

## Reviews

*Paris, 1200*, by John W. Baldwin. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010. 289 pages. \$24.95, paper.

*Paris, 1200* has a succinctly descriptive title. Here, Baldwin attempts to describe the capital of the royal Île-de-France in a year when it was about to become the cultural capital of Europe. Notre Dame is half finished, and the Gothic style and polyphonic music are being born. The University of Paris and the scholastic method are suddenly recognizable. The walls of the left bank are nearly done and the walls of the right bank have been marked out. King Philip Augustus (1180-1223), increasingly a full-time city resident, is supervising a growing bureaucracy and jockeying for position with King John of England (1199-1216) and Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) in a dance that would ultimately define national and church/state boundaries. This attempt to focus on a single year in a single city contrasts sharply with traditional textbook presentations of the High Middle Ages as several centuries of blurry growth to be surveyed in separate, poorly integrated topical (sub)chapters.

The project is a little better in theory than in execution. Even for a city as dynamic as Paris, medieval sources have awkward gaps and limitations. Baldwin's Paris is fitfully illuminated by chronicles, administrative records, sermons, and schoolmen's critiques of their world. While trying to foreground 1200, he exploits sources from the surrounding decades and, even then, he often cannot resist telling the rest of the story. Moreover, because he has already published prolifically on France in this era (another of his books attempts to use the year 1200 as the pivot for describing some northern French writings on sexuality), he has to balance summaries of previous research with newer insights. He tends to sail through material familiar to him with minimal citations, often leaving even direct quotations unreferenced. Sometimes he digresses, as in his discussion of ecclesiastical reform idealism where Paris tends to fade into the background (pp. 204-210). The result is that undergraduate students may find the tone, treatment, and coverage inconsistent.

Despite the above, this is still an interesting and informative book. The wealth of the Île-de-France is illuminated. Social classes and politics are well explicated. Notre Dame, seen in mid construction, comes alive as a place covered with brightly painted statues but where no organ would sound until the fourteenth century. Baldwin offers thick description, using quotations and details. He does not overanalyze: for example, he makes no comment about what it might have meant that Philip's treasurer was a Templar and his chief minister a Hospitaller, leaving speculation about the roles of military orders to his

readers. Scholars who know something of the period will not complain about digressions that demonstrate that many of Philip's gains in revenues and lands had been achieved even before the final defeat of John (pp. 117-125) or that reveal the schools, their curricula, their ideals, and their internationalism (pp. 175-213). Inserted into the text are student-friendly parenthetical glosses of Latin, French, and technical terms.

This book could fit into a French history course, but its most obvious use is in a "great city" course focused on Paris, a city whose phases of development are already described in many excellent books. Baldwin offers a readable, reasonably priced, integrated survey focusing on the city's physical, political, cultural, and religious development. It is true that for Paris in 1200, a great book already exists—Urban Tigner Holmes' *Daily Living in the Twelfth Century, Based upon the Observations of Alexander Neckham in London and Paris* (1952), but Holmes focuses on concrete urban material culture, offering the sort of "history of everyday life" that Baldwin specifically eschews (p. 9).

Texas Tech University

John Howe

*Teaching History With Big Ideas: Cases of Ambitious Teachers*, edited by S. G. Grant and Jill M. Gradwell. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010. 180 pages. \$75.00, cloth.

Books on the craft of teaching history often fall into two camps. The first is theoretical. These books generally lament the current state of affairs in history education and purport to show that some ridiculous percentage of high school students don't know a particular fact about George Washington. Their solution to this travesty is to change the way we think about teaching history. To be sure, many of these texts are useful. Yet when teachers are faced with turning new theories from these works into classroom practice, they tend to be at a loss for what specific actions to take.

The second camp solves this dilemma by providing some set number of "engaging classroom activities" that will work instantly and will leave students begging for more. Again, such works are frequently quite helpful. Yet the problem with these books tends to be their failure to connect specific activities to students' understanding of the big picture of history and its present relevance.

One characteristic shared by both types of books is an unabashed certainty that the contents of the book will solve the problems that teachers face. The absence of such arrogance in *Teaching History with Big Ideas* makes this important book particularly refreshing—and valuable. Filled with the passion and humility of reflective teachers, each chapter serves as both an eloquent call for a pedagogical shift to teaching with big ideas and a practical guide to applying those ideas in the classroom.

Besides three bookend chapters, which are written by the editors (education professors), practicing teachers are the authors of the book's case studies. Each chapter does a fine job demonstrating the increases in student engagement and learning that arise from big-idea teaching. Michael Meyer, for example, was troubled that so few of his students knew anything about Africa. He had previously taught units on Africa that resulted in a unit assessment where students simply repeated the facts that he had presented. Yet genuine student engagement comes from an internalization of history and the ability to make one's own meaning, which Meyer was ultimately able to accomplish by letting go of his intellectual authority in the classroom and turning his course's central focus into students' open-ended grappling with large questions relating to African history. Similarly, Joseph

Karb and Andrew Beiter's chapter on teaching genocide with big ideas flowed from the belief that the limitations of the New York state standards prevented students from understanding how such atrocities can occur—and that they still happen today. Here, student engagement came about especially through understanding that students need to put a face and name on past events in order to get beyond mere numbers.

A major benefit of big-idea teaching is the way it fosters a rigorous learning environment. The big questions behind big-idea teaching, if well-conceived, are opened and debatable—requiring students to go far beyond the memorization of facts in their intellectual inquiry, as Julie Doyle's contribution on the teaching imperialism shows particularly effectively. In a like manner, big ideas allow for genuine differentiation because, as Sarah Foels persuasively demonstrates, students have multiple access points throughout the unit to answer a master question in an increasingly complex way.

Naturally, there are a few limitations worth pointing out. All the teachers come from New York, where the Regents exam places a peculiar burden on teachers to teach to The Test. Also, in the end, neither the editors nor the teachers provide a decent definition of "big-idea teaching." Definitions can often be more disabling than empowering, but in this case, the lack of clarity can leave inexperienced teachers at a loss for how to accomplish such best practices—or lead obtuse teachers to declare that they are already doing it. Finally, surprisingly absent were any mentions of the use of technology in the classroom, except for Doyle's use of a classroom blog.

In the end, though, S. G. Grant and Jill M. Gradwell have put together a book that will provoke much thought—and produce many fine new practices. The volume is full of concrete practical advice so that teachers will be able to "see" how big-idea teaching in their classrooms would actually look. Even more refreshingly, the teachers speak honestly about their struggles to implement big-idea teaching in their classrooms. Significant obstacles, whether in the form of student capabilities or the enormous pressure of state standardized tests, loom large. And big-idea teaching is not a pre-packaged curriculum that can be easily put into place instantaneously. Instead, it takes hard work and constant reflection—two characteristics modeled amply within the pages of this fine book.

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Molly Myers  
Robert D. Johnston

*Japan in World History*, by James L. Huffman. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. 156 pages. \$19.95, paper.

James Huffman's brisk tour of Japan's history begins like the great classics in history, with a foray into the natural geography of the archipelago that becomes the far eastern state. He proceeds apace 128 pages later into the present day. As might be expected, the book offers an excellent primer on Japanese history, but few historical details. As *Japan in World History* is a survey in Oxford's New Oxford World History series, the book continues the spirit of that series. The book contains twenty-three graphics and maps, with chapters under twenty pages in length.

For the generalist and instructor of world history courses, Huffman's survey provides context for major events and points for comparison to other countries and geographic regions. This is perhaps the book's greatest strength. Readers searching for specific details on Japanese history may consult Huffman's suggestions at the end of his brief volume, which include on-line sources.

In seven chapters organized by epoch, *Japan in World History* covers major themes and events. The book's purpose, of course, is not to answer the question "why?" (which I found myself asking constantly), but to offer that broad overview, perhaps even to raise questions for further consideration. A majority of the book is devoted to the modern period, Huffman's area of expertise. The last three chapters cover Japan since 1850.

Huffman's first chapter recounts Japan's earliest history, geographic space, religious foundations, development of the *ritsuryō* system, and the late emergence of a written language. Chapters two through four cover the medieval and early modern periods. The creation of the samurai class and its replacement by a more modern system, along with the promotion of the emperor to a position of prominence in the nineteenth century, form one of the few narrative arcs that bind this brief history together.

*Japan in World History* is a misleading title. This is not a story of Japan in the world, though the later chapters and the book's conclusion elaborate on that. Instead, Huffman frequently draws comparisons, for example, with China as in the absence of a government-administered exam system. Japan's contact with the European (and American) world also undergirds the latter part of the book.

Frequently mentioned are women and the evolution of gender conceptions in Japanese history, a significant inclusion given the scope of this text. The best-known works of the Heian period, for instance, were authored by women. Matters of gender account for a section of nearly every chapter and are far more on display than issues of social class, which are mentioned to a lesser extent.

Huffman's coverage can, of course, be found elsewhere, but not so cogently compiled in one place. Huffman's brief contextual treatment of the numerous literary figures that students of Japan are likely to encounter in their reading attests to this value. The reader is treated to the development of haiku, and the contexts for *The Tale of Genji* and *The Pillow Book*. We further encounter the origins of Zen Buddhism and the emergence of Shintōism as a state religion.

For history instructors new to Japanese history, the book offers an invaluable overview. In survey courses, Huffman's contribution may serve as an alternative to larger textbooks where Japan is one among many topics. A two-page timeline at the end offers a useful chronological tool for the classroom (and for budding instructors attempting to keep this whirlwind history in order). The book is easily read at the undergraduate level and could find its way into college-level high school courses.

In sum, readers on Japan would be hard-pressed to find another concise history that covers this much ground so clearly and in this price range.

*Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy*

Eric R. Smith

*Empire for Liberty: A History of American Imperialism from Benjamin Franklin to Paul Wolfowitz*, by Richard H. Immerman. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010. 271 pages. \$24.95, cloth.

Is the United States an empire? Can a nation that sprang from anticolonial rebellion and routinely celebrates in its commitment to self-determination possibly merit the adjective "imperial"? These questions, as Richard H. Immerman makes clear at the outset of his superb *Empire for Liberty*, have stirred fierce controversy over the years, not least in the period since the September 11 attacks and the enormous expansion of U.S. global activism that quickly followed.

Immerman enters the fray with a resounding “yes.” The United States, he contends, “is and always has been an empire” (p. 4). But Immerman hastens to add that it is an empire of a peculiar kind. In contrast to other imperial peoples, Americans have always imagined themselves to be exerting power in defense of human liberty or to spread it to new lands. “Perceived through the lens of America’s ideology, empire and liberty are mutually reinforcing,” Immerman asserts (p. 5).

But, like the great revisionist William Appleman Williams, Immerman insists that Americans are tragically deluded in this self-understanding. U.S. leaders, argues Immerman, have all too often behaved in ways that denied other peoples true liberty. The result has been fierce resistance around the world—whether, for example, by Native Americans in the eighteenth century or Iraqi insurgents in the twenty-first—against attempts by the United States to impose its will. This “inherent contradiction” between U.S. aspirations and impacts, Immerman argues, has been lost on most Americans until very recently, when the horrors of the Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo prisons exposed the inconsistencies more clearly than ever before (p. 233).

Immerman makes his case eloquently, succinctly, and convincingly. But what most distinguishes the book is not the central argument, which strongly echoes the old revisionist interpretation, so much as the manner in which Immerman goes about making it. The book examines American thinking about empire over the centuries by focusing on six prominent U.S. leaders who, in one way or another, strongly advocated the spread of American power and principles. Taken together, the biographies span the entirety of U.S. history, making the book a good choice for adoption in place of a narrative textbook in undergraduate courses on the history of U.S. foreign relations.

Immerman begins with Benjamin Franklin, showing how America’s preeminent early diplomat lost confidence in the British empire and embraced instead a vision of bold U.S. expansionism in North America. The book turns next to John Quincy Adams, who earns Immerman’s praise as “the greatest secretary of state in U.S. history” because of his skill in realizing Franklin’s hopes for continental empire stretching to the Pacific despite misgivings about expanding slavery at the same time (p. 60). The third chapter examines William Henry Seward, who, Immerman argues, opened a new era by imagining U.S. empire-building not as addition of contiguous territory, but as the acquisition of economic opportunity overseas. Immerman’s fourth subject, Henry Cabot Lodge, helped realize Seward’s vision of a commercial empire by leading efforts to acquire island bases that could facilitate the growth of American trade and, equally important, demonstrate growing U.S. power. For John Foster Dulles, the focus of Immerman’s next chapter, expansion served a much different purpose—to build security for the United States and its democratic allies against a communist system “that by definition was antiliberty” (p. 183). Dulles’s relatively defensive vision of American empire contrasts sharply with the outlook of Paul Wolfowitz, Immerman’s final subject. With as much zeal as any earlier Americans, Wolfowitz and his fellow neoconservatives believed that the United States had a special mission to spread liberty around the world.

Like any author of a collective biography, Immerman is open to criticism for the particular cast of characters that he chose. His story of U.S. empire would be quite different, after all, if he had included a pro-slavery Southerner such as James Knox Polk or an ambitious Cold War liberal such as Walt Rostow. But the larger problem with the book is Immerman’s unwillingness to define “empire.” To be sure, a central point of the book is that “empire” has meant different things to different people. But, by categorizing almost any U.S. use of power beyond American borders as imperialism, Immerman risks diluting the term to the point where the distinction between empire and simple conduct of an assertive foreign policy starts to blur.

Still, *Empire for Liberty* deserves a wide audience of students, scholars, and even general readers. Immerman provides crucial, poorly understood background that helps place recent controversies in a broad context, and he offers fresh analysis of some of America's most colorful and complicated thinkers about America's place in the world.

University of Texas at Austin

Mark Atwood Lawrence

*God of Liberty: A Religious History of the American Revolution*, by Thomas S. Kidd. New York: Basic Books, 2010. 298 pages. \$26.95, cloth.

Historian Jon Butler, in his landmark work *Awash in a Sea of Faith: Christianizing the American People* (1990) asserted, in spite of an abundance of evidence to the contrary, "At its heart, the Revolution was a profoundly secular event" (p. 194). A history of the American Revolution underscoring religion's power as a rhetorical device for political leaders to motivate the colonists to democratic-republican rebellion, as well as buttressing the courage of American soldiers, has been sorely needed for decades. Thomas S. Kidd seems to have filled this gap with *God of Liberty*, his follow-up to *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelicalism in Early America* (2006), in which he asserts that Protestant evangelicalism was a positive galvanizing force contributing significantly to the formation of American identity. Here, he extends his logic to see evangelical Christianity's beneficence infusing the American Revolution.

Kidd's dubious thesis is that "religion, both during the Revolution and afterward, provided essential moral and political principles to the revolutionaries and forged the new American nation" (p. 5), and he grounds this assertion in a series of five religious principles he contends were shared between evangelicals such as the Virginia Baptist John Leland and deists such as Thomas Jefferson: 1) that no government should establish a religion; 2) that God is the exclusive guarantor of natural rights; 3) that human "sinfulness" threatens civil society; 4) that a republic must be grounded in virtue; and 5) that God raises some nations up while pulling others down. There is no doubt that Kidd is right about the Founders' round rejection of religious establishments and that there must be republican virtue in a civil society, but Jefferson, Madison, and the less Calvinistic signers of the Declaration of Independence and framers of the Constitution would have been uncomfortable using a word such as "sinfulness" to characterize humanity's condition. However, a deist would argue that governments are the only guarantors of natural rights, and deists deny that the "Creator" ever meddles in "Creation," whether directly or indirectly for any overarching purpose—and as such, nations rise and fall because of their own virtues and failings alone. Kidd thus implies that the Founders built the United States on a foundation of Protestant Christian theology—a misconception cherished by evangelicals, social and political conservatives, and those who have ignored several of the Founders' explicit statements to the contrary—but this assumption pervades this brief study.

Written in an academic yet still accessible style, *God of Liberty* is aimed at college students and the educated public, and therefore would not be appropriate for high school students, though teachers will find valuable topics for classroom debate and discussion concerning religion and politics. The major contribution *God of Liberty* makes is its emphasis that eighteenth-century Euro-Americans were literate in Judeo-Christian theology and intimately familiar with the stories in the Bible, which the revolutionary leadership used to promote their cause. While it is true that a higher percentage of Americans at the time of the Revolution saw the world in Christian terms than do today,

this does not mean that skeptics such as Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson voted for public fast and thanksgiving days, and the atheist Thomas Paine laced *Common Sense* with religious language, because they truly wished to invoke God's favor of in the War for Independence. They did so because they knew that the mass of ordinary people needed to believe the Revolution to be a glorious cause—a point Kidd concedes at several points in the book. By arguing that revolutionary ideas of virtue were grounded in Protestant Christianity rather than Greco-Roman philosophy and Enlightenment rationalism, he tries to identify the framers of the Constitution as the founders of a Christian nation even if they did not set out to establish “a specifically Christian government” (p. 214). Through such statements, the reader is left with the unmistakable impression that the American Revolution was a profoundly religious event. In the Epilogue, Kidd finally tips his hand and urges “skeptics [and] secularists” to emulate Jefferson and encourage the use of religious language in the political arena, using unreferenced statistics about American religiosity in ominously warning “government and its judges in particular ... to think carefully before seeking to diminish religion's influence in American public life” (pp. 254, 255). Kidd has produced a book that fills the need for a history of the Revolution that countenances religion's role in it, but we shall have to continue waiting for one that is more thorough and balanced.

*Texas A&M University-Commerce*

John H. Smith

*Not For Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*, by Martha C. Nussbaum. Princeton and Oxford, MA: Princeton University Press, 2010. 159 pages. \$22.95, cloth.

Martha Nussbaum, a philosopher at the University of Chicago, with a long engagement in the promotion of humanities curriculum in other nations, especially India, has written a comparative analysis of the place of the humanities in public schools and in higher education across three continents. With *Not for Profit*, she has written a book for our times, “a manifesto” as she calls it, aimed at protecting curriculum devoted to the production of citizens of the world. Having just passed through an eight-year nadir of national chauvinism and political obscurantism, not to mention the flouting of international law and consensus-based global science, her defense of curriculum promoting critical thinking, questioning authority, and empathy for others is welcome indeed. Nussbaum frames the threat in economic terms. In her telling, it is the tendency to reduce higher education to the imperatives of the bottom line that poses the greater risk. This line of attack allows her to range broadly over much wider time frames and issues.

At the heart of the book is an account of the kind of education, she calls it Socratic education, most likely to produce active, critical, and engaged citizens. In the United States, this model of pedagogy and curriculum can be traced from Horace Mann and Bronson Alcott to John Dewey, and to contemporary contributions of Matthew Lipman and Gareth Matthews. In Europe, a much older pedigree derives from Socrates and Plato, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Johann Pestalozzi, and Friedrich Foebel. Whatever the antecedent, the outcome is a model of education that prepared citizens to think for themselves and to criticize tradition and unjustifiable hierarchies at the same time it liberated the human imagination to embrace empathy and innovation. Historians will certainly find much to appreciate about what Nussbaum has to say on curriculum for

global citizenship education, since understanding world history and domestic diversity figure centrally in history teaching today.

The central danger facing this paradigm of higher education is the potential co-optation of education to serve anti-democratic forces. Interestingly, she does not argue humanistic values are bad for business. Indeed, she notes the attractiveness liberal arts majors offer to corporations because they bring critical ideas and “thinking outside the box” innovation. Such rich skill sets have a definite appeal to contemporary capitalists seeking any advantage in the global marketplace. Elsewhere, she notes the generous sponsorship of higher education by the wealthy, still enamored by the well-rounded educations they and their children receive from prestigious institutions like the University of Chicago. The image that most terrifies Nussbaum is that of the technician, engineer, or pre- and post-professional, educated only in marketplace skills, but shorn of ethical, moral, or humanistic depth. Such a person might be capable of any kind of horror whether economic or otherwise. One has only to layer on to this grim prospect the secrecy of the corporate and national security regimes and repressive or even genocidal consequences become, as Noam Chomsky likes to say, “predictable.” What Nussbaum does not consider is the lack of appeal the student who is a product of a culture of individual dissent and accountability is likely to have today for such institutions, since they are more likely to be whistle-blowers than pliant corporate stooges.

The book does not purport to be exhaustive or empirical. It is suggestive, impressionistic, and anecdotal, and therefore more illustrative than systematic. At best, her work is the tip of the point of the sword aimed at the application of managerial and bureaucratic principles threatening higher education as we know it. For more systematic treatments of the threat to contemporary American academia represented by threats to tenure, creation of a vast academic proletariat, and fraudulent accountability regimes, one would more profitably turn to Slaughter and Rhoades, *Academic Capitalism and the New Economy*; Schuster and Finkelstein, *The American Faculty*; and Judt, *Ill Fairs the Land*. For K-12, a reading of Ravitch, *Death and Life of the Great American Public School System* is crucial. When set against these latter works, Nussbaum constructs a disappointingly weak critique of the situation in the United States, as represented in the last chapter of the book, titled, “Democratic Education on the Ropes.” Here, one finds an almost cheerful assessment of the current state of American higher education, although a keener awareness of the threat to American public education coming from the “educational reformers” pushing accountability and standardized testing in the K-12 systems of public education. She offers rightly critical assessments of the situations facing the academies of the United Kingdom and India. Based on the case she constructs, her work is alarmist rather than persuasive, but it is a warning we ignore at our peril.

Long Beach City College

Julian J. DelGaudio

*Imagining the West in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, edited by György Péteri. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010. 330 pages. \$27.95, paper.

Based on a special journal issue published in 2008 in *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, which was revised to include three new chapters, the volume edited by György Péteri is a welcome addition to a growing field of books and edited collections which interpret the history of Eastern Europe and the Soviet bloc from a



perspective informed by anthropology, the history of everyday life, consumption studies, and cultural history. At the same time, *Imagining the West in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* broadens and enriches this perspective by looking at its topic through the lenses of transnational cultural transfers and interactions between the East and the West before and during socialism.

All the essays in this collection are interpretatively rich pieces on a variety of topics stretching from Czech images of Russia and the Russians in the nineteenth century; attempts to place the work of composer Richard Wagner and recreate a northern Bayreuth in a socialist context in the GDR; and representations of the West in Soviet films and the popular culture of the Thaw period; to the reception by Soviet dissidents of the work of U.S. and other Western journalists posted in Moscow, and the interactions between them, during the 1960s and 1970s. Other topics covered by the book include the appropriation and nationalization of the American public health model in interwar Hungary; the use of children's rights to advance Soviet interests before, during, and after Stalinism; the avatars of the reception of bourgeois culture in East Germany; cultural negotiations between Western and Eastern architectural models carried out in 1950s Warsaw; Soviet responses (both official and popular) to the American exhibition of consumer goods and Western standards of living organized in Sokolniki Park in Moscow in 1959; and Czech party officials' presentation of the consumer-driven post-1968 normalization period in Czechoslovakia as a better alternative to the West.

Given the need for a previous grounding in the history of Eastern Europe, Russia, and the Soviet Union, the volume as a whole is more suitable for use in a graduate seminar than in a freshman survey. However, because of their readability and scholarly relevance, many chapters would also fit well—together or apart—into the category of required or recommended readings in a variety of upper-level courses for undergraduates interested in the history of East-West relations, the Cold War, or twentieth-century Russia and Eastern Europe. Moreover, Susan Reid's chapter on Soviet responses to the 1959 American exhibition in Moscow, with its focus and especially adept critique of primary sources, would nicely complement the list of required readings of any upper-level syllabus for a class on historical research and methods. Among other uses, this reviewer also warmly recommends this book to students and scholars of East-West relations and interactions in a global context. The volume would fit well in and nuance both graduate seminar discussions and research focused on world historical developments and transnational encounters analyzed from a transatlantic, colonial, or postcolonial perspective.

With its coverage of interactions between local, national, regional, and ultimately global levels in nineteenth-century Bohemia, interwar Hungary, the Soviet Union, GDR, and socialist Poland and Czechoslovakia, the volume transcends both established chronological, thematic, and narrow scholarly boundaries. Although more attention to the image of the West and negotiations of its meaning in a capitalist setting in Eastern Europe before World War II—and socialist Hungary, Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania after it—would have enhanced the volume's area studies appeal, the strength of the individual essays and the amount of learning that one gathers from the volume as a whole amply compensates for this lack.

The volume's introduction and conclusion also deserve mentioning here. The conclusion nicely draws out the significance and the connections between individual pieces, while the introduction emphasizes that although "many discourses of systemic identity" in socialist Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union "had to insist on construing the West as the constitutive other, on mapping it *without*, and on representing it as socialism's past," in spite of official arguments to the contrary, as Péteri perceptively argues, "the Occident was also part of the self; it asserted itself *within*, and it appeared to be *ahead* rather than *behind*" (p. 11, italics in the original). Nuanced analysis such as this is just

one of the many insights that reward the reader (be it a student or a scholar) interested either in learning more about the region and its avatars in European and world history or integrating the volume's body of knowledge into broader scholarly discourses.

Marywood University

Alexander Vari

*Seattle and the Roots of Urban Sustainability: Inventing Ecotopia*, by Jeffrey Craig Sanders. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010. 288 pages. \$30.00, cloth.

Cities evolve. Like all habitat, cities respond to pressures seen and unseen. The availability of food, water, and natural resources, like the influence of climate, geology, and soils, are among those factors that determine their capacity to reinvent themselves. Their sites and situations are also a consequence of being human constructs: population dynamics, economic activity, and political ambition shape the built landscape. Central to their growth and development, too, are their residents' insight and energy, desires to produce and consume, ideological engagements, and social sensibilities. Cities are made and are forever in the making.

Their very fluidity is what allows historians to track their evolution. This is what distinguishes such seminal texts as Lewis Mumford's *The City in History* (1961); Jane Jacobs' *The Economy of Cities* (1970); William Cronon's *Nature's Metropolis* (1991); and Martin Melosi's *The Sanitary City* (1999)—to name but a few. Such a narrative orientation is manifest as well in Jeffrey Craig Sanders' more narrowly framed but no less intriguing book, *Seattle and the Roots of Urban Sustainability*. Indeed, it is going to be a lot of fun to teach because Sanders situates the Pacific Northwest's largest city in a dynamic context, at once local, regional, and national in scope; carefully tracks how its citizenry variously responded to opportunities to reconstruct their community during the last half of the twentieth century; and offers astute assessments of Seattle's ambitious, self-declared (and, yes, self-satisfied) claim to be *the* American Ecotopia.

Look no further, then, if you seek a primer on the melding of environmental and urban history or want students to encounter a sophisticated analysis of late twentieth-century grassroots politics. And if you would like to compare two monographs focused on the same city, consider this instructive possibility: like Matthew Klinge's *Emerald City: An Environmental History of Seattle* (2007), itself a rich exploration of the conflicts and controversies that have shaped the contemporary community, Sanders' monograph probes the interplay between Seattle's built and natural landscapes.

Yet Sanders' special focus is on the "postwar metropolitan context" that offers "a sharper image of the critical links between urban history and popular ecology." Noting that the "travails and experimental energy generated in the city between the 1960s and 1980s birthed innovative solutions to both urban and environmental problems," and that its citizenry became increasingly concerned "about the future and meaning of the urban form itself," he argues that Seattle became "a laboratory where diverse actors linked social change to environmental change." By this means, they deliberately, consciously "tested the emerging ideas of sustainability in the immediate spatial terms of their neighborhoods, open spaces, and public gardens," one vital consequence of which was that they also "reworked the meaning of home" (pp. 9-10).

On this bold premise, Sanders delivers. He deftly selects a series of local issues with national resonance, and then carefully analyzes the tensions they embody and the

significance they carry. Consider his wonderful recapitulation of the protected debate over the proposed destruction of Pike Street Market as part of an urban-renewal scheme. Beginning in the 1960s, the Friends of the Market battled city hall, the federal government, and developers, using tactics that came out of the civil rights and anti-war movements (and that were replicated in similar historic-preservation struggles in Boston, New Orleans, and San Antonio). But what made this fight unique was its focus on food, a point architectural critic Ada Louise Huxtable underscored when in the *New York Times* she linked “the market to the joys of salmon and strawberries on the shores of Puget Sound” (p. 62). This political contest thus forged early links between “consumption, nature, and urbanism” that Sanders rightly sees as key to Seattle’s subsequent “postindustrial reinvention” (pp. 62-63).

Just as shrewd are his chapter-length explorations of the pushback against the Model Cities program in the Central District; the place—physical and figurative—of native peoples in a gentrifying Seattle; the catalytic power of community gardens in working-class neighborhoods; the hunger for home-based self-sufficiency in a globalizing marketplace; and the power of new technological wealth to reconstruct old industrial areas. Each raises a host of intertwined questions about social inequality and environmental injustice; each shows how local grassroots activists responded to these shifting pressures across time. These individuals and groups, Sanders observes, launched “an enduring struggle to harmonize nature and the city” that they hoped would lead to a more habitable, just, and sustainable Seattle (p. 237). His innovative book makes it brilliantly clear how difficult it has been to formulate and realize these compelling convictions.

*Pomona College*

Char Miller

*Lafayette: Prisoner of State*, by Paul S. Spalding. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2010. 403 pages. \$59.95, cloth.

Most discussions of the life of the Marquis de Lafayette deal primarily with his role as either Washington’s youthful, ideologically driven aide-de-camp or the self-sacrificing aristocrat striving for the liberalization of *ancien regime* France. However, in this unique and engaging treatment, Paul Spalding delves deeply into one of the more overlooked aspects of Lafayette’s life, namely, his five-year imprisonment. Steering clear of a detailed treatment of Lafayette’s role in either side of the Revolutionary Atlantic world or political philosophy, Spalding presents the reader with a focused, exhaustively researched account of one of the eighteenth century’s most famous political prisoners. Spalding argues that Lafayette’s imprisonment reveals “the mechanisms that governments applied to suppress people and ideas that they found objectionable” while showing that informal groups “working cooperatively, imaginatively ... could bypass the machinery of suppression” (p. 228).

Spalding begins his treatment with Lafayette’s capture by Prussian and Austrian troops while crossing the French border into Coalition territory and follows his subject’s journey across Prussia and Austria, finally ending in the fortified town of Olmütz inside the Austrian Empire. After a botched escape attempt (which results in a worsening of his living conditions), Lafayette is joined by his courageous wife Adrienne and his daughters (his son having been entrusted to the care of his namesake George Washington). While Spalding ultimately concludes that it was French power that secured Lafayette’s release, it was the efforts of *Fayetteists* to keep his plight in the public sphere, place Austria on the defensive, and make his release a matter of French honor.

As it unfolds, Spalding's tale encompasses an extensive and international spectrum of characters. On one side of the campaign were those sympathetic to his plight, known as *Fayetteists*, who provided money, established communication networks, and openly sought his release. These supporters included American, British, and French supporters ranging from George Washington, Thaddeus Kosciuszko, and Charles Fox to Georgiana the Duchess of Devonshire, Napoleon Bonaparte, and the enthralling Madame Germaine de Staël. There were also those who virulently opposed Lafayette's release, including the staunch opponent of the ideology of revolution, Edmund Burke, who believed that as the originator of "all these calamities," Lafayette had gotten what he deserved (p. 40). For many of his opponents, Lafayette embodied the spirit of revolution and they believed that only through his imprisonment could the spread of such dangerous ideas be contained. In the course of Spalding's narrative, Lafayette himself is relegated to the margins as he is transformed by his supporters into a symbol of the rights of man and constitutional government. Here, the reader learns more about the apparatus of the state that held him and the network of *Fayetteists* that sought his release than the man himself.

For students and teachers, the international debate over Lafayette's captivity reveals several specifics about political and social life in the era of Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. For America, diplomatic efforts by men such as Timothy Pinckney, while admirable, represented an unwillingness by the young republic to openly commit itself to the hero's cause and provoke the continental powers. For Britain, the affair over Lafayette exposed a deeply partisan brand of politics that pitted Foxites, who viewed Lafayette as a scion of constitutional liberty, against Burkean style conservatives, who saw his ideals as a threat to social order. For Prussia and Austria, the details of Lafayette's captivity laid bare both the effects of enlightened absolutist reform in the fields of law and justice as well as the retreat from enlightened ideals in the face of revolutionary war. Another compelling facet explored by Spalding is the role played by women such as de Staël and Adrienne Lafayette. Female *Fayetteists* worked side-by-side with their male counterparts to keep Lafayette's struggle in the public sphere by writing letters to private individuals and media outlets from Philadelphia to Paris. Spalding points out that the political activities of these women did not go uncommented upon by men such as Thomas Jefferson, who saw them as "exceptional, even objectionable" (p. 156).

The strength in Spalding's work lies in his ability, through meticulous research in a number of languages, to shed light on how late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century communication networks were constructed, maintained, and exploited by participants on both sides. This work can effectively be paired with the works of Robert Darnton, such as *Poetry and the Police: Communication Networks in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Harvard University Press, 2010). Spalding's account is well suited for upper-division and graduate courses concerned with early modern Europe that discuss the evolution of the public sphere. It is a great lecture primer for instructors discussing revolutionary era crime and punishment.

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Brian Odom

*Islamic Gunpowder Empires: Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals*, by Douglas E. Streusand. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2010. 400 pages. \$42.00, cloth.

Douglas Streusand clearly states his thesis in the preface to *Islamic Gunpowder Empires* of creating a comparative introduction to the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires.

The work includes six chapters: an introduction, a survey of the warfare and politics of Central Asia that encouraged the rise of tribal kingdoms, one chapter each for the three empires, and a very brief conclusion. There is both a bibliographic essay and an extensive bibliography of predominantly secondary sources at the end, in addition to providing chronologies and dynastic tables. A lack of footnotes (even for statistical references), reliance largely on Western secondary sources, and extensive—although brief and occasionally vague—historiographical references demonstrate the book's intended audience of upper-level undergraduate students.

Chapter One deals with an introduction to themes Streusand intends to consider, such as the endurance of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal empires in comparison to other tribal kingdoms, as well as emphasis on political and military history and government administration. The second chapter, titled "Common Heritage, Common Dilemma," deals with the background history of the empires as well as offers brief consideration of a variety of topics, including the idea of divine kingship, the legacy of the Abbasids and Mongols, the institution of military slavery, and discussion of the rather cumbersome phrase of "Turko-Irano-Islamic statecraft."

The individual chapters on the three empires are divided up under largely the same subtitles and in order of importance in the book, starting with a quite detailed political history and then leading to considerations of sovereignty, law, military organization, and religion (as it relates to political and military structure); central and provincial administrations; the economy; society, popular religion, and cultural and intellectual history; and, lastly, an analysis of the respective empire's decline and/or adaptation over time. There is by far greater coverage of the Ottoman than the other two empires, even though consideration of the Ottomans leaves off in 1730, approximately the period of the end of the Safavid and Mughal kingdoms. By the author's own admission, the Mughals are his specialty, with the chapter on the Safavids the weakest of the three. The order of the subtitles is significant, for although the publisher, and to a lesser degree the author, claims that the work includes social, cultural, and intellectual history, these sections are tacked on the end of the chapters and are so brief that the reader wonders why these subjects have been included. An example can be seen in the chapter on the Mughals, where social, cultural, and intellectual history is covered in only three pages (pp. 280-282), one full page of which is photos, in a chapter that is otherwise eighty-eight pages long. The author himself states that the greatest emphasis of the book is on political history and military structure, with a secondary consideration of economic history and government administration, so the attempt at social, cultural, and intellectual history appears half-hearted at best.

For the most part, the book is a synthesis of existing ideas and writings on the Gunpowder Empires, and although specific comparisons between the empires are not in-depth and are often rather brief, Streusand does offer several interesting analyses that contribute to alternative interpretations of traditional scholarship. Throughout the book, he considers the three empires within the context of their own internal strengths and weaknesses, and in a broader sense, within the context of the region of Central Asia. He downplays the role of European expansion in the region and convincingly writes that the decline and/or reorganization of these empires had more to do with their own internal circumstances than European intervention or expansion. Secondly, Streusand attributes the founding of the Mughal Empire to Akbar rather than Babur and considers the efforts at religious synthesis done by Akbar, commonly referred to as the *Din-Ilahi*, as an endeavor more about expressing Akbar's sovereignty in terms readily recognizable to his Hindu subjects rather than to create a new religion mixing Islam and Hinduism, as traditionally interpreted.

Lastly, the conclusion to *Islamic Gunpowder Empires* is very short, not quite eight pages long in a book of four hundred pages. The brief comparisons from earlier chapters are reiterated, but no real conclusions or in-depth comparisons are expanded. Nevertheless, the work does provide ready access in one volume to a political and military study of all three Gunpowder Empires for instructor reference or possibly for upper-level undergraduates.

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April L. Najjaj

*Tashkent: Forging A Soviet City, 1930-1966*, by Paul Stronski. Pittsburgh, PA: Pitt Series in Russian and East European Studies, Central Eurasia in Context, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010. 368 pages. \$27.95, paper.

During the 1930s to the 1960s, the Soviet officials in Moscow wanted the people of Tashkent, the capital of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, to be transformed. In this process of personal transformation, these Tashkenters were to transform this once-insignificant Central Asian town into the largest Soviet city of the region (p. 68). Paul Stronski takes readers on a harrowing, albeit entertaining, journey of this ubiquitous transformation project during “High Stalinism,” World War II, and “de-Stalinism.” Stronski’s regional study offers much more than an examination of urban development, providing a detailed analysis of Central Asian lives during the formative years of the Soviet experience. The author tells a multifaceted story of resistance, acceptance, adaptation, and fusion of cultural experiences. Tashkent’s emergence as a Soviet city is, therefore, a story of “complex negotiation between indigenous residents” and “top Party ideologists” from the center in Russia.

Although the Soviet state combined urban planning, ideological education, and the “friendship of the nationalities” rhetoric to forge a common Soviet identity among the Tashkenters, Stronski argues, “what emerged was not what Soviet planners originally had in mind” (p. 8). Yet, both Tashkent and its people successfully survived the excessive Stalinist urbanization plans; the dumping of the WWII evacuees, Japanese POWs, and deported nationalities; the 1948 and 1966 earthquakes; and the Khrushchev-era “liberalization” policies. At the end of the 1960s, Tashkent stood as a social and physical space that merged the cultural and everyday forms that were both Soviet and indigenous.

Stronski’s book succeeds in juxtaposing Tashkent’s history with that of the permanent and transient people. Both the city and the 2.5 million people (in 2009) relentlessly changed, and not always for the better (p. 257). The book’s most notable achievement is its skillful story telling. The author weaves personal accounts of many ethnicities in various professions with the transformation of public spaces. He follows a chronological order, taking the reader from the imperial Russian takeover of the city in 1865 to the post-earthquake years of the late 1960s. We learn that Tashkent developed as a “dual city” during the imperial era, with a “modern” European area and a traditional Old City. Stronski shows that this dual character persisted both despite and because of the Soviet authorities. An ensuing theme emerges: when they planned the new city, Soviet authorities paid little to no attention to the needs, desires, and the input of the indigenous Tashkenters. Some notorious examples include buildings designed to withstand 7.0-magnitude earthquakes in an 8.5 zone and brand new apartment complexes without a sewage or running-water infrastructure.

The city planners and architects, mostly of Russian or Tatar origin, made decisions to transform this desert city into a “beautiful garden,” complete with canals. In the 1930s, they wrote disparaging reports about the time-tested *mahalla* (traditional neighborhood) structures with narrow winding streets, lined by houses with courtyards, only to suggest returning to those traditional forms in the 1960s. They, nonetheless, gradually replaced these with typical rectangular Soviet apartment blocks during and after the war and the earthquakes. During the war, more than 157,000 (in 1941 alone) evacuees and a significant number of factories from the western parts of the USSR took over both the old and the new buildings of the city. Once again, the newcomers’ needs trumped those of the indigenous Tashkenters, condemning the latter to inhumane living conditions.

The book comes alive with the experiences of individuals. These stories illustrate the resilience of the Tashkenters, such as an elderly Uzbek man refusing to move out of his mud-brick house to make way for a new construction project (p. 224). During the era of de-Stalinization of the late 1950s, this man used Soviet laws to his benefit and delayed his family’s eviction for several years. Stronski shows that throughout the Soviet era, the citizens of Tashkent used the necessary ideological rhetoric to complain about problems, or even to request changes from the state officials.

This book provides an excellent case study for history teachers in the Soviet, Eurasian, colonial and post-colonial, and twentieth-century fields. It offers specific examples of resistance, cooperation, and survival, bringing in gender, ethnicity, and even class in this “classless” society. I highly recommend Paul Stronski’s book *Tashkent*, especially because it places Tashkent’s story in world history context.

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Ali F. İğmen

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