

## BOOK REVIEWS

MARY FULBROOK, *Historical Theory*. London and New York: Routledge, 2002. Pp. 228. \$25.95.

Reviewed by Gary Land, Andrews University

Since the 1960s the status of historical knowledge has become increasingly doubtful. Michel Foucault and his followers have strongly argued that political and ideological allegiances fundamentally shape the accounts historians write. From an aesthetic perspective, Hayden White has taught many theorists to believe that history and fiction are virtually indistinguishable, for literary tropes structure historical narratives. Not surprisingly, other writers describe the discipline as being in "crisis" and frequently leap to its "defense."

Into this fray jumps Mary Fulbrook, Professor of German History at University College, London. Taking the postmodernist critique seriously, Fulbrook nevertheless argues that the discipline of history is different from both political ideology and fiction on the one hand and from the science that many of its practitioners have sought to emulate on the other. Advocating a middle route between these alternatives, she believes that "it is possible to seek responsible, accountable ways of investigating and representing the past" (11).

Fulbrook argues that the current debate over these issues needs to focus on scholarly communities or traditions within which historians work, rather than the background and values of individual historians. These communities have developed paradigms that in turn are based upon assumptions about "how the world works" (34). Even those historians without an interest in theory work within such paradigms. Despite the often fundamental differences between these paradigms, however, Fulbrook believes that it is possible for meaningful cross-paradigm conversations to take place.

The author suggests that history should be regarded as a "puzzle-solving" enterprise in which solutions are sought through "conceptually netted" (97) evidence. Although theory or paradigms are inescapable, "sources are the crucial bedrock of historical research" (100) and evidence can "render some interpretations more plausible than others" (121). Thus, in principle there is a dialogue between theory and evidence in the work of both individual historians and paradigm com-

## BOOK REVIEWS

munities. Responding to White, Fulbrook believes that because historical accounts are ultimately rooted in evidence we must reject the notion that history is akin to fiction. "Questions of style, and techniques of representation and persuasion must be clearly distinguished from questions of testability and truth" (161).

Fulbrook concludes that while history addresses real questions and issues it cannot escape context and theory. Because some of this theory is based on "alternative philosophical anthropologies" (174), some paradigms "are divided by vast and empirically unbridgeable gulfs" (183). She compares historical representation to a map, which is evaluated on the basis of "fitness of purpose, consistency, [and] clarity" rather than simple realism (191). Although theory is inescapable, she observes, historians can and do revise their "interpretive and explanatory frameworks in the light of new evidence." Therefore, "it is possible to say that historical knowledge is of a different order from that of fiction, myth, and ideology" (196).

Unlike many writers on theory, Fulbrook largely avoids jargon and writes clearly. Although she carefully and thoroughly develops her argument, the author occasionally lightens the tone by interjecting a bit of humor, as when she notes that nonnative German speakers may regret that theoretical paradigms change more rapidly than the rules of German grammar. In short, *Historical Theory* is an accessible work on an often complicated subject. The author also provides a useful bibliography of mostly recent significant American and British works on historical theory.

Two of Fulbrook's key concepts are thought-provoking and potentially useful in addressing the discipline's issues. First, while her description of historical work as "puzzle-solving" reminds me of Robin Winks's *The Historian as Detective*, it provides a useful metaphor for emphasizing the fact that historians address only limited aspects of the past and do not pretend to reconstruct its totality. Second, her phrase "conceptually netted" evidence deftly draws attention to the active and interconnected role that both theory and evidence play in historical research and writing. I am not sure, however, that shifting the focus from the background and values of individual historians to paradigm communities helps resolve the issue of historical truth; the problem is not where the theory or paradigm comes from but the degree to which it shapes an historical argument or narrative.

While I agree with Fulbrook that underlying assumptions shape the way that historians read the evidence but that the evidence itself tests those assumptions, I sometimes wonder whether much progress is being made in our understanding. Although written within the context of the issue of whether history is an art or a science rather than postmodern challenges to historical truth, W. H. Walsh came to much the same conclusion in *Philosophy of History*, published in 1951 and some fifteen years later the first book I ever read on historical theory. Apparently the middle road between viewing history as an empirical science or seeing it as the product of literary or political commitments is a difficult route to hold, despite its common sense appeal. Amidst the contemporary debate, Fulbrook has effectively demonstrated that historians inescapably use both theory and evidence to write accounts that relate to, but do not reproduce, the external reality we call the past.

## BOOK REVIEWS

ROGER KENNEDY, *Psychoanalysis, History and Subjectivity: Now of the Past*. New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2002. Pp. 189. \$70.00/\$25.95.

Reviewed by Gene R. Marlatt, American Pathways University

At least since the American historian Preserved Smith psychoanalyzed Luther (1906) psychohistory (or psychoanalytic history) has been with us. In 1957 the president of the American Historical Association institutionalized it by calling for the "deepening of our historical understanding through exploitation of the concepts of modern psychology." Results have ranged from reasonably responsible works by psychiatrists like Erik Erikson (Luther) and historians like Alan Nevins (John Brown) to Sigmund Freud's appalling biography of Woodrow Wilson (1940). Critics have complained about psychohistory's often rigid determinism and intrinsically flawed extrapolations of normative patterns from a study of neurotic behavior. Freud's most trenchant American detractor, University of California-Berkeley English professor Frederick Crews, spoke for many when he charged that psychoanalytic concepts like free association, symbolic dream interpretation, female masochism, and transference are pseudoscientific.

Psychotherapist Roger Kennedy, lecturer at London's Imperial College, enters the debate by claiming that his interest is not psychohistory—"the application of psychoanalytic understanding directly to historical figures or situations" (1)—but that psychoanalytic historiography should be done and how it should be deployed. He is candid that he is also rebutting the "current fad" of "Freud bashing," in particular Crews's attack on recovered memory theory. Such criticism, Kennedy maintains, "wipes out the complexities and subtleties of psychoanalytic thought, including the multilayered way in which past and present interact;" indeed, recovered memories therapy "is more relevant" to historical research than the work of "positivist" historians (8).

Kennedy rejects the "positivistic" historiography of scholars like E. L. Carr, who he incorrectly charges believes historical narratives can exactly mirror past reality. This criticism is to be expected given that Kennedy's self-confessed mentors are the Greek sophists, the historian Hayden White, Hume, Nietzsche, Foucault, Derrida, the post-structural psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, and "above all" "the real Freud" (6, 88, 98-99, 101-10). Nonetheless, he claims to eschew the "extreme" postmodernist position of Richard Jenkins, for whom history is a "verbal artifact, with no real foundation beyond the textual" (113). He prefers Richard Evans's "middle" ground that there are real past events even though "they will never be known in every detail," that documentary evidence is vital to historical research provided its limitations and ambiguities are also recognized, and that historians might actually understand past events better than those who lived them (168, 114-16, 6, 54). In fact, however, Kennedy is much closer to Jenkins as indicated in statements like "there are no facts, only interpretations," "one can never fully know what has happened in the past," and "facts do not speak for themselves, the historian speaks for them" (126, 159).

Kennedy's model essentially rests on the proposition that "historians, like the psychoanalyst, find meanings in the events that were hidden to those witnessing the events. Meaning is created as a story unfolds" (126). Practitioners in both dis-

## BOOK REVIEWS

ciplines determine the facts, give “causal explanations for them,” and identify what “the human situation meant to those involved in it, what their outlook was, by what rules they were guided, what presuppositions were entailed in what they said” (88–89). So far this sounds like the positivist historiography he criticizes. He departs from the positivists by using “pathogenic memories”—“restored links to the past”—to produce liberation for the patient and the culture “from the burdens of [positivist] history.” Kennedy also endorses postmodern research techniques like deconstruction, multiple viewpoints and realities, diversity of interpretations, history as quarry to be mined, and discontinuities, and the “notion that subjects can recognize themselves in the stories they construct as well as in the fragments of daily life.” Kennedy is determined to recapture the concept of “subjectivity” that he believes has been unwisely deemphasized by clinical psychoanalysts and postmodernist historians for whom the “subject” is only an elusive, irrational, fragmented, unaware, unconscious, disunited, self-deceptive multiplicity. Conversely, Kennedy claims that the “real Freud” neither abandoned the subject completely nor ceased to believe that rational reflection can lead to personal and cultural liberation (4–5, 75–77, 164). Thus recovered, the subject and human subjectivity have “many resonances:” “The subject of discourse, the one who speaks, the subject of a story or narrative . . . a relationship to an object,” the conscious mind and the unconscious, the “elusive self,” and documentary data. The result of these tactics produces a postmodern view of history as a “succession of shifting layers, as fragments of living reality, where, as in the unconscious of the individual subject, distinctions between the past and the present may be blurred” (5–6, 166).

To illustrate the model Kennedy tells of a Holocaust survivor who testified that she saw “four chimneys going up in flames, exploding” during the Auschwitz uprising. When historians discovered that only one chimney had been destroyed, they were horrified: If she was wrong here, who could believe anything else she remembered? Their fears were unfounded, Kennedy responds, because out of her unconscious memory “she was testifying . . . not to empirical historical facts about what really took place, though something amazing did take place, but to the very secret of survival, and of resistance of extermination”—a truth that the factual “one chimney” could not convey (162–63).

There is much to critique. Despite his disclaimer, Kennedy is a philosophical relativist and hence open to the criticisms that that epistemology warrants. He uncritically uses such questionable tomes as Foucault’s *History of Madness*, which suggests that psychoanalysts writing history need to be trained historians and conversant with the literature in the field, such as historian Keith Windschuttle’s destruction of Foucault’s *History*. He quotes scholars out of context: For example, analytical philosopher Arthur Danto, who maintained that “history maintains truth stories,” is cited to support historical relativism. Kennedy often lapses inconsistently into quasi-metaphysical grand narrative—“history is ultimately about such acts of [Holocaust] survival”—that he eschews (162–63). The psychoanalytic case studies he employs to demonstrate the viability of the model are ambiguous, are far from compelling (31–48), and they illustrate that a historian should not practice psychohistory unless she is also a thoroughly trained psychoanalyst—dilettantes should not apply.

## BOOK REVIEWS

Kennedy writes well and clearly. Even so, much of the book might be arcane to many, including most undergraduates. Conversely, historians and graduate students specializing in intellectual history could find the book stimulating. As the ultra-critic Crews admits, there are promising aspects of psychoanalysis—multiple significance, ambivalence, identification, projection, the unconscious mind—that historians who are also trained psychoanalysts might employ with salutary effect, if they follow Kennedy's dictum that "the complex multiplicity of life" does mean that evidence for a viewpoint is unnecessary (75). Finally, psychohistorians must guard against dogmatism. In what may be a reflection of his own experience—a little deconstruction here—Kennedy wisely cautions against the "terrorism of ideas," with "one faction claiming their view of an idea is the only one, and that their followers have made the crucial discoveries which in fact have been made by a whole lot of different workers" (75).

NORMAN F. CANTOR, *Inventing Norman Cantor: Confessions of a Medievalist*. Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2002. Pp. 241. \$28.95.

Reviewed by Mark Steinhoff, Liberty University

A sequel to his insightful *Inventing the Middle Ages*, Cantor's *Confessions* offers an intimate revelation of his life as teacher, administrator, and author. This reviewer found more compelling analogies to Abelard than to Augustine. Like that twelfth century *enfant terrible*, Cantor's misfortunes transformed him from a gentle knight of Camelot to self-styled cynic. But, as we might expect from this author, the mask illustrating the book's cover surely implies irony and perhaps an abiding belief in the value of medieval studies.

Success coming too early can spoil a scholar. Cantor was the youngest person to get tenure in Columbia's history department and his medieval text got rave reviews in 1963. Reminiscent of Abelard again was his strained relationship with his mentor Strayer at Princeton, his falling out with R. W. Southern at Oxford, and his scathing review of Kantorowicz's *The King's Two Bodies* after which he never again heard from his friend. His interaction with his teacher of diplomatic history, Kathleen Major, amounts to teacher-insulting. In this "Cantorbury Tale" (the phrase is Robert Bartlett's) pride causes him to overreach at times—in attempting *The Sacred Chain*, *A History of the Jews*, for example—but it does not keep him from exposing Abelardian psychological hang-ups (like restlessly moving from place to place) that stymied his *magnum opus*.

Through the prism of his own life, Cantor traces the metamorphosis of American academia from British humanism to Francophile postmodernism. The former featured a text-based liberal arts curriculum, was empirical, rationalist, and romantic, largely research-driven and dominated by males. Princeton in the 1950s epitomized its highpoint and Cantor paints revealing portraits of five mentors, proverbial giants on whose shoulders he stood: Strayer, Mommsen, Harbison, Weitzmann, and Kantorowicz. Through their disciples they made America's leading universities the envy of the world. At Columbia (where Cantor taught from 1960–63), Berkeley, Yale, and Chicago a new academic culture was emerging which

## BOOK REVIEWS

was subjective, relativist, neo-romantic, interdisciplinary, and increasingly feminist. Reflecting on his attempts to blend old and new (by inspiring student rebels, radicalizing the curriculum, and hiring leftists), Cantor admits that some of the seed bore poisonous fruit. He reacts apoplectically to the leftist take-over of academia and especially to his arch-nemesis at Princeton, Lawrence Stone who he charges is "a Marxist and a Nihilist" (139).

In his second career Stormin' Norman claims that he was "the Ted Williams of university administrators," but that he was unjustly fired as Dean of Arts and Science at New York University. Speaking truth to power can indeed be dangerous. He alleges that leadership of American universities has passed from activist deans to faculty icons like Stone. "Nineteen times out of twenty (at least) in the humanities departments at leading universities today academic freedom means the appointment of a leftist." Allegedly Presidents have surrendered and many of the faculty, especially younger members, appear to be "immersed in a cargo cult" assenting to "any conceivable leftist dogma," (196, 194).

Who else today can bend the bow of Edward Gibbon? Cantor's eighteen reader-friendly books (including the all-time best selling medieval survey in America) targeting a general audience, have made him "a minor brand name in the book trade." He gleefully exposes the evils of over-specialization. "Ninety-eight percent of academic writers on the Middle Ages . . . just write for the scholars" who Cantor claims amount to "at most five hundred people world-wide," (225). The Abelard in him surfaces with his comment that, "There is no pleasure greater than receiving a substantial royalty check. It is better than sex" (203).

Forty years after I was first captivated by his teaching, Cantor still challenges me to think—for instance, with his observation that postmodernism isn't only a leftist phenomenon but "can be compatible with rightist ideas" (205). Another lesson he taught as a Jewish immigrant from Canada was that "You have to be much better than the Gentiles if you want an academic appointment" (223). Evangelicals in a post-Christian world should be inspired by his *chutzpah*.

ANDREI A. ZNAMENSKI, TRANS. AND ED, *Through Orthodox Eyes: Russian Missionary Narratives of Travels to the Dena'ina and Ahtna, 1850s–1930s*. Rasmuson Library Historical Translation Series, 13. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2003. Pp. xiv + 346. \$27.95 (paper).

Reviewed by Sharyl Corrado, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

## 132

Both religion in American life and the relationship of religion and empire have been important topics of historical study, resulting in a large volume of scholarship on Protestantism in the U.S., and on Catholic and Protestant missionaries abroad, spreading Christianity and European values throughout newly-conquered territories. This book, however, provides a unique perspective on both areas, a translation of reports and travel journals of Russian Orthodox (rather than Protestant or Catholic) missionaries in Alaska, which by 1867 was no longer part of the Russian empire at all. For those interested in religion in American life, the book provides a valuable description of native Orthodoxy, a religion which the reports

## BOOK REVIEWS

demonstrate was viewed as truly indigenous, in opposition to the foreign faith of American whites. To support this assertion, translator Andrei Znamenski describes a 1998 conversation with an Alaskan informant lamenting the secularization of native youth: "All turn into white people. . . . These people here don't know what's an icon, they're white people" (1). The narratives Znamenski translated describe the relationship of Orthodoxy and native values, as the Christians formed mutual aid societies, maintained local chapels, and remained faithful despite the infrequency of priestly visits. By the 1930s, however, Orthodoxy appeared to be following a pattern of secularization common in American religion, as the priest described the decreasing size of his flock, neglect of chapels, disinterest in religious societies, and poor attendance at parochial schools. Nonetheless, the Dena'ina remained nominally Orthodox. How familiar is Fr. Pavel Shadura's 1921 statement that, "in all fairness, the majority of the natives still visit the church regularly, fulfill their Christian duties and believe in God. But in their daily life they are far from being Christians" (272).

The book is equally valuable for its portrait of the missionaries themselves, and how they viewed their role in spreading the values and faith of their Russian homeland. During the early days of the mission, when Alaska was part of the Russian empire, one notes with surprise the frequent conflicts between missionaries and Russian miners and traders, ostensibly their partners in the colonization process. In 1853, missionary Nikolai Militov complained that "missionary instructions are frequently weakened by the inappropriate activities of the Russians who work for the [mining] company" (74-75), and the company put its own interests first whenever profits were at stake. Clearly in Alaska, missionaries' goals went beyond the Russification and financial profit assumed to be behind them. Yet later missionaries complained equally about the bad influence of American settlers, many of whom took native concubines in opposition to the missionaries' teaching. Nonetheless, missionaries taught their students, now U.S. citizens, English, and included the president, as well as the tsar, in their prayers. "Good Americans" were included in the memoirs as well, however, as settlers took Orthodox wives, supported chapel construction, or even sent their mixed-blood children to Orthodox schools. It is interesting to note that, despite the well-financed missions of American Protestants, the natives remained Orthodox, as many do to this day.

It is difficult to critique a book of this nature, as it is not the scholar's place to determine what nineteenth-century priests should have written in private journals, nor to question their perceptions, experiences, and emotions in a land far from home among people they considered savage and uncivilized. Nonetheless, it is worthwhile to consider how the book is best used today, and in which areas it may be lacking. Authors' biases aside, the reports provide rich detail on the lifestyles of native Alaskans, including food supply, transportation, livelihood, weather, housing, marriage, shamanism, and relationships to both Russian and American settlers. We learn of the hunger natives faced when American fish canneries depleted rivers of their main food supply, and of the impact of vodka, introduced by the Russians, on the natives. They provide rich detail on the hurdles faced by missionaries themselves, including harsh weather, remote distances, insufficient

## BOOK REVIEWS

financial support, and what seems to be the ever-present toothache. As discussed above, the memoirs provide valuable insights into native Christian life. Yet the voices of native Christians are almost exclusively lacking. The attitudes and experiences of translators, readers, song leaders, deacons, teachers, and guides, so crucial to the missionaries' success, have simply not been recorded. In addition, we must remain aware of the purpose for which these reports were written—almost always to superiors with the hope of securing financial or other support. Hence we find an emphasis on extreme hardships and difficulties, as well as likely exaggeration of the missionaries' success. It is only through Znamenski's thorough research that we learn that Hieromonk Nikita, whose report focuses on weather and health problems, was himself prone to heavy drinking, for which he was reprimanded and recalled to Russia. He refused to comply (19).

While published in Alaska as part of a series on local history, the book provides data of interest to all who study American religion (particularly native religion), missions, popular Orthodoxy, and the settlement of the U.S. West, and could be recommended to students as a unique primary source, now available in English, in any of the above fields.

M. C. LEMON, *Philosophy of History: A Guide for Students*. New York: Routledge, 2003. Pp. 461. \$90.00/\$27.95.

Reviewed by Nancy Erickson, Iowa Wesleyan College

Written as a guide for historians, M. C. Lemon's *Philosophy of History* provides a comprehensive survey of the philosophy of history from classical Greece and Rome to the present. The text has a dual purpose: to provide a map to steer the reader through the abundance of philosophical information related to the discipline of history, and to examine contemporary approaches to the study of history.

The volume begins with a chronological discussion of "speculative" philosophy of history and ranges from the pre-historic period to the advent of Marxism. "Speculative" philosophy of history is defined by its outline of a universal concept of history that may be linear with a definite beginning and end or cyclical as in the case of rise and fall literature. It gives a very broad view of its subject and generally considers human nature as a constant. Speculative philosophy of history is concerned with content and interpretation. It tries to make sense of things. It deals with questions such as "What is the meaning of human life?"

134

Analytical philosophy of history (addressed in Part II), on the other hand, addresses questions such as "What is history?", "What is a fact?", "Why should we study history?" Analytical philosophy of history considers the ways historians work and think. It attempts to define historical truth and determine if the way a historian approaches truth is different from the way a scientist would approach it. Is there such a thing as objective history? Or, is the historian always an inseparable part of his work? In studying history there are two primary objectives. We study history either to study it "for its own sake," or we do it "to achieve some (external) objective" (356). Lemon suggests that that question be left open because there are a variety of reasons for studying history and who is to say which is the right one.

## BOOK REVIEWS

The third and final part of this study is entitled, "The end of history?" and it surveys postmodernism and Francis Fukuyama's speculative philosophy of history. Postmodernism has many faces but it rests on the challenge to our perceptions of how we represent reality. Some deny the existence of "objective reality" and others deny the existence of reality. There is particular issue with the idea that reality can be represented through language. If this position is accepted it would be difficult, if not impossible, to advance truth through the study or writing of history—thus the contention, by some, that history has come to an end as far as it is currently practiced. Its claims cannot be substantiated.

Fukuyama would advocate the return of speculative philosophy of history because we live in a time when we need to rediscover meaning in human existence. In the twentieth century the world was dominated by wars, depressions, the Holocaust and communism, and the pessimism that all of this engendered resulted in an abandonment of the attempt to find meaning in history. By the end of the twentieth century Fukuyama believed we were approaching a "world-wide liberal revolution" (391). This leaves us ready for a new approach to a speculative philosophy of history. Where the postmodernists call for a complete revision in methodology of historical study, Fukuyama sees the way history is currently practiced to be valid. He would say that events of the twentieth century have proved that there is an overall logic to history and "freedom" is what allows us to achieve "human nature" characterized by "desire," "reason," and "respect." History is progressive, it is not cyclical. In the sense that history has come to an end for Fukuyama it is because we have fashioned a world in which our desires can be realized. Thus, for him, we have achieved the consummation of history.

Throughout this book Lemon is challenging historians to think about their craft and revisit the works of the philosopher/historians who have attempted to make sense out of human existence since ancient times. He addresses those philosophical issues that would be of most interest to historians. While he admirably summarizes the views of a wide range of individuals he does not try to draw conclusions from their work. He leaves the most pressing questions open, allowing for individual reflection and interpretation.

This volume is most appropriate for graduate students and professional historians who already have a broad knowledge of the sweep of history, as the book assumes a greater academic background and more substantial vocabulary than most undergraduates would command. It is interesting, although somewhat slow reading, certainly to be recommended to those who are working in the field.

135

WENDY GAMBER, MICHAEL GROSSBERG, AND HENDRIK HARTOG, EDs., *Public Life and the Historical Imagination*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003. Pp. 320. \$45.00/\$20.00.

**Reviewed by Robert J. Eells, Spring Arbor University**

The editors dedicate this book to their mentor, Morton Keller, now Professor Emeritus at Brandeis University. Professor Keller's field is American history, especially

## BOOK REVIEWS

the late nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries. Keller is the author of numerous books, of which *Affairs of State* (Harvard, 1977) is particularly noteworthy.

The editors believe, as do all the other former students of Keller who contribute to this anthology, that their mentor has, in fact, pioneered a new field of studies—Public Life—that should be recognized as a distinctive addition to American historiography.

Unknown to the book review editor, I was also briefly a student of Professor Keller. In 1985 I was one of twelve undergraduate professors working with Dr. Keller as he directed a seminar at Brandeis sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities. I already knew something of the breadth of his knowledge and of his grace as a teacher.

To accomplish this task twelve essays are presented under three major headings: “Pluralist Methods and Contexts,” “Identities,” and “Institutional Experiences.” They cover an impressive range of topics: for example, what it means to think like an Indian, the meaning of pluralism, the definition of marriage, the role of women in the national economy of the late nineteenth century, baseball as a metaphor for U.S.–Canadian relations, the emergence of child protection laws at the state level, and the uneasy relationship between the Anti-Saloon league and the Ku Klux Klan.

At first glance, the subjects remind one of “American Studies,” but all these authors are historians and wish to remain within that discipline. They are careful to acknowledge the insights from more traditional fields and sub-fields of American history but also feel constrained by the limitations of existing categories. Difficult as it is to define Public Life and its intimate connections to culture and politics, the editors make the following attempt:

The common commitment . . . is to a complicated and multilayered conception. . . no single methodology or overarching synthesis emerges from these pages. This is not a cause for lamentation. Rather, it is a testimony to the scholarly potential of public life and the richness of the historical imagination.

All of the essays do, indeed, reflect the above commitment. The authors are especially keen to distance themselves from traditional explanatory models—like distinctions involving terms such as public/private, progressive/conservative, and revisionist/post-revisionist. The essays are multifaceted and innovative in both their examinations and conclusions.

Understanding “pluralism” is key to historical knowledge for the authors. Especially helpful, therefore, are the essays included in the section “Pluralist Methods and Contexts.” None of the contributors here believe that pluralism is an abstract theoretical model; rather it is a political and cultural reality that emerges from empirical investigation. Pluralism is a process that recognizes diversity everywhere, also in causation and explanation. Thus, Frederick Hoxie shows from the historical record that there are many ways to think like an Indian; William Novak concludes that the state in America has always been a pluralist institution, a mixture of public and private concerns and forces; and James Connolly notes, ironically, how Progressivism actually created the conditions necessary for ethnic and political pluralism.

## BOOK REVIEWS

Most of the other essays are equally stimulating. How satisfying it is to picture, as does Beth LaDow, international relations through the lens of baseball, a game without a clock, where there's plenty of time to reflect on cultural similarities and differences. How jarring it is to rethink, thanks to Thomas Pegram, the awkward alliance between two "Christian" organizations—the Klan and Anti-Saloon League—as they both fought to transform America in the 1920s.

Their combined efforts are largely successful. It is a fitting tribute to a significant historian. Only time will tell if *Public Life* will have a life of its own.

My only reservation is a philosophical or theological one. Pluralism also has to be understood as a process that exists in a normative world, in other words, a world that is itself responding to norms. Without this awareness *Public Life* and everything else can collapse into cultural relativism. Perhaps some of Keller's students can address this problem in future studies.

MARGERY POST ABBOTT, MARY ELLEN CHIJIJOKE, PINK DANDELION, AND JOHN W. OLIVER, JR., EDs., *Historical Dictionary of the Friends (Quakers)*. Historical Dictionaries of Religions, Philosophies, and Movements, no. 44. Lanham, Md. and Oxford: Scarecrow, 2003. Pp. 432. \$80.00.

Reviewed by Jeffrey B. Webb, Huntington College

This volume takes its place among others in the series *Historical Dictionaries of Religions, Philosophies, and Movements* from Scarecrow Press, a Rowan & Littlefield imprint. It is the collaborative work of a team of scholars with extensive experience in Friends organizations and in the field of Quaker scholarship. They have provided an efficient reference tool for libraries, denominational offices, and scholars of religion, which will remain the standard for the coming generation. No serious library will be complete without including this dictionary in its collection.

Abbott, Chijioke, Dandelion, and Oliver give the researcher a book that belies its title. The cover advertises a "historical" approach to the people, institutions, and doctrines of Quakerism, and yet the content has a surprisingly contemporary feel. Indeed, entries in the dictionary help the reader to comprehend the background of issues that remain alive within the Quaker community and the larger Christian world of which they are a part. To cite one of many examples, the entry for "Trinity" (285) offers an explanation for the historical resistance of Quaker leaders to appropriate the term (essentially because of its lack of "primitivist" connection to the apostolic age), with appropriate quotations from George Fox and William Penn. But then, the entry moves forward to explain how modern Quakers have come to resonate with Trinitarian thought through the idea of three-fold "witnesses in heaven": Father, Word, and Spirit. Many other entries exhibit this admirable combination of historical coverage and contemporary relevance.

At times, however, this editorial vision detracts from the effectiveness of the volume. Looking for particular concepts, for example, can be frustrating, if you have in mind the seventeenth- or eighteenth-century usage. A researcher who requires a historical explanation of the evolution of "Public Friend," for example, will not find an entry devoted to this purpose. Instead, "Public ministry"

## BOOK REVIEWS

is folded within a larger entry on “Ministers” (178) which itself contains no explanation for how “Public Friend” evolved within a community that practiced radical spiritual egalitarianism from its inception. When I searched for other distinctive Quaker practices, like “naked as a sign” and “sense of the meeting,” I met with similar frustrations. For that matter, it is hard to imagine a reference work on historical Quakerism to be complete without an entry on Joseph Besse and the *Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers*, which provided the Quakers with a sense of historical and collective identity in the increasingly complex world of eighteenth-century Britain.

To focus on this shortcoming is to miss perhaps its greatest asset, which is not its treatment of topical or thematic subjects. What is truly impressive, and unique to this reference work, is the coverage given to Quaker leaders throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, especially leaders from outside the traditional British-American-Canadian milieu. *Historical Dictionary* bristles with names of Quaker missionaries to South America, Africa, South Asia, and elsewhere. It documents the rise of a native-born Quaker leadership, as seen in the figures of Josiah Embego (89) of Kenya and Ham Sok Hon (125) of South Korea. To be sure, Lucretia Mott (186), Margaret Fell (101), and Isaac Pennington (215) get their due—as does the “best known Friend in the twentieth century,” Richard Nixon (197)—but clearly the editors have in mind a volume that embraces global Quakerism in all of its breadth and complexity. This alone sets the volume apart from previous efforts to comprehend the extent of the Quaker movement.

Other benefits of *Historical Dictionary* are clear to see, even upon the most cursory examination. For the serious researcher, the bibliography alone would be worth the cover price, with more than six hundred individual citations and a very efficient topical arrangement for easy navigation. Yet, general readers will appreciate the extraordinary discipline of the editors, which results in concise, easy-to-digest entries. One can imagine the temptation the editors must have resisted to go beyond the current two pages for the entry on George Fox (105), to give merely one example. Overall, the editors have set a high standard for succeeding collections that aspire to document the varied currents that shaped Quaker belief and practice.

JOANNE MEYEROWITZ, ED., *History and September 11th*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003. Pp. 2731. \$61.50/\$19.95).

138

Reviewed by Stephen P. Hoffmann, Taylor University

The title of this book is the same as that of a special issue (September 2002) of the *Journal of American History*. This volume reprints all the papers in that issue and adds an introduction, an afterword, and twelve primary source documents. A strong interest in pedagogy and in reaching an audience beyond professional historians distinguishes the publisher of the *JAH*, the Organization of American Historians, from the American Historical Association. Accordingly *History and September 11th* is aimed at teachers and students. That we need history to make sense of the present and that policymakers pay less attention to history than they

## BOOK REVIEWS

ought are truisms cited in the introduction as the reason for this book. Contributors were asked to provide essays “with deeper research and greater intellectual engagement than typically found in newspapers and magazines” (1). This collection succeeds to some extent in addressing the fundamental question posed by Fareed Zakaria better than he could within the confines of a magazine feature article (“The Politics of Rage: Why Do They Hate Us?” *Newsweek*, 15 October 2001). However, loose organization, unfortunate timing and a rather tendentious tone in the introduction and afterword limit this book’s value as a source of background and interpretation.

Four of the chapters undertake to show the roots of opposition to U.S. government policy in particular parts of the Middle East: Afghanistan, Turkey, and the Arab world in general. Another four focus more broadly on the predilection to conceive of (and to justify) American foreign policy moralistically in terms of grand ideological or civilizational struggle. Three others treat a variety of subjects: compiling an oral history of memories of the 9/11 attacks, how religious fundamentalists read history, and the relationship of George W. Bush’s foreign policy to previous presidential doctrines concerning the Middle East. Each of these chapters has something interesting to contribute, but it would have been helpful if they could have been categorized into sections, such as one devoted to interpretations of U.S. foreign policy strategy during and after the Cold War and one incorporating case studies illustrating conditions affecting the development of that strategy or its implementation. It is, of course, no fault of the publisher that *History and September 11th* was completed prior to the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Fundamental to the debate over that action and what it signifies about the trajectory of American foreign policy is whether or not it was justified as part of the response to Al-Qaeda’s attacks on New York and Washington. A chapter or two on Iraq would have made this book even more useful in putting 9/11 in perspective.

The twelve (mostly excerpted) documents that constitute the book’s appendix are very useful for teaching. The collection is eclectic, including presidential statements by Jimmy Carter and George W. Bush (but not, unfortunately the September 2002 “National Security Strategy of the United States”—popularly known as the “Bush doctrine”); excerpts from the 1919 King-Crane Commission report on the future of Palestine and from a December 2001 Pew Foundation survey of foreign attitudes toward the United States; Samuel Huntington’s statement of his “clash of civilizations” thesis; Laura Bush’s address to the women of Afghanistan; Osama bin Laden’s justification of September 11th; and a 1960 call for Islamic revival by the Egyptian Sayyid Qutb, the intellectual father of contemporary radical Islamism. However, introductory notes link each document to one of the chapters effectively and pose interesting questions for discussion.

There are many insights to be gained from the contributors. For example, few people know about the extensive and ultimately unsuccessful American efforts at “nation-building” in Afghanistan (epitomized by the TVA-like Helmand Valley Authority) for some thirty years prior to the Soviet invasion. Two authors remind us of the significance of the Iranian revolution and the related hostage crisis for the course of events in Iraq and for the salient role anti-terrorism came to play in U.S. foreign policy. More questionable contributions include rather dismissive criti-

## BOOK REVIEWS

cisms about the often insightful work of Huntington, Thomas Friedman, Bernard Lewis, and Robert Kagan, and also suggestions that the U.S. government's moral and political justification for military action amounts to little more than using ideals and fear of "the other" to mask a selfish imperialism.

A good teacher should introduce students to complexities that cause them to examine their prejudices. However, it is all too easy to discourage them from making judgments because things are complex or because "objectivity" precludes judgment. Therefore a teacher has good reason to take a strong position as a model for encouraging students to come to a conclusion or make a commitment. The trick is how to model judgment while fairly representing alternatives and without discouraging ongoing reflection on the judgments that are made. *History and September 11th* concludes with the strong suggestion that the authors of the volume do not share the "mad and doomed" (217) vision that underlies the Bush Administration's foreign policy. Though the historical studies here offer a good basis for raising important questions about American foreign policy, the editor could have been more effective in relating these to a more substantive assessment of the current President's actions and justifications. *History and September 11th* is a little too much like a printed version of a teach-in. A teach-in can be illuminating and may be necessary, but its focus on advocacy is likely to limit its value as a source of education.

MATTHEW RESTALL, *Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. Pp. x + 218. \$28.00.

Reviewed by Daniel R. Miller, Calvin College

Matthew Restall wants to debunk the myths that have grown up around the Spanish Conquest. By "myth," he means "something fictitious that is commonly taken to be true, partially or absolutely" (xvi). In place of these myths he seeks to provide more accurate stories of what happened when Old World and New World peoples encountered each other. Not all of his arguments are fully persuasive, but he does offer a stimulating reflection on the notion that "things are not how we see them, but how we remember them" (xvii).

Restall begins by attacking the notion that the Conquest was the work of a few exceptional men, specifically Columbus, Cortés, and Pizarro. He does a good job demythologizing Columbus, noting that Columbus's critics didn't really believe that the earth is flat and had a better idea of its size than he did. Columbus, it turns out, was more lucky than good. Restall's discussion of Cortés is less satisfactory because the criteria are much more subjective. He claims that much of Cortés's reputation for greatness rests on his own letters to Charles V. These were "probanzas"—formulaic conquest reports that by their very nature were designed to "puff" the contribution of the writer and enlarge the significance of his conquest so that a grateful king would respond with honors and rewards. Taking them as an accurate account of events is like accepting a real estate promoter's prospectus at face value. In reality, writes Restall, there was nothing special about Cortés's actions, they were standard practice for Spaniards venturing into as yet unclaimed

## BOOK REVIEWS

territory. I think Restall is trying too hard here. A mere recital of the events surrounding the conquest of the Aztecs suggests that Cortés was either supremely lucky or a commander of unusual audacity. Saying so does not seem to me to be a matter of myth making in the way that Restall defines it but merely acknowledging a truly remarkable military achievement.

Several of Restall's other claims seem less than earthshaking. He points out that few if any of the Spaniards were professional soldiers and none was acting under royal orders. Instead they were "armed entrepreneurs" who signed on to expeditions of conquest hoping to win booty or receive land in proportion to their contribution to the campaign and their proximity to the leader. While it is virtually certain that the Spaniards did not show the martial professionalism of armies in later centuries, to say that they were not soldiers because they identified themselves as artisans and clerks seems naïve. The British, French, and Dutch privateers who infested the Spanish Main within a century of Cortés's arrival were probably no more nor less professional than the conquistadors, and their relationship to their respective crowns was equally tenuous. Nevertheless the Spaniards feared their military power and their depredations led in time to more permanent colonial beachheads, much like the Spaniards' own experience.

Restall is on firmer ground when he reminds us that the Conquest was not accomplished by tiny bands of Europeans acting alone. Tens of thousands of Tlaxcalans aided the Spaniards in the Conquest of Tenochtitlán and hundreds of Africans aided the "Spanish" Conquest as early as the 1530s. Restall also refutes the notion that the Conquest was a swift and total success. He convincingly demonstrates how this myth was promoted by early conquistadors who wanted to assure the king that they were in full control of the situation and that the natives had been pacified. In reality, the Conquest was only begun by the mid-sixteenth century; it took centuries to complete. Frequent "rebellions" in "pacified" areas might better be viewed as on-going resistance to a process of incorporation into the Spanish empire. Even when Native Americans did accept Spanish authority, they retained their cultures, languages, and religious customs to a remarkable degree. This is another sense in which the Conquest was not a brief or even an entirely successful undertaking.

"The Lost Words of La Malinche: the Myth of (Mis)Communication" is, ironically, the most confusing chapter in the book. It left me uncertain on the essential question of whether the Spaniards and the Native Americans did or did not understand each others' intentions. Restall's discussion of the "Requirement" (95) is especially murky. He is much clearer in describing the vital role played by Doña Marina, Cortés's native translator, but his claim that her contributions were slighted because of Spanish attitudes toward translators seems wide of the mark. Surely the fact that she was a native and a woman was enough to make Marina well nigh invisible to the Spaniards as long as she was serving their ends. More intriguing is his claim that the Spaniards were mistaken in believing that Moctezuma viewed Cortés as a god returning to his throne. All that the Aztec emperor's flowery welcome really meant was "mi casa es su casa."

The myth of native desolation seeks to correct the idea that Native Americans were so overawed by the Spaniards that they lost all hope and simply endured 300

## BOOK REVIEWS

years of domination. Restall describes how native nobles continued to enjoy a privileged place in society for several generations after the Spanish Conquest and he cites the ritual celebrations that occurred in indigenous communities to buttress the claim that Native Americans did not view themselves as a conquered people. These are good correctives to an unduly bleak assessment of the post-Conquest status of Native Americans. On the other hand we must not forget that in the tropical lowlands, Native Americans were almost completely annihilated. Moreover, as Sheldon Annis has pointed out in *God and Production in a Guatemalan Town*, community fiestas were adopted by the Maya after the Conquest in part to dissipate wealth before it could attract the avaricious attention of Spanish overlords. Hence, as signs of indigenous autonomy and self-confidence, they are ambiguous.

The root myth according to Restall is the idea that Native Americans were too primitive to compete successfully with the more advanced Europeans. The real reasons for European success were disease and Native American disunity. Of secondary importance were military technology, especially steel swords, and military tactics, such as killing the enemy on the battlefield as opposed to capturing him for sacrifice on Huitzilopochtli's altar. Once again I think Restall is trying too hard to subvert a myth that is largely true. Old World people were more advanced in metallurgy, ballistics, and military science. Saying so hardly elevates them to a higher moral plane. A better argument against the myth of European cultural superiority would be to point to the horticultural achievements of Native Americans. Crops developed in the New World and adopted by the Old World helped to sustain rising global populations during the last half millennium. That seems like a more legitimate cause for boasting than the development of better ways to kill people.

*Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest* is by turns fascinating, insightful, unper-  
suasive, and obscure. Undergraduates will find it a lively and provocative introduction to the Spanish Conquest. Those already familiar with the topics it addresses will still find much in it worth reading.

R. ANDREW CHESNUT, *Competitive Spirits: Latin America's New Religious Economy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. Pp. 200. \$39.95.

**Reviewed by Phillip Luke Sinitiere, University of Houston**

142

R. Andrew Chesnut's *Competitive Spirits* applies the theory of religious economy to Latin America's contemporary religious landscape in order to "comprehend the dynamics of religious competition and the nature of spiritual production" (4). Religious economy treats faith systems as firms, believers as consumers, religious services as productions, and rituals as products. Chesnut's innovative picture of religion in Latin America builds mainly on the foundational work of sociologists of religion Peter Berger, who first articulated religious economy in his authoritative *The Sacred Canopy* (1969), and later featured by Rodney Stark (with Roger Finke), whose *The Churching of America* (1992) applied religious economy to America's religious history.

According to Chesnut, the three competitive spirits of Latin America's religious economy are charismatic Catholicism, Protestant Pentecostalism, and the

## BOOK REVIEWS

various strains of the African diasporan religions, namely Santería, Candomblé, and Umbanda. These three religious firms share a Spirit-centered focus, what Chesnut calls pneumacentrism, faith healing, and important devotional elements that meet the tastes and preferences of potential members, otherwise known as religious consumers. In order to stay competitive, Chesnut carefully details, these religious firms must possess a kind of marketing savvy and employ creative sales representatives (ministers).

Pentecostals, for example, offer physical and spiritual healing, conversion, exorcism, and ecstatic powers marketed by pastoral home visits, radio, television, and testimonials and proffered by sales representatives who come from the same socio-economic situations as consumers. Thus, in Chesnut's estimation, competition and conversion—or competition for conversion—is as much about the work of the Spirit as it is about networking and marketing.

Similarly, charismatic Catholics offer the products of healing, conversion, and pneumacentric experiences but essentially adopt Pentecostalism's methods to stay competitive. Chesnut calls this appropriation the "Pentecostalization" of Catholicism. According to Chesnut, the Pentecostalization of Catholicism began in the 1970s and 1980s with charismatic impulses within various quarters of U.S. Catholicism and eventually migrated south. Thus, to compete with the Pentecostals, Roman Catholic religious firms in places like Brazil, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala simultaneously critiqued and adopted the savviest features of Pentecostal firms.

The African Diaspora religions—Candomblé, Umbanda, and Santería—offer spirit possession and healing in addition to an amoral cosmos where religious consumers may harm or "curse" those whom they choose. According to religious economy, the diasporan religions are even more versatile, and perhaps more prosperous, than charismatic Catholicism or Protestant Pentecostalism because they do not possess the dualistic universe that is a fundamental part of Christian epistemology. In other words, the diasporan spiritual universe is amoral and consumers can request both ill and harm for their "enemies" without the threat of future recourse by a/the deity.

The diasporan religions feature fathers-of-saint and mothers-of-saint (in effect the resident "minister," or alternatively, the sales representative) who market religion by offering a familiar space in which to exhibit religious experience and promise to deliver desired spiritual goods. Furthermore, religious consumers might be pimps, prostitutes, or others on the fringes of society, and the diasporan religions provide social and religious space for those marginalized by Catholics and Pentecostals. This, of course, is another egalitarian feature that, according to the function of religious economy, adds a market advantage.

Women, in Chesnut's estimation, are the most important religious consumers in Latin America because the new spiritual landscape creates spaces for empowered spiritual expressions. According to this argument, because women more easily identify with matters of the "heart" the Holy Spirit becomes a kind of spiritual husband when the temporal husband lacks connection; this results in a kind of spiritual and social empowerment.

Spirit possession also allows for a refashioned gendered landscape. In Pente-

## BOOK REVIEWS

costal circles, for instance, women are often the recipients of the Holy Spirit and a certain amount of religious and spiritual authority comes with such possession. In Catholic charismatic circles, women can receive strength from the Blessed Virgin Mary, what Chesnut terms "virgophilia." In diasporan religions, women (sometimes the mothers-of-saint) may cast good or evil spells and control lovers or partners through invocation of the spirits. Chesnut also perceptively notes the hypnotic and transformative power music holds in Catholic charismatic, Pentecostal, and African diasporan circles that create for women other roads to empowered spiritual experiences.

Chesnut's work marks an authoritative turn in the social scientific study of religion and offers a new and innovative way to understand the rhythms of faith in Latin America. Deploying the theories of religious economy pioneered by Berger, and more recently by Rodney Stark, and relying on interviews, church documents, apologetic materials, and observation and participation, among other sources, Chesnut shows how and why religious firms in Latin America must market their spiritual products to religious consumers. While Chesnut does not advocate one firm over another, he registers a fascination at Latin America's new religious economy and suggests that more diversity and a greater plurality will invite more competitive spirits to "grace" the new religious landscape. In the final analysis, what Rodney Stark and Roger Finke did for America's religious landscape in *The Churching of America*, Chesnut has done for Latin America's new religious economy with *Competitive Spirits*.

STEPHEN R. HAYNES, *The Bonhoeffer Phenomenon: Portraits of a Protestant Saint*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004. Pp. 280. \$22.00.

Reviewed by Robert O. Smith, Baylor University

"Don't call me a saint. I don't want to be dismissed that easily." Such was Dorothy Day's retort when a journalist once exclaimed, "I've never interviewed a saint before!" One might imagine Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the young Lutheran pastor and theologian executed by the Nazi Gestapo for his role in plotting to assassinate Hitler, offering a similar reply. Certainly, this is the response Stephen Haynes wishes Bonhoeffer could now proffer.

*The Bonhoeffer Phenomenon* is a veritable compendium of secondary literature regarding Bonhoeffer. While the book does not intend to break any new interpretive ground on Bonhoeffer's own theological concepts, it suffers at points from a lack of engagement with primary sources, especially the widely available critical edition, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Werke*, now undergoing translation. Nevertheless, Haynes admirably traverses an immense amount of scholarly and popular terrain, including biographical novels, books collecting the stories of modern saints, stage productions, radio programs, videos, and travelogues in addition to academic articles and monographs. The resulting bibliography is therefore as much cultural document as scholarly resource.

T. W. Manson once said of theological perspectives, "By their lives of Jesus ye shall know them." Given Haynes's analysis, the same holds true for appropriations of Bonhoeffer. The first part of his book—titled "Who is Bonhoeffer for us?"—

## BOOK REVIEWS

traces appropriations and characterizations of Bonhoeffer in four broad schools, radical to conservative.

In the second part of *The Bonhoeffer Phenomenon*, Haynes turns to analyzing the forms of theological hero-worship that have sprung up around this compelling figure. Here, the heuristic is hagiography, the homogenization of the saintly narrative. One comment is particularly telling: "Saint Dietrich's Hagiographer was Eberhard Bethge," the one who established "the portrait of Bonhoeffer by which all others are measured" (147).

Haynes is critical of the way in which Bonhoeffer has been elevated to mythic status among Christian commentators. Haynes argues convincingly that, especially in Bonhoeffer's case, sanctification can be a one-way ticket to trivialization, in which the object of one's devotion is flattened into a means toward one's own ends. But Haynes struggles with another effect of Bonhoeffer's unofficial but ubiquitous canonization: that this once-real person *cum* saint has been reconstructed into an ideal figure situated beyond even constructive critique. Thus we get to the real point of *The Bonhoeffer Phenomenon*.

In an effort to open space for critical reassessments of Bonhoeffer, Haynes seeks to break through the interpretive veneers that cling tenaciously to Bonhoeffer's life, death and theological reflections. Haynes's own critiques of Bonhoeffer—only tantalizingly hinted at in this study—center on the German theologian's statements and actions regarding Jews and subsequent questions regarding whether or not Bonhoeffer is a helpful "guide for post-Holocaust Christian theological reflection" (176).

Indeed, matters of Jewish-Christian relations are Haynes's primary concern—in previous publications and in this volume. At the end of one of the most compelling critical sections of the book, outlining the limits of liberationist and feminist applications for Bonhoeffer's thought, Haynes rejects the maxim, "The man Bonhoeffer is better than the theologian Bonhoeffer." He then parlays this insight into a mention of his own central concern: "We will encounter a similar problem when considering Bonhoeffer's relevance for post-Holocaust theology in a subsequent volume" (58).

Haynes has been grappling with these concerns for quite some time and, as he recounts in his preface, has experienced reprimand from the high priests of the Bonhoeffer cult (my words, not his), the English Language Section of the International Bonhoeffer Society. What some may perceive as iconoclasm is certainly undertaken in good faith, with no derision of Bonhoeffer himself. And now that *The Bonhoeffer Phenomenon* has placed the preliminaries on the table, Haynes's next book, devoted specifically to his central concern, will inaugurate a new chapter of critical theological reflection.

145

JOSEPH TSE-HEI LEE, *The Bible and the Gun: Christianity in South China, 1860–1900*. New York: Routledge, 2003. Pp. xxxvi + 207. \$80.00.

Reviewed by Jeff McClain, University of Illinois (Champaign-Urbana)

Continuing the recent tendency to write the history of Christianity in China with more emphasis on Chinese Christian activity and less on the missionary end, Lee

## BOOK REVIEWS

examines the ways in which the Christian faith (especially in its Protestant form) was spread and made indigenous in Chaozhou prefecture of southern China's Guangdong province. By extensive use of mission agency and government archives, local gazetteers from Chaozhou, newspapers, and interviews with descendants of the first Protestant Christians in the area, combined with a thoroughgoing knowledge of the relevant secondary sources, Lee paints a largely credible and fascinating picture of the complicated dynamics of conversion in late nineteenth-century, rural South China.

Lee sets the stage with a short but well-rounded discussion of Chaozhou society at the time. Contrary to much of both Chinese and Western historiography on the area, which, until recently, has viewed Chaozhou as a cultureless periphery in need of civilizing, Lee's Chaozhou is a complicated society in its own right; heavily Chinese, of course, but also unique in its dialects, and long outward looking in its economic and social life, tied as it was to the trade economy of Southeast Asia. In fact, it was through the connections between Chaozhou and Southeast Asia that Protestant Christianity first entered the prefecture. Lee relates the stories of a number of Chaozhou natives who were converted by missionaries while they were abroad, involved in business in the overseas Chinese trade networks in Bangkok, Singapore, Malacca, and other ports. These converts then returned home and sometimes saw to the conversion of family members and business associates.

In 1860, following the Treaty of Beijing, foreign missionaries (mostly American Baptists and English Presbyterians) began to set up shop in the prefecture. Still, Lee shows, by looking at local church records and reports by the few missionaries resident in the treaty ports, that the majority of conversions were happening in rural areas with only infrequent missionary activity. In these areas, churches were constructed from local funds and managed on a day-to-day basis by Chinese Christians. Thus, as the missionaries theorized about the need for the Chinese churches to embrace the "Three-Self" principle (self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating), rural Chaozhou churches in the late nineteenth century, while nominally under missionary tutelage, had, in large part, already achieved it.

Most of the second half of Lee's work is devoted to showing the ways in which church activity in these rural communities played into preexisting conflicts over who had what sorts of power in a given community. By looking at a number of well-documented cases of conflict, Lee aims to show that what has been labeled "sectarian conflict" or "anti-Christian violence" (the latter phrase, for very different reasons, by both missionary and communist historians) was often, in fact, cases of long-standing, "traditional" disputes between and within various local lineages, onto which the rhetoric of the religious was grafted. In a way then, the violence, for Lee, is not a symbol of the rejection of Christianity, but quite the opposite, its successful indigenization.

Here the book's title becomes most interesting, for it is clear that the "gun" is not primarily the gun of the imperialist (though it is that, too), but the gun of local Chinese, Christian or not, involved in disputes over community power and resources. In one case, the actual guns belong to the Baptists as they fire on the Catholic church in the village of Kuxi. Far from being a case of sectarian violence as it would appear to be on the surface, Lee tracks the origin of this particular vi-

## BOOK REVIEWS

olence to a long-simmering and always evolving dispute between the Lesser Li lineage (who became Baptist) and the Greater Li lineage (who became Catholic) over issues such as firewood collecting rights, which ancestor to honor in the shared lineage hall, and conflicting geomantic concerns. Similar explanations are offered for violence between non-Christians and Christians. In every case, Lee very capably shows the uncomfortable position of the missionaries and the Chinese magistrates as they sought to mediate these local disputes, and the impact events elsewhere in China, such as the Boxer Rebellion, had on these local outbursts and their resolution.

Lee's work is not without a small number of deficiencies. Not every case of violence against Christians, even in Lee's own presentation of them, appears to have been unambiguously rooted in previous local conflict. On occasion, Lee seems to hypothesize more than prove something other than anti-Christian motivation to the violence. Also, while Lee succeeds in shifting attention away from the missionaries, one may well wonder whether the power players in lineage politics are the best examples of the Chinese side of the equation? Lee is critical of stereotyping of Chaozhou society, yet, his claim and major theme throughout, that "intense competition for power is a norm, not an exception, in Chinese grassroots society" (xviii), to which Christianity is readily added, is something of a stereotype itself.

In all, *The Bible and the Gun* is an excellent work, which provides the reader with a wealth of detail on at least one way by which Christianity was made to fit in southern China. The work is short and accessible enough for general readers, but there is also plenty of primary source data brought to the surface on missions, cross-cultural interaction, and Chinese local society to interest the specialist.

CHUNG-SHIN PARK, *Protestantism and Politics in Korea*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003. Pp. xi + 316. \$50.00.

**Reviewed by Jeff McClain, University of Illinois (Champaign-Urbana)**

Chung-shin Park begins by reminding his readers of the striking fact that since the 1884 arrival of the first few Protestant missionaries, the Korean church has grown to count among its members 25% of the South Korean population. How to explain this unprecedented growth has occupied many minds, but Park feels that an adequate historical explanation has yet to be offered. He is particularly critical of historiography that links the success of the Korean church with American imperialism, and, on the other side, of apologetic writing that claims that the church growth is due to the many blessings Christianity bestowed on Korean society. Rather, Park believes a more historical explanation for the growth of the Korean church is to be found in the astute political maneuverings of Christians in the tumultuous twentieth century. Along the way, Park also wishes to break down what he sees as a too facile interpretation which puts fundamentalist Christianity on the side of either otherworldly noninvolvement or reactionary politics and liberal theology on the side of progressive reform.

In order to accomplish his task, Park makes good use of a wide variety of both

## BOOK REVIEWS

Korean and English language primary sources, among them: Korean newspapers, county government reports, local church histories, and missionary memoirs. Further, he shows himself to be particularly well-acquainted with recent Korean-language historiography on the subject, which, no matter if it be Marxist, liberal or fundamentalist in orientation, typically serves for Park as a foil to his views.

Much early Protestant success, in Park's estimation, can be attributed to the arrival on the Korean scene of Japan as the imperialist aggressor par excellence. Whereas nationalists in other Asian countries often linked the presence of Christian missionaries with the arrival of the colonizer, in Korea a disjunct was produced when the American imperialist advances were halted by Japan. Thus, instead of seeing Christianity as a religion that needed to be thrown off with the colonial yoke, many nationalists, according to Park, came to see Protestant America (if impracticably) as a likely defender of Korean interests vis-à-vis Japan. Park continues by extensively documenting the very Christian character of early nationalist endeavors, such as So Chaep'il's famed Independence Club, the ill-fated March 1, 1919 Declaration of Independence and associated Movement, and the intriguing though morally problematic fact that Christians were the best known political assassins during much of the first half of Japan's rule. During this period, the Christian faith had great nationalist appeal to both the lower and the intellectual classes, and churches frequently fulfilled both spiritual and political aspirations.

When considering this early phase of the Korean church, Park asserts that one cannot reasonably assume that the fundamentalists were passive while the theological liberals active. The fundamentalists were heavily involved in such modernizing activities as introducing new medical and communications technologies and increasing the use of the vernacular language. The fundamentalist challenge to Confucianism as idolatry dovetailed neatly with the nationalist reformers' notions of the need for Korea to throw off the burden of tradition. Under Japan's rule, even the most conservative, pie-in-the-sky preachers could be quite political as well. Fundamentalists, Park shows, were active in the March First movement, and their preaching, while always biblical, frequently exhibited obvious political undertones that linked Korea's plight with young David or the Jews in exile. In such sermons, there could be no doubt which nation played the role of Goliath, Egypt, or Babylon. When Japan, in 1938, issued a mandate that every altar in Korea must bear a small Shinto shrine, theological liberals and moderates were willing to rationalize this action, but conservatives resisted and many were imprisoned or forced to flee. These, in turn, became nationalist heroes once released from prison in 1945, and the liberals, for the moment, stood charged with abandoning not just Christ, but country as well.

Immediately upon liberation, Christians rose again to political prominence on the People's Committees, in both the north and the south. Yet, Christian activism through the Committees was to come to naught, as the Soviets found many of them to be too bourgeois and the Americans suspected them of communist sympathy. In the resulting mess leading up to and through the Korean War, a variety of factors coalesced to strengthen the conservative Christians' position in South Korea: the influx of many northern Christians, Christian Syngman Rhee in the country's

## BOOK REVIEWS

leadership, American involvement, and the appeal of conservative theology to the troubled times. In general, as the South Korean church grew in size, it grew to be comfortable with the dictatorial regimes of Rhee and then Park Chung-hee, and rarely stood for anything politically but vehement anti-communism. It was not until the late sixties that the liberal theologians, often associated with seminaries or journals rather than churches (where they would likely have been prevented from speaking out by the conservative laity), began to take the activist stance for which they are now famed.

Park's work is not without some flaws, the foremost being its organization. The book is divided into two parts; The first is the "social history" of the church that is intended to set the stage for part two, the chronological telling of the story. Yet, there is a good deal of material that is overlapping, such that redundancy becomes a problem. On a more theoretical note, while Park does a good job showing that Korean Christians, even fundamentalists, were good nationalists, he fails to consider critically the problems inherent in such nationalism. For instance, Park notes, but does not seem to comprehend the irony, that many of the earliest Korean nationalists saw Christianity as a particularly useful tool in a Social Darwinistic struggle among nations. Aside from the theological problems here, in these days of postcolonial criticism, Park's enthusiasm for Christian nationalists requires more careful explanation.

*Protestantism and Politics in Korea* is not likely to be the definitive work on the subject. Yet, to date, it is the most solid effort. The work is recommended, due to the way Park pulls together various strands of thought on the church in Korea, generally avoids simple answers, and informs an English-reading public about a very important part of the world, both in terms of the Christian religion and global politics.

THOMAS ALAN HARVEY, *Acquainted with Grief: Wang Mingdao's Stand for the Persecuted Church in China*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2002. Pp. 190. \$14.99.

**Reviewed by Richard R. Cook, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School**

In *Acquainted with Grief* Thomas Harvey links the persecution of Wang Mingdao (1900–1991) in China to the longer tradition of Christian resistance and persecution, including, more recently, Karl Barth and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. True biblical Christianity is relevant in the modern world, Harvey argues, as a prophetic voice against the absolute claims on the individual by the modern nation-state. As the Barmen Declaration in Germany stood as a witness against the absolute claims of German fascism on the individual, so did Wang Mingdao stand firm against the absolute demands of the Chinese Communist Party. Whereas liberal Christians have attempted to maintain "relevance" in the modern world by providing a theological justification for the claims of the modern state, they actually were often co-opted by the state. In contrast, conservatives like Wang Mingdao anchored their theology in the unchanging Word of God, providing a consistently relevant critique of culture, society, and politics. Harvey, however, does not only critique liberals, but also evangelicals who would uncritically accept the notion

## BOOK REVIEWS

that Christianity can be wedded to democracy or any other form of government (109–10).

Harvey develops this larger argument from the story of Wang Mingdao, a conservative Protestant fundamentalist. Wang was born in Beijing in 1900 and established an independent ministry in the 1920s that continued into the 1950s. By the time the Chinese Communist Party took control of China in 1949, Wang's church was the largest in Beijing. Harvey bases his study of Wang's life and teaching (chapters 1–2) primarily on Wang's own writing, including Wang's 1950 autobiography and his extensive collection of published journal articles. In chapter three Harvey provides a cogent description of the CCP's United Front policies and the formation of the Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) in the 1950s. The final four chapters (chapters 4–7) provide the heart of Harvey's study. He describes and carefully analyzes Wang's defiance of the Chinese Communist Party.

During the early 1950s Wang published several significant articles detailing why he would not cooperate with the efforts of the government to unify the Protestant churches. While Wang argued that he would not join the CCP-sponsored church because he believed his church should be independent and he was unwilling to unite with Protestant liberals (Wang called them "unbelievers"), Harvey notes that Wang's non-cooperation had far greater significance. The magnitude of Wang's stand is demonstrated, implicitly, by the ferociousness of the CCP's attack against Wang. Wang was arrested in 1955 and was beaten into submission, gaining release in 1956. Physically and emotionally drained, a humiliated Wang publicly read his "confession" at the (liberal) YMCA in Beijing. Wang admitted to crimes such as complicity with Western imperialism and opposing the Communist Party. Although he had agreed to join the TSPM, he never did. He was re-arrested in 1957 and sentenced to life in prison. He was finally released in 1980 during the reforms of Deng Xiaoping, and he lived in Shanghai as an internationally renowned victim of persecution until his death in 1991.

Harvey desires to explain why the CCP was so determined to silence Wang. Although the "confession" read by Wang in 1956 does not reveal much about Wang, Harvey's insight is that the document clearly does demonstrate the thinking of the CCP. That is, the new narrative of the nation that the CCP was attempting to write can be seen, between the lines, in Wang's forced confession. The state was determined to crush Wang Mingdao because he refused to conform to the Communist Party's new nationalist narrative of China. Harvey writes, "[T]he Communist Party's narrative of China overwhelmed the church and transformed its gospel politically, spiritually, and theologically" (67). While liberal Chinese theologians, according to Harvey, attempted to provide theological justification for the new state, Wang and other conservative Christians offered a timeless and prophetic critique to the state.

In *Acquainted with Grief* Harvey provides significant insights into a number of overlapping fields, including Chinese studies, ethics, church history, and political science. In the end, however, the intended target audience is not clear and some readers may not feel satisfied. For example, evangelical Christian readers may desire more biographical material on Wang, while China scholars might hope for even further interaction with the current scholarship mentioned, such as Jacques

## BOOK REVIEWS

Derrida and Prasenjit Duara. Wang Mingdao is a valuable subject, however, and as Harvey points out the resistance of Wang is more relevant today than that of Barth and Bonhoeffer. While a number of the totalitarian states in the West have fallen, the religious polity of the CCP that Wang resisted is still in place (8).

MARK A. NOLL, *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2004. Pp. 320. \$23.00.

Reviewed by John Fea, Messiah College

For the last twenty-five years Mark Noll has taught us more about American Evangelicalism than perhaps any other scholar. What is most impressive about Noll's body of work is its attempt to reach a variety of audiences. Scholarly works such as *Princeton and the Republic* (Princeton, 1989) and the recent *America's God* (Oxford 2002) have explained the complex relationship between Evangelicalism, moral philosophy, and early national political thought, while books such as *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Eerdmans, 1994) and *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Eerdmans, 1992) have been written with students and the larger evangelical public in mind. Noll's recent work, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, fits into the latter category, but it is nonetheless a book that should not be ignored by scholars interested in the origin, diversity, and transatlantic context of early Evangelicalism.

*The Rise of Evangelicalism* is the inaugural volume in InterVarsity Press's projected five book series entitled "A History of Evangelicalism: People, Movements and Ideas in the English-Speaking World" (Noll and David Bebbington serve as the general editors). If Noll's book is representative of the others, this series will provide a wonderful introduction to the evangelical movement and hopefully contribute to a more informed understanding of born-again faith among its lay adherents.

While Noll's book is essentially a synthesis of early evangelical history, it is more than merely a textbook. The real interpretive strength of the book is in its organization. *The Rise of Evangelicalism* provides a much-needed chronological account of the way Evangelicalism expanded throughout Great Britain during the eighteenth century. Noll moves deftly across the Atlantic, describing concurrent developments in England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, and the British colonies. Readers get a blow-by-blow account of the revivals occurring in every corner of the English-speaking world and in the process Noll demonstrates quite convincingly that an evangelical movement—rooted in a commitment to personal conversion and holy living that transcended denominational bounds—was emerging with force as the century unfolded. Potential readers should not be fooled by the subtitle of this book. Yes, Noll does spend considerable time exploring the important roles that Jonathan Edwards, John Wesley, and George Whitefield played in the rise of Evangelicalism, but we also learn about lesser known evangelical founders—Philip Doddridge, Selina, the Countess of Huntingdon, and Howell Harris—that may not be familiar to American readers.

As he has done in so much of his published work, Noll writes as an observer-participant of Evangelicalism. Writing as an evangelical Christian to the kind of

## BOOK REVIEWS

audience that would be drawn to a volume of religious history published by InterVarsity Press, Noll celebrates the way in which born-again Protestantism has served as a movement of spiritual renewal and has cultivated a deep sense of Christian assurance, community, and social activism among its adherents. As a religious movement with its origins in seventeenth-century Continental pietism and eighteenth-century revivalism, Evangelicalism should be credited for its pursuit of a "true religion" that never loses sight of the work of God's spirit on the human heart. But even as he praises certain spiritual dimensions of Evangelicalism, Noll also does not hesitate to criticize the movement. For example, he notes that this brand of Protestantism could easily breed self-interest and enthusiastical disorder among its membership, especially during seasons of revival. He reminds us, as he did so forcefully in *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, that the activist strain of evangelical religion has seldom been conducive to the pursuit of an intellectual life. He also calls our attention to the fact that evangelical anti-slavery activists and political leaders such as William Wilberforce often did little to meet the needs of England's working-class poor.

In an interpretive decision that may disappoint some lay readers looking for a providential history and please most of those professional Christian historians affiliated with the Conference on Faith and History, Noll grounds the story of Evangelicalism firmly within the larger social and cultural developments of the eighteenth century. We thus learn a great deal about the way that human agency, print culture, the American Revolution, religious disestablishment, and the social and cultural landscape of the British Isles all shaped the history of Evangelicalism. In this sense, *The Rise of Evangelicalism* makes a solid contribution to early American history by calling our attention to the religious character of what historians of early modern Great Britain have described as the "Atlantic World."

Noll's bibliography of 100 of the most important primary sources of eighteenth-century Evangelicalism offers a great starting point for further reading in the history of the movement. Seminary and college teachers searching for an accessible introduction to Evangelicalism for their church history, British history, or early American history courses should give Noll's new book serious consideration.

HANS KRABBENDAM AND DEREK RUBIN, EDs., *Religion in America: European and American Perspectives*. Amsterdam: VU University Press, 2004. Pp. 306. \$56.95.

Reviewed by David Settje, Concordia University (River Forest, Ill.)

## 152

This collection of essays by European and U.S. scholars offers a unique examination of American religion that will both challenge and frustrate *Fides et Historia* readers. Its six sections (Religion in America: Past, Present, and Future; The Clerical Presence in Nineteenth-Century Literature; Religion in Twentieth-Century Literature; Gender and American Religion; Religious Space and National Symbolism; and Religious Imports and Exports) provide studies that ponder the historic meaning of religion in America in unique and interesting ways. But the book is geared toward a European audience, limiting its contribution to U.S. historiography.

## BOOK REVIEWS

The most rewarding aspect of these essays comes from their international perspectives. Whether written by a European or American scholar, many of the entries question long-held assumptions based on an analysis that examines American religion from the "outside." For example, Philip Jenkins's "The Center and the Fringe: America's Religious Futures" challenges the theory of a unique diversity within American Christianity. And David W. Stowe internationalizes the study of religion in an investigation of transatlantic hymn exchanges. Indeed, all of the essays force the reader to examine the topics in a different light: in reading how others view the U.S. religious landscape, Americans can learn about themselves.

Also beneficial, the contributors do a solid job of exposing the myths of American exceptionalism. Walter H. Conser, Jr. addresses the significance of abundant land and how it affected religious realities and myths. Emory Elliott continues this discussion and pulls the myths forward to the present, explaining how American exceptionalism continues to influence religion in this nation.

Other positive aspects of these examinations include their interdisciplinary nature, attention to gender, and exploration of literature in a religious context. To that end, the contributors include historians, literary critics, sociologists, and religious studies professionals. And the sections that contemplate gender, nineteenth-century literature, and twentieth-century literature present original research and challenging ideas. Mary Farrell Bednarowski examines the "religious imagination of American women" by exploring what gender issues shaped a unique perspective about Christianity. The studies of literature relate popular texts, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Agnes of Sorrento*, William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, and F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, to the American religious scene, demonstrating how some "secular" books contain rich lessons about American religion.

Despite these positives, readers of *Fides et Historia* will find the book of limited value. The introduction admits that a call for papers regarding religion in America "revealed that relatively few scholars in Europe were including religion in their research and teaching of American Studies" (1). The essays therefore go a long way toward correcting that error in European perspective, a problem not faced by historians of American religion! Historians will also balk at the personalized style of writing; many articles reference personal stories and experiences to outline the importance of American religion, again moving away from the academic approach desired by those familiar with the field. To that end, many of the essays use limited sources to support their claims or engage in speculation. Again, this stems from the book's intention of exposing European scholars to the topic, not because of faulty research or writing, but this reality limits its appeal to those knowledgeable in the field.

In short, *Religion in America* provides an interesting read with some provocative questions in its international examination of American religion. It accomplishes its objective of getting European American Studies to account for religion's pervasive influence in the United States. While various articles and approaches prove interesting, however, American religious historians will have a love-hate relationship with this book.

## BOOK REVIEWS

THOMAS A. ASKEW AND RICHARD V. PIERARD, *The American Church Experience: A Concise History*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004. Pp. 288. \$21.99.

Reviewed by Miles S. Mullin, II, Vanderbilt University

In this work, two veteran professors of history—Pierard and Askew, both of Gordon College—contribute a valuable book to the relatively small group of survey texts focusing on American Christianity. This volume significantly improves upon the earlier work of Askew and Spellman (Baker, 1984), providing a more readable, interesting, up-to-date, and inclusive product.

The *American Church Experience* is not a history of religion in America, but rather a history of Christianity in America, focusing on Evangelicalism, “a vital current in American Christianity, especially in the nineteenth century and beyond” (9). Although the evangelical tradition determines the trajectory, religious groups like Roman Catholics and Mormons also receive attention as important in their own right.

Askew and Pierard locate the origins of Evangelicalism in the English Reformation, referring to the “Reformed and Puritan roots of evangelical theology” (125). Yet, they do not define the movement in narrow theological terms, but choose a broader approach, viewing Evangelicalism as a “coalition” or “mosaic” (219) of groups possessed of certain key characteristics (10). As a result, they easily incorporate non-Reformed influences such as the Holiness movement into the story without adopting a Calvinist declension narrative, determining that diverse elements coalesced in the formative “Second Awakening,” forging “a mainstream tradition for American evangelical Protestantism” (85).

For the most part, this book follows a familiar path through the history of Christianity in America. After an introductory section situating American Christianity in the larger history of Christianity and its trans-Atlantic context, the narrative in the second section (1607–1783) is shaped by Puritanism, disestablishment, and Awakening; the emerging market economy, the expanding frontier and the “Second Awakening” shape the third (1784–1860); intellectual and social challenges dominate the fourth (1861–1916); and religious renewal, increasing diversity, and pluralism order the last (1917–Present). Largely following Winthrop Hudson’s periodization, the limits of each period are determined by American involvement in a major war. The usual suspects also appear: the Puritans (36, 44), Lyman Beecher (79ff.), Horace Mann (91), D. L. Moody (120), Pentecostalism (136–38), the SVM (155–57), Martin Luther King, Jr. (200, 214–15) and others. To their credit, the authors also include some unique actors, who enrich the story, e.g. George Baker, a.k.a. Father Divine and the Native American prophet Wovoka (136).

154

Primarily, Askew and Pierard explore the social history of Christianity in America. They do this with great skill, carefully situating their narrative within the social, political, economic, and cultural context of American history. Three main themes permeate the story. First, church–state issues abound. Civil religion, “American exceptionalism,” toleration, and disestablishment factor significantly. Second, legal disestablishment meant “a truly revolutionary idea, liberty of personal choice, was now the organizing principle in American Christianity” (67). Therefore, the authors adopt Hatch’s democratization thesis with vigor, describ-

## BOOK REVIEWS

ing the forces of an emerging competitive market economy, that, when coupled with revivalism, commercialism, and denominationalism leveled the field for various religious groups, who now had to compete for members. Finally, the social activism of the evangelical tradition receives much attention, making its way into their definition of Evangelicalism (10), the epilogue (237), and many of the pages in between. Discussions of the lesser known Chicago Declaration (220) and World Relief Commission (185, 232) join the well-known activism associated with the "Second Awakening," the Holiness movement and the social gospel.

Highly competent in the social arena, the authors' efforts regarding the history of Christian thought are less adept. In a particularly egregious example, the idealist G.W.F. Hegel is classed as a German romantic (150). A few other problems pepper this fine work. At times, its concision creates challenges. For instance, introducing the term Yankee (45) or Neo-Thomist theology (229) without further discussion, may confuse some readers. Likewise, referring to the Church of God, Anderson and the Church of God, Cleveland as "branches" indicates a familial affinity that is not historically warranted (186).

In spite of these few problems, *The American Church Experience* does most things well. Even though its narrative is a traditional one, it is adopted critically and thoughtfully. For instance, in affirming the conventional wisdom of a "Great Awakening," they acknowledge the counter argument, and carefully place the Awakening within its broader historical context (45), making a case for its impact on the Revolution and later American religion, especially slave conversions, denominational development, and the emergence of "a distinctively revivalist tradition" (50–53). This example highlights the authors' successful efforts to describe the impact of events for future developments and acquaint readers with historiographical issues, something few survey texts attempt. They reference over twenty authors in the text itself and integrate the historical insights of many more (e.g. Goen, Mathews) without explicit mention.

Askew and Pierard also incorporate the story of African-American religionists and women into the larger narrative naturally, something remiss among many evangelical histories of the past. For instance, neither Richard Allen nor Antoinette Brown Blackwell appeared in the 1984 book, but they do here (74, 99). In addition, *The American Church Experience* succeeds in being even-handed where other popular survey texts have failed, treating such topics as Fundamentalism (138–40, 167–72), the Peace Movement in America (159–60, 165), the "New Christian Right" (222–24), and gender issues in twentieth century (227–28) with equanimity. William Jennings Bryan even gets favorable treatment for his peace efforts and concern for the working class (145, 160). Finally, in the opinion of this author, their interpretations are correct more often than not. For instance, they accurately portray the diversity of early Fundamentalism and correctly assess the impact that the experience of African-American soldiers in World War II had in garnering support for the Civil Rights Movement (213–15), two things many American religious historians overlook.

*The American Church Experience* emerges as an ideal text to introduce students to American Church History. It is up-to-date, lucid, and concise. It introduces students to the historiography of the field, yet, with only sixty-eight footnotes, it does

## BOOK REVIEWS

not overwhelm. A sixteen-page index and thirty-two-page bibliography correlated to each chapter make this book an ideal resource. Finally, it is roughly half the length of most standard survey texts on American religion, providing a less daunting alternative for introductory courses on American Church History and especially the American component of those difficult Church History II courses, which begin in the sixteenth century and end in the twenty-first.

FRANK LAMBERT, *The Founding Fathers and the Place of Religion in America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003. Pp. 344. \$29.95.

**Reviewed by Phillip Luke Sinitiere, University of Houston**

The energetic but unsuccessful campaign of Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore to retain a Ten Commandments monument in public political space and its attendant controversy underscores the salience of Frank Lambert's *Founding Fathers*. In yet another provocative and carefully argued book, Lambert traverses the complicated political and religious landscape of eighteenth-century British North America. Did America begin as a Christian nation? Why did the Founding Fathers passionately embrace freedom of religion when the "passionate sectarians" (13) of the 1620s and 1630s forcefully opposed religious pluralism? Lambert addresses such questions in a judicious survey (roughly 1600–1800) that explores developing conceptions of "freedom."

The first section of *Founding Fathers*, concerned primarily with the "Planting Fathers" of Massachusetts and the "Nursing Fathers" of Virginia, presents the founding of Virginia, Massachusetts Bay, and Pennsylvania as case studies for a "transplanted" faith in a new land. In Virginia, for example, church attendance was required and Lord De La Warr reminded inhabitants that worship and obedience to God characterized worthy citizenship. A similar story took place in Massachusetts, where tight state control by Christian politicians sought to regulate religious praxis in order to eliminate heresy. Religious freedom existed in Pennsylvania, Lambert carefully asserts, yet religious affiliation fueled hotly contested political space within the colony. By the end of the seventeenth century, Lambert lucidly concludes, "religious localism" operated within a "regulated religious market" (122).

If there was local oversight of religious practice at the end of the seventeenth century, then by the middle (and end) of the eighteenth century a fresh array of choices became part of a new religious market. Immigration, population growth, and a transatlantic market revolution, Lambert convincingly contends, provided a context for the Great Awakening to inhabit the colonial imagination. Indeed, the "invention" of the Great Awakening effectively shattered parish boundaries and opened up new spaces in an expanding religious market. George Whitefield, Lambert concisely observes, was the catalyst for such change as he empowered and inspired itinerants throughout the colonies. As a result, individuals, Lambert perceptively asserts, became the hinges on which salvation turned. Choice operated powerfully within such a religious market, as George Whitefield described his ministry as "trafficking for the Lord" (128) in which he preached the gospel as "heavenly cargo" (138). Similarly, Boston minister Thomas Foxcroft embraced

## BOOK REVIEWS

Whitefield's "Imported Divinity" (128) and Benjamin Coleman, also from Boston, cherished the gospel as "Holy Merchandize" (128). For some, like the Deists, the new religious market provided sacred space for religious (and political) dissent shaped by the "New Learning" of the Enlightenment. "The Enlightenment and Deism," Lambert importantly concludes, "did not make the Founders irreligious, nor did it make most of them anti-Christian" (178). The cultural milieu in which such changes took place necessitated, in many ways, a political discourse couched in religious terms.

It was within such a diverse religious market, Lambert astutely argues in the second portion of *Founding Fathers*, that carefully held notions of religious freedom developed within the context of growing political dissent. If religious tyranny came under derision, it followed, therefore, that political tyranny should suffer a similar fate. In colonial America such dissenting traditions, Lambert attentively observes, were rooted in British ideas of religious and political freedom, influenced by the work of Milton, and shaped by the political philosophy of John Locke, among others. This flavor of dissent, Lambert instructively shows, manifested itself as anticlericalism and "disestablishmentarianism" (195), agitation against the standing church and standing order. "To combat religious as well as political tyranny," Lambert concludes, "dissenters marshaled the ideas of the Great Awakening, the Enlightenment, and Radical Whiggism—all of which insisted on the individual's right to determine his or her own beliefs and practice without any involvement from the state" (202).

In the final portion of *Founding Fathers*, Lambert clearly shows that the Founders conceived, articulated, and established religious freedom in a heated climate of political dissent. Influenced heavily by the intellectual vibrancy of Enlightenment philosophy and shaped by a thriving religious market that followed the Great Awakening, the Founders "believed that religious liberty, not religious regulation, was the more effective bond in a pluralistic society" (206). Lambert cites the lively debates over established religion in Virginia, for instance, and shows how the zealous fires of the Great Awakening helped to situate the state's statute of religious freedom in 1785. More strikingly, Lambert cogently argues, the Constitution was based on a secular ideology; yet Lambert is also keen to assert that "most [Founders] were convinced that Christianity was the surest foundation of a moral society" (205). Intriguingly, the "godless constitution" assumed churches would help equip the citizenry with honor and virtue. This formula was tested in the election of 1800 as both Federalist and Republican apologists vied for votes in the "competitive marketplace of ideas" (267). "Without official privilege protecting one religious expression above all others," Lambert expertly concludes, "debaters [in the election of 1800] had no alternative but to gain adherents to their cause by swaying voters one at a time" (287).

Lambert's *Founding Fathers* displays the thoughtful erudition and careful reflection that readers have come to expect and enjoy (as is the case with his "*Pedlar in Divinity*": *George Whitefield and the Transatlantic Revivals, 1737–1770* and *Inventing the "Great Awakening"*). Finally, the book is an interdisciplinary effort, straddling religious, political, and social history and also finds historiographical space in the burgeoning body of church–state studies.

## BOOK REVIEWS

DAVID HACKETT FISCHER, *Washington's Crossing*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. Pp. x + 564. \$35.00.

Reviewed by Jonathan Den Hartog, University of Notre Dame

Although most Americans are familiar with Emmanuel Leutze's painting of *Washington Crossing the Delaware*, far fewer know about the actual events which Leutze attempted to capture. Fischer seeks to remedy this problem by employing a narrative strategy similar to the one he used in *Paul Revere's Ride* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). In so doing, he has produced another compelling work which raises questions about contingency, the military, and the nature of American liberty.

Fischer begins by introducing the three major armies in the conflict: the heterogeneous and contentious Americans, the well-regulated British, and the disciplined Hessian mercenaries. He opens the narrative with Washington attempting to defend Long Island in the summer of 1776. Against the well-organized movements of the British under the Howe brothers, Washington was forced to fall back to Manhattan—under cover of a fog which many soldiers believed was nothing less than providential. Washington's position on Manhattan turned into a debacle, and the British chased Washington, not only off the island, but all the way out of New Jersey into Pennsylvania. There, in December, Washington and the army he was leading decided to rally and take the fight to the enemy. Fischer follows the American army as it crosses the Delaware and attacks Trenton. He then narrates the subsequent events, including the second Battle of Trenton, the Battle of Princeton, and Washington's escape into winter quarters.

Interspersed in the narrative, Fischer offers finely-drawn portraits of those who participated in these events. Washington, of course, takes center stage, but Fischer also gives much credit to his lieutenants. Men like Alexander Hamilton, the feckless Charles Lee, or Henry Knox, whose "stentorian lungs" made the actual crossing possible, receive their due. Fischer does not slight the common soldiers, either, paying full attention to the experiences of men such as John Haslett, who fell into the Delaware during the crossing. Even Washington's adversaries are fully developed characters; the Howe Brothers and Col. Rall become understandable and complex men, not cardboard villains.

Fischer's attention to the individual actors in the story points to one of his main themes: contingency. Fischer pauses repeatedly to point out moments and actions that could have turned out differently. The actors did not have all possible information, and they definitely did not have the hindsight of modern historians. Still, they had to make decisions, and those decisions had real consequences. Because of the contingent nature of events, individuals' actions mattered. Appreciating the unknown consequences of a given choice at any moment helps Fischer build drama and interest in the narrative. He thereby challenges historians to contemplate the conditions in which historical events occur and the dynamics by which they occur.

Fischer's narrative serves as a vehicle for him to consider two other significant issues. First, Fischer sees in the conduct of the American army during the Revolution the creation of an "American way of war." In Fischer's portrayal, the republican ideals of the Revolution became embodied in specific military prac-

## BOOK REVIEWS

tices. In contrast to the British or the Germans, who made warfare a way of life, the American citizen-soldiers fought the war reluctantly and hoped to end it quickly. As a result, they focused on effectiveness, rather than military orthodoxy. They also created a "policy of humanity" which extended equal treatment to all prisoners and regarded quarter as a right—instead of the optional policy it was in Europe. Although Fischer's description of this "way of war" may be an accurate account of the Revolution, too many counter-examples from other wars raise questions about the value of this generalization for understanding the subsequent two hundred years of American military history.

Fischer is secondly concerned with the nature of American liberty. Washington's army was composed of groups of men with very divergent notions of liberty and its place in society, from the communalism of New Englanders to the extreme individualism of Backcountry settlers to the egalitarianism of the Pennsylvania Associators. To lead such a motley band, Washington had to build a consensus. Fischer repeatedly discusses the multiple councils of war which Washington convened (255, 266, 278, 283, 310). British councils of war reflected the hierarchy of the society, as generals would explain to their subordinates the plan they had already devised. By contrast, Washington listened to all his commanders and worked to secure agreement through open discourse. In describing the practices of these very different armies, Fischer dramatizes the conflict between two "large historical processes": that "people could organize a society on the basis of liberty and freedom, and could actually make it work," and the discovery of "the capacity of human beings for order and discipline." To Fischer, the interaction of these two principles forms the "central tension in our modern condition" (5–6). Despite Fischer's claim, his narrative actually suggests a different conclusion; namely, that tension need not be the defining metaphor. Instead, the American army's experience pointed to a creative joining of the principles of order and liberty. Under Washington's leadership, the Americans harmonized the two tendencies by curbing the fractious individualism which threatened the army's existence and thereby made their success possible.

Despite these quibbles, Fischer has crafted an excellent book. The text is based on tremendous amounts of research, and academics should not miss the jewel of a historiographical essay in which Fischer compares the vicissitudes of the Leutze painting to trends in historical treatments of the event. In sum, the book is a delight to read and an important contribution to the literature of the American Revolution.

159

EDMUND S. MORGAN, *Benjamin Franklin*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002. Pp. 339. \$16.00 (paper).

Reviewed by James S. Baugess, Columbus State Community College

During the last decade, several works have appeared about the legendary Benjamin Franklin. H. W. Brands, Walter Isaacson, and others have all joined in chronicling the life and times of one of the nation's most remarkable men. What makes Franklin fascinating to historians and biographers is Franklin's insatiable curiosity about people, places, science, and politics. There was little in the world that did

## BOOK REVIEWS

not fascinate Franklin, and as a result, there is a continuing fascination with his extraordinary life.

Edmund S. Morgan, Sterling Professor Emeritus at Yale University, lends his contribution to the examination of Franklin's earthly journey. In three hundred and fourteen pages of narrative, Morgan takes the reader through a whirlwind trip of the great man's life. The reason historians know so much about Franklin is that there is little he did not tell about his life and generation. The thirty-six edited volumes of his papers have made Franklin accessible to many more scholars than ever. Morgan is one of the first to take advantage of the electronic media.

Franklin spent little time in the colonies after the onset of his middle age, and Morgan reveals a man who enjoyed flattery wherever he traveled on the continent. Morgan dismisses the possibility of sexual liaisons in Europe, but he does reveal an individual who spent a great deal of his younger years in riotous living. Morgan presents him not as statesman, though he was that, but as one with all the weaknesses that beset the best of men. It is obvious that Morgan likes his subject, which does not make him any different from scores of others who have written about Franklin.

Readers of *Fides et Historia* are no doubt interested in Morgan's handling of Franklin's religious orientation. Morgan presents Franklin as a skeptic, who did not accept any religious views based on faith alone. He rejected the Calvinistic faith of his father and the good citizenry of Puritan Boston, but he did not doubt the existence of a Creator, only the commonly held view of the deity popular at that time. Franklin listened to Cotton Mather and George Whitfield on numerous occasions, but it appears they did not have much of an impact on his thinking. He wanted to practice virtue as many eighteenth-century colonial people viewed it, which meant that one could practice virtue without adherence to any sectarian creed or reliance on scriptural precepts.

Readers of the work may have minor difficulties with the finished product. Morgan includes a list of brief biographies in the back of the book, but many may not be aware of such a list until after they have read the entire work. A detailed bibliography is absent from this work. Such issues may detract from the wonderfully chronicled tale and insights offered by this distinguished author. Morgan does include the credits and current locations of the portraits and images used within the text.

All in all, Edmund S. Morgan has produced a lucid and readable biography of an early American icon. Readers looking for a short, well-written, and engaging biography of the legendary Franklin can find what they are looking for within the pages of Morgan's captivating presentation.

160

ROBERT E. FRYKENBERG, ED., *Pandita Ramabai's America*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003. Pp. 322. \$49.00.

Reviewed by Douglas Carlson, Northwestern College (Iowa)

Nineteenth-century visitors to America created a rich literature of observation and critique of American society. Americans are most familiar with the Europeans who

## BOOK REVIEWS

came to see this off-shoot of their culture. Less well known were visitors from other parts of the world who traveled America and offered their comments. One of those was India's Pandita Ramabai, who came to America in 1886 and stayed for two years, after which she published *Conditions of Life in the United States and Travels There* for her own countrymen. In this volume editor Robert E. Frykenberg has presented the entire text for the first time in English. It is a rich and engaging work, both for her view of 1880s America, and the biographical introduction to this remarkable Indian woman. Some have compared her work to Tocqueville's earlier classic, *Democracy in America*. Ramabai was remarkable as a learned Indian woman who challenged the caste system, a social reformer on behalf of women, a convert to Christianity, and an insightful critic of American society.

Ramabai Dongre (1858–1922) has been called India's greatest woman of the nineteenth century. Born into a Brahman family whose itinerant scholar father believed in educating women, by age fifteen Ramabai could recite Sanskrit classics. Orphaned by famine, she and her brother went to Calcutta in 1878, where her learning astounded Brahmans, Europeans, and Sanskrit experts alike, earning her the honorific title "Pandita," meaning "learned." Ramabai's growing doubts about Hinduism, because of the subservient status it assigned to women, led her to an interest in Christianity, especially as she witnessed Christian work among destitute women. She began to speak out and write on behalf of Indian women; in 1883 she went to England where she was baptized, though she considered herself both Christian and Hindu. She came to America in 1886 to celebrate the first Indian woman to graduate from medical school. While here, she spoke on the plight of Indian women and gained a wide hearing as she asked for support for a proposed residential boarding school to provide shelter, literacy, and vocational skills for high-caste widows.

Ramabai returned to India and established several schools for destitute Indian women. She stirred controversy as her Christian social reform efforts earned criticism from her Hindu countrymen, and her non-western definitions of Christianity antagonized Anglo-American Christians. The final project of her noteworthy life was her new translation of scripture into Marathi, to make it more accessible to common people. She died in 1922, shortly after its completion. Criticized by her own people for challenging class, caste, birth, family, and religious tradition, she nevertheless remains a remarkable woman of India.

Her observations of America, published in India in 1889, provide a non-western critique, often criticizing her own country by comparison, and a snapshot of 1880s American life. Nine chapters address the history of America from European discovery through the Revolution, and comment on the system of government, living and domestic conditions, education, religion, condition of women, and trade and business. Overall, she was impressed with American material, economic, and social progress, and—not surprisingly for a person from a caste-bound society—the degree of individual initiative and freedom, especially for women. "The principal strength of the nation indeed is this," said Ramabai, "that ordinary people have the right to consider their own future interests and to vote on how the nation's business is to be conducted" (102). Wide-spread concern for the common good struck her as a powerful dynamic in American life, underlying the work of

## BOOK REVIEWS

government on all levels, as well as the efforts of individual citizens, resulting in an infrastructure that allowed for the development of dynamic commerce and industry. Public education for all children, boys and girls, was another result of American public-spiritedness, creating opportunities for women which she highlighted for her Indian readers.

While praising America for its accomplishments, she was not oblivious to shortcomings. Ramabai noted that Americans' awareness of their independence and progress led to arrogance and a superiority complex, and a lack of appreciation and respect for other peoples. She also was critical of American males for their consumption of alcohol and tobacco, and applauded the work of women's organizations like the WCTU. She cited statistics comparing expenditures on alcohol and tobacco with expenditures on Christian missions. "Although the American people firmly believe that non-Christians will go to eternal hell, they spend a total of only [one hundred fifty-ninth part of their total wealth] propagating their faith" (203). She recognized racial discrimination against Afro-Americans and Native Americans, even citing Helen Hunt Jackson's *A Century of Dishonor* (1881), which documented American mistreatment of the continent's original inhabitants. But she was overly optimistic about improvement in the near future, assuming discrimination would soon disappear, a naive claim to those who know now that the worst of Jim Crow and lynching was yet to come. And present-day historians may be surprised to see James Garfield listed among popular presidents with Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Lincoln.

*Pandita Ramabai's America* is an important work for several reasons. As a feminist and reformer in the late-nineteenth century, Ramabai was singular in her own culture and more forward-looking than most Americans. Her emphasis on individual opportunity and initiative, public-spiritedness and education, and the dynamic, open society they created in America, was a criticism directed at her own culture, and highlights for Americans historic qualities perhaps taken for granted. And finally, her evolving, ever-deepening Christian faith and how she lived it in Indian culture is a story worth reading for Americans seeking to better understand the wider, non-western world.