The first of these is the question of the purpose of the rabbinical strictures which the Talmud had imposed on orthodox Jewry. Are we looking at an immense number of rules and regulations whose purpose is nothing more than to make Judaism as much of a burden on the orthodox while discouraging converts, as Modena suggests? Is it possible that the Talmud and intricacies has another purpose? Neither in the case of the Karaites nor in that of the reform movement of the nineteenth century in Germany is continuity the outstanding features of these movements. Rabbinic Judaism, however, appears to continually reinvent itself and assume an ever new vigour.

Perhaps another volume might be the answer to this fascinating but limited analysis of a unique document.

MIA ROTH  
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**Darwin's Spectre: Evolutionary Biology in the Modern World.** By Michael R. Rose (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 233 pp. \$27.95/£22.95 cloth.

Darwin and Darwinism are in the midst of a popular revival, as one can readily appreciate from the number of new books on the man and his theory. Michael Rose, a working biologist and evolutionist, had a good instinct for what is missing in this burgeoning literature:



an answer to the question, “Why is Darwin so important more than a century after his death?” *Darwin’s Spectre* is a synopsis of Darwinian thought and how, in Rose’s opinion, it has influenced advances in agriculture, miracles in medicine, and the horrors of world war witnessed during the twentieth century.

Rose’s concept of a Darwinian impact on society is one of “an indirect, ‘cultural’ role” (100), an influence based in agency and discursivity. *Darwin’s Spectre* does not offer a probing, historical/philosophical analysis of science’s influence on society, but neither does it fall (too often) into the abyss of social Darwinism. Rose is an enthusiast who finds Darwinism in everything. Early on, he asserts that “Almost everything about your body that works was created by natural selection acting on randomly generated genetic variation” (74). Even while admitting to exaggeration, for example, while acknowledging that “progress could be made without identifying the genes” (103), Rose argues that animal breeders and seed merchants as well as medical and public health providers are all in debt to Darwin. Of course, Rose must turn a blind eye to certain evidence in order to maintain his point of view. Rose apologizes, for example, for “A few viruses [which] use RNA to encode their genomes” while asserting the DNA is “the basis of life” and even suggesting that Darwin predicted a genetic code involving nucleotide sequences in DNA (78–9).

If *Darwin’s Spectre* had been written in the journalistic style of “now that I have your attention ...” it could be forgiven for a degree of headline rattling. Regrettably, however, Rose wrote in a detached rhetorical style (easily confused with objectivity) and cannot be forgiven for pontificating. What is more, the comprehensive coverage of Darwinism, the reader is led to expect, never emerges from the jargon of science, and the “spectre” fails to materialize from the muddle of history. Instead, *Darwin’s Spectre* is a chimera: one part, a college-predatory crib sheet—containing everything the “general reader” (219) should know about Darwin and evolution in order to confront the ubiquitous, untutored creationists; another part, a panegyric on behalf of Rose’s doctrine of Darwinism—containing everything the “objective reader” (220) should believe while paying taxes and tithes for the support of research on evolution.

Some of Rose’s authorial crimes are merely annoying and hardly impeachable offenses, given the current level of popular Darwinism. But, as a biologist, he should never have elided heredity with the origin of species, and the domestication of plants and animals with current attempts to shape genomes to our supposed needs. Like so many others attempting to write popular science, Rose descends to didacticism (“By this point [the 1940s], there could no longer be any doubt of three basic points” (43).), and like everyone writing outside their area of expertise, Rose commits little errors (the movie “If ...,” was made at Cheltenham, not Harrow (45)) and circulates meaningless metaphors (“‘Pleiotropy’ is the glue and rubber bands of genetics ...” (72)). The reader must also endure Rose’s opinion on the trivial and apocryphal (the “three decades” that might have been gained if only Darwin had read Mendel’s paper on inheritance in peas “found among Darwin’s files after his death” (33)). Rose repeats a host of clichés (“And that’s why fluffy little puppies and kittens are ‘so cute!’” (73)), sometimes apologizing, sometimes not, and, while playing little sociobiology games, he sinks to word games (“the peaceable Bourgeois ... is an unbeatable strategy” (68)).

More damning, Rose fails utterly to extricate himself, to say nothing of his reader, from the circular reasoning dominating evolutionary theory in both the academic and popular literature. For example, by taking potshots at the “straw-man” of blending inheritance, Rose attempts to demonstrate that current genetic theory is the only theory capable of accounting for the emergence of extreme traits in the offspring of parents not exhibiting these traits. According to Rose, blending inheritance (albeit developed and maintained by Darwin himself) is erroneous because, contrary to observation, it predicts that “The extremes will be lost [from a breeding population], leaving the population with nothing but a dull uniformity” (34). In contrast, and consistent with observation, current genetic theory predicts that “Mendelian variation is *conserved* from generation to generation” (46). However, the Hardy–Weinberg Law, upon which Rose relies to draw his conclusion, actually predicts that one generation of random mating would impose an equilibrium on the frequency of hereditary

traits in a population. Taken at its Hardy–Weinberg word, therefore, genetic theory also predicts that “The extremes [may] be lost” as a population approaches equilibrium. Furthermore, just as predicted by blending inheritance, a population at Hardy–Weinberg equilibrium having “dull uniformity” to begin with will have “dull uniformity” to end with. Where does all this leave Rose’s demonstration of current genetic theory? Correctly understood, it leaves it in the midst of circumlocution, if not special pleading, but that is hardly Rose’s intention.

If Rose wrote his scientific papers the way he wrote *Darwin’s Spectre*, his work would never be published in peer-reviewed journals. Regrettably, Princeton University Press has seen fit to pass on teleological explanations (“... so that” (60) and “... in order to” (63)), and the bad currency of history written backwards (“Modern biology would be inconceivable without Darwinian theories and findings” (28)). Inconsistency does not seem to have bothered the publisher either. In a remarkable non sequitur (or throwback to Lamarckism), Rose writes, “The faster horse that can outrun its predators will tend [*sic*] to have more progeny, on average, and progeny somewhat like itself. Thus the average speed of the horses increase” (27). Later, however, the reader is told, “on average, any animal has an equal likelihood of getting there [to the goal] first, [and] the benefits are distributed widely through the population” (69). Responsibility for *Darwin’s Spectre* cannot be placed entirely at Michael Rose’s doorstep; Princeton University Press should be cited for its share of the blame. Perhaps, if the Press had not “pushed [Rose] along ... and refused to listen to [his] pleas for delay, reconsideration, or second thoughts” (ix, Acknowledgments), *Darwin’s Spectre* would have been a better book.

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**Lucretius and the Transformation of Greek Wisdom.** By David Sedley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), xviii + 234 pp. £35.00/\$59.95 cloth.

David Sedley has achieved a formidable reputation as an expert on Hellenistic Philosophy,

particularly Epicureanism, on philosophical papyri, and on ancient philosophy more widely. At the same time he is highly sensitive to literary and nonliterary use of the Greek and Latin languages. While his decision to write on Lucretius may come as a surprise to some, it rapidly becomes apparent that this is a book that is both a major contribution to the study of his author and something which only somebody with his range of expertise could have achieved.

The starting point of the book is not Lucretius’ relationship to Epicurus and the Epicureans, but rather his relationship to his main *literary* model, the Greek didactic poet Empedocles, who put into epic verse a philosophy that late antiquity regarded as essentially Pythagorean. Chapter One is in fact a study of Empedocles and his relation to Lucretius, a study that takes its starting point the traditional two-work view of Empedocles, but adopts a new rationale for allocating unplaced fragments, so that there is much that is new on this author too. Empedocles is held to have begun his *On Nature* with a hymn to Aphrodite, like Lucretius, to have included a significant amount of religious theory, and to have pictured the author as an exile from his true home, buffeted by earth, air, fire, and water, and dependent upon strife (fr. B115DK). The author’s persona he finds incompatible with that of the divine healer and magician, who has transcended his previous mortal state, found in the *Purifications*. I am less sure that the contrast implies two quite separate poems, since *Purifications* might easily be the *sequel* to *On Nature* and embrace the healing wisdom that the poet’s cosmic journey has taught him, so that their relationship might be somewhat ambiguous, like that of Plato’s *Timaeus-Critias*. However, Sedley convinces me that B115 cannot be part of *Purifications*. As the new Strasbourg papyrus shows, religious elements were found in *On Nature*, and this gives plausibility to Sedley’s thesis that Empedocles can explain seemingly religious material in Lucretius, as well as some of his chosen language. The problematic prologue of *De Rerum Natura* can now be read as a Roman–Epicurean adaptation of Empedocles’ own prologue, defining at the outset Lucretius’ place in the history of poetry.

Lucretius’ near divinization of Epicurus (5.50–1), even in a materialist universe, now

stands in a direct relation to Empedocles' near divinization of Pythagoras (B129DK), not to speak of himself (B112DK: if the speaker of *Purifications* really is Empedocles as was usually supposed, and not Pythagoras). It is hardly surprising, then, that Cicero remarked when discussing Lucretius that one who read Sallustius' *Empedoclea* could be considered a *vir* but not a mere human.

Sedley goes on to develop masterfully the thesis that Lucretius' poem is largely an adaptation of themes from Epicurus' *On Nature* I–XV, working out the relationship in the kind of detail that I had not imagined possible. He shows that suspected allusions to the Stoic school, which are scarce and nonspecific even if they exist, are plausibly due to the interpretation of Plato's *Timaeus* being proposed by Polemo, Zeno the Stoic's Academic teacher, whose interpretation also surfaces in Cicero's *Academica*. He goes on to show that Epicurus himself was indebted not only to Polemo, but also to Theophrastus' very well known doxographic work on natural philosophy. I find his arguments concerning Theophrastus the most difficult in the book, but the thesis has great historical plausibility. Eventually, then, it transpires that we can use Lucretius (albeit with great caution) as a source *not only* for Epicurus, but also for the Academy and Lyceum during the final decade or so of the fourth century B.C. when the relevant books of *On Nature* were written.

The promise of the historical theses for the history of philosophy is evident, but the book is, in the final instance, on Lucretius the Roman Epicurean poet. The historical theses help to show much more clearly the nature of Lucretius' fascinating project. As such, it is essential reading for all Lucretian scholars. The final chapter applies the findings to Book I in particular, and helps to promote a greatly improved understanding of the architecture of Lucretius' poem. It is clear that, for Sedley, the discovery of the mechanics of composition has brought a greater rather than a diminished respect for the talents of the poet, a poet who had attempted the frighteningly difficult task of posing as the inspired preacher of a mechanistic philosophy. Sedley sees the final results of Lucretian poetics in Books I–III, while maintaining that IV–VI still await the final stage of composition, so that the purpose of the account of the plague

with which the work closes has still to be indicated.

It should also be evident that an understanding of Lucretius' adaptation of Greek sources, from Empedocles' proem at the beginning to Thucydides' account of the plague at the close, enhances our grasp of this typically Roman procedure of adapting genres and their themes from the Greeks. We should pause to consider whether this book might assist us also in the understanding of Plautus, Cicero, and Apuleius, to name a few. The book comes with a generous bibliography, useful Index Locorum, general index, and index of modern scholars. It is characterized by considerable scholarship, yet modest footnotes, and it demonstrates the author's familiarity with a range of contemporary research on ancient philosophy, in particular on papyrus texts. Its progression is logical and easy to follow. It is clear where clarity is possible, but does not resist more tortuous paths where they are appropriate. It is possible to see the utility of this contribution without accepting all the theses that are argued for, yet in time I expect most of them to win acceptance.

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**Genetic Imaginations: Ethical, Legal and Social Issues in Human Genome Research.** Edited by Peter Glasner and Harry Rothman (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 1998), Avebury Series in Philosophy, ix + 140 pp. £32.50 cloth.

At a time when identification, characterization and, ultimately, sequence of all of the 10,000 genes in the human genome project are about to be completed, the reality of the ethical, legal and social issues that the project engenders must be discussed, especially in view of its possible positive and negative consequences. This book examines these issues from several perspectives with the intent "to improve the public understanding of science." However, while the intent is meritorious, and indeed, the book is very thorough in its approach to the scientific implications, it is too technical and difficult to be read with profit (and enjoy-

ment!) by the general public. Rather it addresses itself to the specialist who is already engaged in research in this area and is searching for confirmation of the social benefits of his/her search.

After a short introduction (Chapter 1, *Social Dimensions of the Human Genome Mapping Project: An Introduction*), scientific issues are discussed in several chapters outlining new directions in biological technology (Chapter 2, *Transitional Science and the Human Genome Mapping Project Resource Center*); how new information may lead to future managerial policy (Chapter 5, *Exploring Organizational Issues in British Genomic Research*); an ethnographer's use of information technology (Chapter 4, *Information Technology as an Instrument of Genetics*); the potential profound impact of genetics on clinical practice (Chapter 3, *How Weak Bonds Stick? Genetic Diagnosis Between the Laboratory and Clinic*); the moral and legal consequences of new technology for the fetus outcome and pregnant mother's decision (Chapter 7, *Moral and Legal Consequences for the Fetus/Unborn Child of Medical Technologies from Human Genome Research*); embryo research, fetal tissue transplantation and pregnancy termination (Chapter 6, *Eugenics Here and Now*) and the development of gene therapy in the USA (Chapter 8, *The American Gene Therapy Industry and the Social Shaping of a New Technology*).

Finally, the establishment of regulatory safeguards are explored in Chapter 9 (*Social Criticism of the Human Genome Programme: Some Reflections on the Limits of a Limited Social Science*) and Chapter 10 (*Signs of Life—Taking Genetic Literacy Seriously*). The "notion of a socially shaped science and technology" calls for "a wider public participation in its future development on the social agenda."

This book provides the researcher in the human genetic field with insights on the social consequences of his/her research. It attempts to alleviate the fears of biomedical practitioners about the ethical and legal dangers of widespread genetic applications to human health. It is the intent of the book contributors "to provide answers so that progress may continue in an environment of informed debate with the society as a whole."

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**The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology.** By Mark D. Jordan (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), x + 190 pp. \$14.00/£11.25 paper.

This highly original work, now in paperback, although narrower in focus than John Boswell's seminal book, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*, offers a thoughtful analysis of a collection of texts concerning same-sex love. The author, whose expertise is in theology and philosophy, begins by noting the homophobic nature of Catholic theology and states that his book is an argument about the incoherence of the theological category of "Sodomy." When Jordan wrote this book, he was an openly gay, tenured faculty member in the Medieval Institute at the University of Notre Dame and a member of an outlawed lesbian and gay group; thus his Acknowledgments include some bitter remarks about the atmosphere at Notre Dame. Jordan has since resigned from Notre Dame and accepted a position at Emory University as the Aquinas chair in Catholic Studies. Jordan's book, then, is an apologetic for gay sexuality addressed to modern Catholic theologians.

In the Prelude, Jordan states that the term "Sodomy" was invented by medieval theologians in the eleventh century. One problem is that the main terms used by medieval Christian theologians to describe sexual activity cannot be translated into modern English. Furthermore, the terms do not have constant meanings even across texts. As a result, "Sodomy," he says, "cannot be used for serious thinking," or for "rethinking what Christian theology has to say about human sex" (9).

In Chapter 1, Jordan scrutinizes three texts about St. Pelagius, a Christian slave in the court of a Muslim king. St. Pelagius was martyred at the age of thirteen because he refused to be a sexual attendant of the king. Whereas, in the first text, Raguel, an Iberian priest, spoke of unclean illicit tastes, Hrotswitha used the word "Sodomitic" in the second text. In doing so, Jordan says, she "speaks precisely, with the technical vocabulary of Christian theology" (28). The third text is a Mozarabic liturgy, an office of St. Pelagius. Here Pelagius became only a figure for resistance to worldly desire, a soldier of Christ, a noble knight.

curious sublimation of homoerotic desire” (26).

In Chapter 2, Jordan discusses the Old Testament story of the punishment of Sodom and the various interpretations of that story which led in the eleventh century to the invention of the word “Sodomy” by Peter Damian. Jordan notes that in the Old Testament, most often Sodom is an image of utter destruction, of desolation, of total divine judgment. In the New Testament, only passages in Peter and Jude associate Sodom with sexual sins, and no text links Sodom with same-sex copulation. Each of the four doctors of the Western church wrote on the story of Sodom in different contexts. For Jerome the sin was one of brazen arrogance bred of opulence. Ambrose spoke of fleshly indulgence and lasciviousness. Augustine’s interpretation was more complex. He said that the Sodomites were unclean, proud, and blasphemers. In addition, Augustine held that the citizens of Sodom wanted to rape the male angels. “With Augustine, then, we reach an explicit description of the sin of the Sodomites as the desire for same-sex copulation” (35). For Gregory the Great, his first thought was of sexual sin. By the end of the patristic period, then, Latin exegesis fixed on a sexual interpretation of Sodomitic sin. In medieval penitentials, Sodomites were mentioned as a way of designating a particular kind of sexual intercourse, but descriptions varied. Some passages merely spoke of fornication in the Sodomitic manner; other passages spoke cryptically of the Sodomitic sin. As Jordan points out, the penitentials, which are noted for their bluntness in regard to sexual matters, both conceal and reveal.

Peter Damian is the subject of Chapter 3. In his *Book of Gomorrah*, addressed to Pope Leo IX, Peter drew from generations of predecessor texts in his condemnation of “Sodomy.” Jordan points out the problems in Peter’s theology. “He seems to conceive Sodomy as a sin that cannot be repented,” (66) a conception that violates the fundamental Christian teaching concerning the forgiveness of sins. In a masterful analysis, Jordan leads readers through the maze of mythology and metaphors in Alan of Lille’s *The Complaint of Nature* (Chapter 4). In that work, Alan showed “the limits of Nature as a

guide in morals” (87). Alan concluded that one had to turn to Christian Scripture, especially to Pauline condemnations of same-sex couplings.

In Chapter 5, Jordan gives a critique of a number of guides to confessors, those of Paul of Hungary, Robert of Flamborough, Robert of Sorbonne, and William Peraldus, among others. In all these guides the confessor was told that the sin against nature was only to be spoken of with great caution. How then asks Jordan, are the faithful to be instructed about it?

The great scholastics, Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas are the subjects of the final two chapters. Albert refused to acknowledge that same-sex copulation was a medical problem. Rather, same-sex intercourse was a serious sin against grace, against reason, and against nature. In the *Summa theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas, sodomy appears within two questions on the vice of *luxuria*. As in the manuals for confessors, Thomas followed the tradition that a vice against nature could not be named; thus his descriptions of sins against nature are vague. Like Albert, Thomas restricted sexual activity to procreation, which Jordan says “seems at best quaint, at worse tyrannical” (156).

This provocative book concludes with “A Postlude after St. Ambrose,” in which Jordan summarizes his arguments and calls for a reexamination by Christian theologians of same-sex love. He states that the place of the erotic in Christian love has never been worked out. “Sodomy” is the “refusal of theologians to understand how pleasure can survive the preaching of the Gospel” (176). Although Jordan offers an intriguing and often compelling analysis, when one looks at the texts from a medieval perspective, his case is less convincing. How could medieval theologians such as Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas ignore the procreative tradition of the Old Testament, Pauline condemnations of homoeroticism, and the Latin exegeses of Augustine and others? How, then, can modern theologians ignore these same sources?

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**Redeeming American Political Thought.**

By Judith N. Shklar. Edited by Stanley Hoffmann and Dennis F. Thompson (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), xvii + 209 pp. \$38.00/£30.50 cloth, \$13.95 paper.

This posthumously published work represents a collection of essays developed around the general theme that provides the book's title, itself taken from the subject of Shklar's presidential address to the American Political Science Association in 1990 and included in this collection. It is clear from the many previously unpublished essays appearing here for the first time Shklar had begun to think seriously about this topic toward the end of her life. The editors are to be commended for the work they have put together, although there is some redundancy in the arguments rehashed in several of the newly published pieces—a deficiency, if it is one, that results from their contiguity here and that perhaps would hardly be remarkable had they appeared (assuming each was intended for publication) in separate journals over time. But the suggestion that American political thought requires redemption (here, the redundancy is advantageous to reinforcing the theme through the variations offered on it) makes the book sufficiently intriguing to invite our interest, and the essays do not disappoint. For even if one remains unconvinced that Shklar has identified the means of redemption, she has earmarked arguably a plausible path to it.

If American political thought ought not to be reduced to a single unifying theory, as Shklar argues, then it remains something we suppose to be materially identifiable in some respect. She finds this “something” in the peculiar expressions of many of our not so singular political institutions: elections, judicial review, federalism, and slavery. Because for her American political thought is grounded in, and so must be derived from, its dynamic heritage of democracy, unifying theories of American political thought cannot possibly capture or distill the diversity of Americans' experiences with these institutions by reducing the sum of these to an essentialist quality. This is not to say there are no idiosyncratic qualities peculiar to American political thought. Pre-occupation with the nature and practice of democracy, especially in the context of social

inequality, emerges as such a quality, while at the same time providing Shklar with a unifying basis for her own theoretical analysis. Even so, one is tempted to concede her point that the essence of democratic complexity, which must also include its contradictions, necessarily frustrates the temporary satisfaction of convenience and simplicity to be found in any reductionist theory.

Recognition of this same complexity should further caution against grand but limiting encomiums to America's exceptionalism or fabled past. For Shklar, idealized history and romanticized beginnings lead all too easily to the self-serving jeremiads regarding the present and to a woeful neglect of the future. Instead, a sense of memory or history, as political self-expression and self-understanding, is far more appropriate to the continuing project of freedom and equality here and now than to “ancestor worship” as the justification of authority. It is the latter that too often produces, she argues, such misguided notions as “original intent.” That she focuses in her own analysis almost exclusively on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century political thought and frequently relies in these essays on romantic literary fiction, often turning to Hawthorne's *Custom House* or his *House of Seven Gables* to illustrate her point, evinces no intellectual hypocrisy but rather the insight into the underlying responsibility of “democratic man's” commitment to the American tradition of liberties. In other words, to think about current responsibilities rather than of its imaginary past produces an understanding of history that is also the basis of democratic education, the commitment to the politics of newness and an ongoing dialogue on rights. But just as for Shklar Americans are revealed to be political creatures who look ahead rather than behind, they are no less the inheritors of a political tradition that necessarily requires a way of thinking seriously about the lives of ordinary people as intrinsically significant. In this respect, Shklar underscores the practical value of political science as a working tool of theoretical democracy and as a way of addressing the “difference” of democracy, i.e. the dignity inherent in the right to vote.

If Shklar does not yet in these essays redeem American political thought from the divergent unifying theories that have long laid claim to it, from Tocqueville in the

last century to Louis Hartz in this century, she at least coaxes us into looking beyond them into her own unifying center: the harmony between social science and mainstream ideology that produces both a philosophy and practice of citizenship. This hopefulness may be its own idealism, but these essays, taken individu-

ally or collectively, will be useful to those who wish to explore this subject more thoroughly and honestly in the hope of better understanding it.

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