All but one of the chapters in the present book and its companion volume on the modern Atlantic1 originated as papers presented at the “Fourth Avignon Conference on Slavery and Forced Labour” (2002), organised in honour of Suzanne Miers. Both as a pioneering scholar and a socially engaged academic, Miers has left an indelible mark on the fields of African and comparative slavery. Author of Britain and the Ending of the Slave Trade (1975), Slavery in the Twentieth Century (2003), and co-editor of four volumes on slavery—including Slavery in Africa (1977), The End of Slavery in Africa (1988), Women and Chinese Patriarchy (1994), and Slavery and Colonial Rule in Africa (1999), her activities in such groups as Anti-Slavery International have raised questions about modern forms of servitude, pressuring international bodies to act against both slavery and the continued trafficking in people.

Women and Slavery’s first installment—also dedicated to the memory of the late Timothy Fernyhough—focuses on women’s experiences of slavery from the medieval Norse Atlantic to nineteenth- and early twentieth-century tropical Africa and the western Indian Ocean. The book’s “trans-culturo-geographic grouping” serves as an “essentially exploratory initiative” intended to engage both women’s history and slavery studies, to integrate each with the other (xv, 3). Apart from a tribute to Suzanne Miers, a helpful conceptual preface and an elucidating introduction by Joseph Miller, the book consists of fifteen chapters divided into five sections written by a collection of senior and junior professional and independent scholars. Various methodologies are used, mostly rooted in history, supplemented by feminist studies, text linguistics, and historical archaeology. The order of the sections is based on processual dynamics rather than chronology: from significantly autonomous and older (but increasingly submerged or marginalised) communities of kin, to large patriarchal households held increasingly accountable to transcending universal religious ethics and secular intrusions of militarised political power, then finally to Western colonialism (xxv).

The first section, “Women in Domestic Slavery across Africa and Asia”, explores the dynamics motivating the presence of enslaved women in households engaged in, albeit not subordinated to, transcending commercial economies and monarchical polities. Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch compares a few case studies of enslaving women in kin-defined communities in nineteenth-century sub-Saharan Africa. Slave women’s evolving status was defined by two main features: being considered a commodity, and uprootedness, or isolation (43). She concludes that the conditions of most women “grew harder and harder... owing to the
political and social disturbances all over the continent” (58). Martin Klein considers the domestic household enlarged by power or by wealth in terms of the politics of the royal or imperial harem, both Islamic and Asian. The harem was about more than sex. It was a central political institution, as well as a place where the dynasty reproduced itself, princes were trained to rule, and the ruler relaxed (70, 76-7). Using Lacanian psychoanalysis, Sharifa Ahjum looks at the implications of French feminist theories of the feminine and the maternal, with regard to the law of uterine descent for slaves, and applies this to the representational status of Cape slave women.

The chapters in the second section, “Women in Islamic Households”, offer two approaches—one historical, one literary—to the differing ways in which strategies of enslaving women played out within the intertwined but distinct domestic (religious) and commercial (public, secular) frameworks generally characteristic of the Islamic world. Katrin Bomber deals with the depiction of female slaves in various Swahili literary genres. These texts reveal the violence against slave women in Tanzania; describes their labor, their marriages, their role as concubines, and their public behaviour; and explains the female solidarity binding them together (112). Jan-Georg Deutsch shows how changes in the price of female slaves in pre-World War I German East Africa reflected the “fundamental transformation” (140) in the “typical” life cycle of female slaves in the 1890s and early 1900s when slavery drastically declined.

The third section, ‘Women in Households on the Fringes of Christianity and Commerce’, focuses on the domestic politics among and tension between the women in the compound households of slaves and wives. Kirsten Seaver’s reconstruction of female slavery in the medieval Norse Atlantic settlements in Iceland and Greenland demonstrates that in these heavily patriarchal and violent outpost societies, even “queens” could easily become thralls of a strong man (154-6). Using the “UNESCO approach” to recover the lives of African slave women in Egypt, George Michael La Rue demonstrates that the period from Muhammad Ali’s invasion of the Sudan in 1820 and the capture of mostly female African populations, to the plague epidemic of 1834-5, represented “a critical conjuncture” (185) in Egypt’s history. The resulting labor shortage initiated a renewed series of large slave raids and a novel campaign to end slavery in, and the slave trade to, Egypt (182). Fred Morton examines the female inboekelinge or “apprentices” captured by Boer commandos in the Transvaal between 1850 and 1880. The inboekelinge, he concludes, represented an indigenous, captive element indistinguishable racially from the African population but stigmatised by their servitude and their loss of African cultural ways (193).

The fourth section, “Women in Imperial African Worlds”, considers women in similarly patriarchal household domains across a range of nineteenth-century moments of political consolidation—warlord/monarchical in style in Ethiopia and Madagascar and theocratic/warlords in Sahelian/Sudanic western Africa. The late Timothy Fernyhough examines the role of women and slavery in nineteenth-century Solomonic Ethiopia in terms of power and gender relations and shows how the experiences of slave women—mostly raided from the lowland Barya and Kunama of the northwest—were shaped also by other forces such as ethnicity, culture, religion, community, and family (215). Gwyn Campbell analyses the vital roles of female bondage in Imperial Madagascar from the Merina ban on slave exports in 1820 to French official emancipation in 1896. The adoption of autarkic policies led to a dramatic rise in demand for servile labor by the Merina state and elite. That demand was met through a large increase in the enslavement of non-Merina Malagasy, and dramatically increased slave imports from mainland Africa, as well as through a reconstituted and enormously expanded system of fanompoana or state corvée. Both slavery and fanompoana involved harsh and exploitative labor engaging large numbers of females (238-9). Paul Lovejoy argues that the idea of an Atlantic-Sahara divide based on the preference for females over males of the latter is misleading, because the distinction was political and moral rather than economic, separating Muslim West Africa from the Christian Atlantic. Rather than the notion of an inte-
grated “world market for servile labor” incorporating large parts of Africa with the Americas, Muslim North Africa, the Middle East, and the Indian Ocean basin, as espoused by Patrick Manning, these areas should be seen as distinct, if interlocking, components of an international system of slavery (273-4). Richard Roberts uses court records from the Banamba and Gumbu provincial tribunals in French West Africa to examine the immediate post-emancipation period in two areas that witnessed significant departures of slaves after 1905 and produced significant new strains of African households, both slave and free (302).

The fifth and final section, “Women in Commercial Outposts of Modern Europe”, investigates adaptations to the fully commercial worlds of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans through enslaving women—from Portuguese Guinea and the Dutch Cape Colony to French Mauritius. Philip Havik takes a closer look at how women traders—so-called ñaras or “big women”—of the local Afro-Atlantic Kriston community of Portuguese Guinea were in a position to renegotiate and redefine their identities during the transition toward “legitimate” trade in the nineteenth century through the combination of slave trafficking and production of export crops. Based on thousands of artefacts recovered in a series of archaeological excavations in the Platteklip Stream valley outside Cape Town, Elizabeth Grzymala Jordan uses the “material signature of washing” to recreate the story of the local enslaved washerwomen in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (336). Finally, Richard Allen examines the ways in which femmes de couleur, or free women of colour, profoundly shaped the contours of life in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century slave plantation world of French Mauritius. These women were not insignificant players in their transformation from an ‘unappropriated people’ into a community with a marked impact on Mauritian life (372).

Women and Slavery is an ambitious and largely successful project, attempting to cover the many forms of female slavery changing over time and through the spaces. If not all, the lion’s share of the individual contributions exemplifies high-quality scholarship provided with a level of coherence by Joseph Miller’s incisive preface and introduction. However, a project of such thematic, chronological, and geographical scope exhibits some inevitable lacunae. Though the editors denounce the exaggerated emphasis on Africa as the sole source of the enslaved in modern times and acknowledge the existence of other active trades in other periods (5-6), the overwhelming majority of the chapters focus on nineteenth-century Africa. As I have argued elsewhere, this distinct modernist “Afrocentrism” in slavery studies is a derivative of the Atlantic slave trade in general, and reflects the takeoff of plantation slavery on the Swahili coast and the Mascarene Islands (Mauritius and Réunion) in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, along with its obvious connections with the modern biracial system of apartheid in South Africa in particular.2

In addition, though the editors recognise the crucial and diverse roles played by women slaves in politics and the economy, the volume’s primary focus is on women and household slavery (1-2). Leaving aside the various cultural roles of these enslaved female “jill-of-all-trades”, it is argued that full chattel slavery characterised by a Caribbean-style plantation economy had Old World counterparts (not precedents) only in areas of Africa subject to European rule in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the European plantation islands of the Mascarenes, and the Omani-dominated parts on the Swahili coast and eastern littoral of Madagascar (xxvi, 14-5). Precedents, nevertheless, did exist elsewhere. In the seventeenth-century, for instance, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) developed and operated spice plantations in eastern Indonesia and gold mines on the West Coast of Sumatra involving large-scale slave labour.3 Admittedly, despite the importance of “context-dependent particulars” and local variations, slave women were not used regularly in fieldwork, but were mostly involved in domestic occupations. Despite moments of “creolization”, low levels of reproduction in the Dutch Indian Ocean world also seem to confirm the reluctance of enslaved women, noted by the volume’s editors, to bear children as one of the forms of “subversion from within” at their disposal (18).

In sum, Women and Slaves provides some vital insights in parts of the Old World’s female
experience of domestic slavery, representing an important corrective to women’s gendered exclusion from the stereotypical modern image of slavery as an institution peculiar to the Americas and peoples with male chattel slaves toiling on plantations or in mines. It is an important contribution to the fields of women’s history and comparative slavery studies, and an appropriate tribute to the distinguished life and career of Suzanne Miers.

Markus Vink, State University of New York, Fredonia

Notes


3 For specific numbers of adult male, female, and children slaves in the various Dutch settlements across the Indian Ocean: Idem, table 3, 154-5.


It seems that most books on globalisation these days begin with a statement attacking what the author describes as the conventional wisdom. Those seeing a bright side for the future of the world economy with globalisation believe that most other writers see globalisation as an evil that is destructive to economies and democratic behaviours. If the author regards globalisation as an evil, then she describes the general consensus as believing, with the IMF, that globalisation is something to “be celebrated” because “integration will gradually extend its benefits to everybody” (2). Aviva Chomsky, Professor of History and Coordinator of Latin American Studies at Salem State College in Salem, Massachusetts, has written extensively on labour in Latin America. She clearly fits into the second category, her critique on labour history intended to educate students who seem to believe “overwhelmingly” in a pro-globalisation view that is “fundamentally flawed and historically inaccurate”, and “fails utterly to explain the world we live in today” (2).

Her basic argument, however, has a longer history than the current debates on globalisation. It is a return to an earlier variant of basic Marxian anti-capitalism, with its concerns over labour exploitation, capital accumulation, and the limited nature of labour unions. Attention is given to two measures which lower labour costs: immigration and capital movement into different areas. Unions, to date, have often been disappointing in their alignments with management, but, as believed in earlier generations, they represent what could be the great hope in providing democracy and industrial security. The argument for the coercive nature of labour markets leaves it somewhat mysterious how over time there has been an “expansion of workers’ rights”, with immigrants receiving much higher wages in America than in countries of origin, and that strikes have been relatively infrequent. Her depiction of Colombia as an extremely violent society politically is used as a typical example of globalisation gone terribly wrong. However, it is stated that recently “Colombia took the dreary first place as the worst humanitarian disaster in the Western Hemisphere”, so it is best seen as an extreme rather than as a typical case (187).

The book presents its basic message in a number of case studies, some for the twentieth century New England textile industry, and several for different sectors in post-World War II Colombia. The research is quite detailed, drawing heavily on newspaper stories and interviews, and the arguments are clearly presented. The particular case studies are intended to illustrate the author’s main themes, and do not present a general or balanced picture of developments in the industry. The first chapter deals with the Draper Company, noteworthy for a strike in 1913, and a later movement to the South (in addition to employing Ferdinando
Sacco, of Sacco and Vanzetti fame). The Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company followed a similar pattern decades later, with a major strike in 1933, somewhat successful under Communist Party leadership, and a movement to the South in the 1950’s. Textron’s drive for cheap immigrant labour and favourable conditions for capital movement is described, with its movement to Puerto Rico and elsewhere in the Americas and Asia, in which, it is argued, the U.S. military and other governmental agencies has played a major role. The final U.S. chapter describes the desire to attract low cost immigrant labour, most recently Latinos, as domestic workers were moving to better-paying jobs in other industries, leading to what is described as a “labor shortage”.

The examination of Colombian industry uses a similarly based argument and very detailed research. The products discussed are bananas and coal. In the former, the politics of paramilitaries and attempts at union formation led to a considerable amount of homicide and related forms of violence. One chapter deals with the role of U.S. multinationals, military, and labour unions in aiding employers in Colombia at the expense of labour. It is argued that in recent decades the policies of the AFL-CIO have been aimed more at aiding U.S. corporations than benefiting Colombian workers.

Chomsky’s arguments are strongly made, but the case study selection leaves out parts of the story, such as how the wages, working conditions and safety regulations all improved. And while she argues that current globalisation “has meant increasing inequality and an increasing ability of the powerful to profit from the inequality”, the author’s main hope is that an appropriate labour movement could challenge and offset these costs of inappropriate globalisation (304).

Stanley L. Engerman, *University of Rochester*


Despite the individual efforts of scholars such as James L. Matory to study Yorùbá religions from a transnational perspective, few books have examined how globalisation is reshaping Yorùbá religion in Africa, the Americas, or even some European countries. The book *Orìsà Devotion as World Religion: The Globalization of Yorùbá Religious Culture* arises out of the conference “From Local to Global: Rethinking Yorùbá Religion for the Next Millennium”, held in December 1999 at Florida International University, Miami. The different studies presented in this book develop the idea that *òrisà* devotion associated with Yorùbá religious culture from West Africa is no longer related only to Yorùbá population. Trans-Atlantic slave trade, migrations, and reciprocal exchanges that followed in the twentieth century, along with the more recent development of communications and new technologies (cable television, Internet), have spread *òrisà* devotion, transforming it into a world religion.

Among the book’s contributors we find important scholars in the field from Nigeria, United States, United Kingdom, Brazil, and France. Following the purpose of the book, the different chapters cover various geographical, such as the United States, Cuba, Haiti, Brazil, and Nigeria. The book is divided into two parts and comprises twenty-seven chapters. The first part, “Yorùbá Religions Culture in Africa”, includes ten chapters. Wole Soyinka’s chapter, “The Tolerant Gods”, develops the present importance of Yorùbá spirituality in the promotion of peace, tolerance and unity of humankind. Rowland Abiodun scrutinises Ifá ritual in the second chapter, by explaining how arts are a crucial means of preserving cultural and aesthetic values, as well as “recording history, and providing an indispensable body of information for healing physical and human problems” (51). Abiodum discusses some objects of Ifá sculptural repertoire, such as *ìkìn*, *ópó́n-Ifá*, *ì̀ròké*, *àgère-Ifá*, as well as beads. In the chapter, “In What Tongue?” Olásopé O. Oyèlèràn argues that language is a crucial
element of Yorùbá cosmology and worldview. He points out that today, language is a key instrument to achieve the globalisation of Yorùbá religious culture. In the fourth chapter, “Orísà: A Prolegomenon to a Philosophy of Yorùbá Religion”, Olufemi Taiwo discusses the terminology used by scholars who usually refer to African Traditional Religion. He argues that this terminology should be replaced by what he calls orisaism. The fifth chapter, “Associated Place-Names and Sacred Icons of Seven Yorùbá Deities”, discusses the combination of oral traditions and archaeological data to understand the Yorùbá religious past. Cornelius O. Adepegba discusses the relationship between deities and present-day places and sites. The author examines the mythology surrounding Yorùbá deities in order to understand the history of deification of Ogun, Ìfá, Òbatála, Órìsà-Òko, Òsùn, Òsãgò, and Òyà.

In the sixth chapter, “Twice-Told Tales”, Flora Edouwaye S. Kaplan examines Yorùbá religious and cultural hegemony in Benin (Nigeria). Using a rich iconography, Kaplan offers a new interpretation of Benin bronze figurines known as “messengers from ìfè”. Kaplan’s chapter is the first to critically examine the Yorùbá hegemony in the longue durée. She shows how Yorùbá hegemony can be understood in the context of the slave trade, internal ethnic conflicts and British rule in Nigeria. In the seventh chapter, “Meta-Cultural Process and Ritual Realities in the Precolonial History of Lagos Region”, Sandra T. Barnes studies a procession held in Lagos in 1983. The author demonstrates that the procession helps us understand the community’s historical memory and allows us to retrace the “importation of ritual knowledge into Lagos” (165). In the eighth chapter, Diedre L. Badejo examines Yorùbá mythology, focusing her attention on Osùn’s orature, rituals, iconography, and fine and performing arts. She tries to understand Osùn in her multiple roles as “keeper and propagator, mother and warrior, wife and confidante, healer and protector, divine and woman being” (191). The ninth chapter, “Religious Encounter in Southwestern Nigeria: The Domestication of Islam Among the Yorùbá”, by H. O. Damnolé, focuses on the encounter between Yorùbá religion and Islam. By examining traditional festivals and the conflicts generated by these exchanges, the author explains how both religions were transformed and even mixed. In the tenth chapter, Barry Hallen examines what he calls “Yorùbá epistemology” to understand Yorùbá cultural values.

Seventeen chapters compose the second part, entitled “Yorùbá Religions Culture beyond Africa”. The eleventh chapter by Olabiyi Yai reflects on the globalisation of Yorùbá religion in Africa and across the Atlantic world, describing it mainly as a process that started with the development of trans-Atlantic slave trade. He also pays attention to the new challenges that emerged with the globalisation of Yorùbá religious culture in the last thirty years. Afe Adogame in “Clearing New Paths into an Old Forest” studies the development of the African Aladura movements in Europe. He seeks to understand how these movements combine global influence and local identities. In the thirteenth chapter, Laënnec Hurbon analyses the impacts of globalisation on Haitian voodoo, by establishing distinctions between the period of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the contemporary period. In the fourteenth chapter, Ikolumi Díjsoviso Eason studies the history of Ìfá culture in the Òyòtunjí African village in South Carolina (United States), while in the fifteenth chapter, Kamari Maxine Clarke examines how divination is related to the Yorùbá revivalism in this same North American village. Marta Moreno Vega focuses on the expansion of La Regla de la Ocha (so-called Santería) in New York through the activities of different individuals, including intellectuals such as W. E. B. Du Bois, Fernando Ortiz, Wilfredo Lam, Lydia Cabrera and Melville Herskovits, as well as Afro-Cuban and African-American musicians. In the seventeenth chapter, Tracey E. Hucks explains the evolution of Yorùbá religion among African Americans. Chapter eighteen, by Mercedes Cros Sandoval, focuses on the history of Santería in Cuba and outside the country during the twenty-first century, while in the nineteenth chapter Juan J. Sosa examines the role of Santería in the transculturation of the Cuban population of Miami after the Cuban Revolution of 1959.

The chapters “Myth, Memory, and History: Brazil’s Sacred Music of Shango”, by José
Flávio de Pessoa Barros, and “Yorùbá Sacred Songs in the New World”, by José Jorge de Carvalho, focus on the Yorùbá musical tradition in Brazil. In the twentieth second chapter, Reginaldo Prandi examines the funeral rites known as axèxè, as well as the recent growth of Òrìṣà religion in the Brazilian cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. In the two following chapters, George Edward Brandon and Joseph M. Murphy examine the impact of the Internet and digital technologies on the expansion and the transmission of Yorùbá religion. Finally, in the chapter “Gender, Politics, and Hybridism in the Transnationalization of Yorùbá”, Rita Laura Segato discusses three different academic conceptions of gender in Yorùbá religion: her own interpretation and those of James L. Matory (1994) and Oyèrónké Oyewumi (1997). The debates on the conceptions of gender developed in these last two books are also discussed in the chapter, “Is There Gender in Yorùbá Culture?” by James L. Matory. In the last chapter, John Pemberton III develops his personal remarks about the papers presented in the conference.

In the chapters examining the Americas, the reader would like to know more about the recent developments on the debate regarding the hegemonic position of Yorùbá culture in the Americas, especially in Brazil and Cuba. The majority of the authors did not critically discuss their own position concerning the endorsement of Yorùbá religious culture. One exception is Olásopé Oyèläràn, who clearly states that the role of scholars is to promote it. Olufemi Taiwo, while criticising the use of the term “African Traditional Religion” suggests that African religion itself is Òrìṣà, even if this term cannot be applied to some parts of Africa. In spite of these minor criticisms, the book’s strength is that it covers various regions and different aspects of the history and present transformations of Yorùbá culture in a globalised world. Even if the qualities of the different contributions are unbalanced, Òrìṣà Devotion as World Religion is an undeniable contribution to all Yorùbá religious cultures around the world.

Ana Lucia Araujo, York University

AFRICA


In his introductory section titled “Why You Might Want to Read This Book”, David Graeber begins with a well-known quote from Karl Marx: “Men make their history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly found, given, and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living” (30).

This book is about the relationship between politics and history and about what it means to act politically and in accordance with social history. Graeber emphasises individual actions and sets his ethnography in the ancient village of Betafo, Madagascar, located not far from the nation’s capital, Antananarivo. This village has long had a reputation for sorcery and envy. The divisions between former slave masters and former slaves have shifted as the descendants of former slaves have become powerful landholders in the 1990s, while the andriana find themselves increasingly impoverished. Graeber sets out to explain the divisions and power relations in Betafo in 1990 by writing an ethnography that treats what he calls “ordinary people” as actively shaping their world (31). This world is shaped by magic, by what is unseen and cannot be known. It is also shaped by the legacy of slavery in Madagascar.

One of the legacies of nineteenth-century slavery in Madagascar was the social and economic division existing between the ancestors of former slave owners and former slaves. These fault lines were definitively ruptured in 1987 when the dust from the tombs of two major ancestors were mixed together, resulting in a catastrophe that ruined the rice fields of
two men responsible for the mixing. The ancestors brought on this catastrophe; people did not understand it as a natural disaster. Graeber explains the actions of key individuals, which provoked this event and resulted in sharpening the historical division and raising tensions in a newly divided Betafo.

Graeber (130) offers a useful definition of local level politics as a process by which people act knowing that their actions will be talked about, praised, criticised discussed and narrated. This definition links action to politics and to representation and includes individuals and groups external to what we think of as authoritative institutions, individuals, or texts. For Graeber, these representations can and do take the form of dramatic narratives, and these narratives have ideological effects. Stories are peopled with compelling characters that act within the story’s dramatic structure. One of the effects of these stories is to naturalise specific structures of power. Graeber’s ethnography is a story about the micro-level politics of individuals residing in Betafo, which helps to explain the changes in power dynamics happening in the village.

Taboos, sorcery, astrology, charms, and the power of ancestors are all part of Malagasy contemporary cosmology, and they inform how people act and represent their actions. Graeber reveals the ways magic is implicated in political action and representations of that action. But ancestral power, magic and sorcery are invisible, ambiguous and unknowable. One intriguing paradox Graeber reveals is that power is defined by what it is not at the local context.

One of the strengths of this ethnography is to give rural people names and faces, rather than portraying them as either anonymous victims of poverty or actors in the island’s environmental degradation. This text will be of interest to those especially concerned with how the past is revealed in the present, within the political activities of rural people who continually interpret their actions and life pathways in reference to ancestral authority. One of Graeber’s objectives is to reveal how struggles, rivalry and various forms of oppression are translated and linked to ancestral authority, by telling us the story of Betafo through the lives and actions of people living there.

Graeber presents us with individuals, with characters who have tragic, intriguing and compelling biographies. However, I wanted more context for these individual histories and actions in terms of their everyday activities, and a more detailed description of the rural landscape and the realities of poverty and hunger in contemporary Madagascar. The rural place that is Betafo and the Malagasy landscape is important, but missing pieces of enriching description, while at points in the text the stories of the characters seem weighed down by excessive detail. It often seemed as though they were social actors out of context. Structural adjustment conditions mandated by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were driving up the price of rice and needed medicines in Madagascar in the early 1990s, and Graeber asserts that the rural world of Betafo lay largely untouched by the state or other external modalities of governance. He depicts a closed, insular, rural world. I am not entirely convinced of this.

The rural world of Betafo and the stories of the individuals living there are masculine. Graeber tells readers that this is due to the power relations inherent in gendered divisions of labour. Men are the dramatis personae of the narratives. Yet key research participants and his research assistant are women. I wonder how the stories would differ if the ethnographic focus were upon women. Graeber considers some aspects of his research positionality in this work, but does not critically assess the impacts of his gender upon the stories he hears and the story he ultimately tells. This raises more research questions about rural gender divisions of labour, gendered politics and relations of power in Madagascar.

Graeber contributes to our understanding of the roles of magic and the legacy of slavery to rural politics in Madagascar. The particular strength of this ethnography is that it peoples the rural world with individuals who assume power through their actions and by the stories they tell about others and the past. The idea of merging ethnography with narrative and
storytelling is a compelling pathway. It is a methodology that animates and gives face to “ordinary” people who, in the case of Madagascar, are often rendered as rather faceless impoverished crowds. It also reveals the political power of magic in uniting and dividing people though memory and fear.

Lucy Jarosz, University of Washington

**ASIA-GENERAL**


*Resisting Bondage in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia* is the succinct companion volume to *Slavery and Resistance in Africa and Asia* (2005), appearing in the Routledge Studies in Slave and Post-Slave Societies and Cultures series. The thematic, temporal, and geographical scope of this booklet is breathtaking. Following a brief introduction by the editors emphasising the complexity of forms of unfree labour and resistance, eight essays aim to explore examples of resistance to forms of bondage in a variety of pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial regimes in the Indian Ocean World, from South Africa and Somalia, the Indian Ocean islands of Mayotte and Madagascar, to Indonesia, Australia, India, and Indo-China.

In the opening editorial, Gwyn Campbell, Edward Alpers, and Michael Salman provide an inventory of the many different forms of resistance to bondage assumed in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia. Resistance ranged from outright revolt (a relatively rare occurrence), community solidarity, revolutionary ideology, petitioning, “negative forms of resistance” (anti-conception measures, induced miscarriages, self-mutilation, and abandonment of crafts) and flight, to go-slows, strikes, and accommodation.

In his essay on revolt in Cape Colony slave society, Nigel Worden rightly points to the rarity of major slave revolts in world history, and the endemic nature of small-scale, day-to-day resistance of bonded labourers against their owners—most notably escape (10-11). The absence of slave rebellion at the Cape in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was due to the “atomization” of the geographically dispersed and ethnically diverse slave population. Only as creolisation took place in the early nineteenth century did collective revolt take place, as in the Koeberg district (1808) and Bokkeveld region (1825). These revolts coincided with reformist activities and anxieties among slave-owners and local colonial authorities.

Francesca Declich’s contribution deals with several episodes of individual acts of resistance by the Zigula people to forced labour in agricultural concessions held by Italian farmers in the Lower Juba River region of southern Somalia until 1941, and during the Second World War when the colony came under the direction of the British Military Administration (24). The settled descendants of ex-slaves and free farmers, the Zigula people’s resistance to forced labour took several forms, including escape, resignation by local leaders, refusal to work or go-slows, and protest marches.

Isabella Denis examines the basic causes of the 1856 Mayotta revolt, notably the system of agricultural concessions practiced there and the concomitant growth in forced labour. She analyses how these *corvée* demands on the southernmost of the Comoros Islands caused rising resentment in a population that in 1841 had accepted the French presence in exchange for protection against Merina aggression. Finally, she looks at the suppression of the 1856 revolt and its consequences: the creation of a “true” colony of exploitation, open to development by Réunion and French-based companies and merchants.

Based on his monographic study *Vichy in the Tropics* (2001), Eric Jennings examines the “explosion” of forced labour in Madagascar under the ultra-conservative and authoritarian Vichy régime of 1940-42. The onset of the Second World War and the autarky engendered
by the British blockade of Madagascar, combined with a hardening of colonial ideologies and practices under Vichy, conspired to create a “golden age for colons”, or settlers, and to increase the scope of forced labour (prestations) in all of its forms on the “Red Island” (61). “Voting with one’s feet”, or migration, was the only important form of resistance and opposition to this increased reliance of forced labour on the pays d’esclavage.

In his discussion of the colonial sugar industry in mid-nineteenth-century Java, G. Roger Knight pursues “themes of forced labour, resistance and accommodation” (69). After a brief discussion of the vast historiography on the island’s industry and its workforce (including the studies of Peter Boomgaard, Jan Breman, R.E. Elson, Cees Fasseur, Robert Van Niel, and Knight himself), Knight stresses the variety of labour processes and the ambiguous, multi-layered nature of resistance. Resistance was “muted”, profoundly localised, sporadic, apparently spontaneous, and of short duration (74). Knight draws attention to two aspects of the reignant “political economy of servitude” to explain the relative absence of resistance in rural Java: the system of accommodation and coercion underpinning Dutch colonial power, and the transformation, or “peasantization”, of elements of Java’s agricultural workforce (75-78).

Focusing on the same area, albeit at a later period, Shigeru Sato’s essay analyses the reasons for the lack of open rebellions and the prevalence of passive resistance (most notably desertion and dereliction) among Javanese romusha (forced labourers) under Japanese military rule from 1942 to 1945. Sato downplays the violent nature of the Japanese occupation for “lack of solid evidence”, while challenging the image of the “legendary” docile Javanese peasants (82-83). Ultimately, he attributes the dearth of open rebellions, among other things, to the lack of a guiding ideology, and the fact that the “Japanese military possessed superior power” (93).

In the final collaborative contribution, Robert Castle, James Hagan, and Andrew Wells examine the role of unfree labour in three industries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: plantation coolies in the Assamese tea industry; indentured workers and, increasingly, “free” labourers on Vietnamese rubber plantations; and Aboriginese workers in Northern Australian cattle ranching. In each of these industries, protest evolved from individual acts of desertion, self-harm or murder of overseers or managers, to collective action. The catalyst was the linking of individual grievances to emerging nationalist and anti-racist sentiments (109).

Resisting Bondage in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia is an important, ambitious study in an expanding field, pointing to the heterogeneous, multi-faceted, and evolving nature of servility and forms of resistance in the modern Indian Ocean World. The overall quality of the volume’s contributions is high, though the essays by Nigel Worden, Gwyn Campbell, Eric Jennings, and G. Roger Knight deserve special mention. Taken together, as the editors rightly assert, this collection adds an important dimension to what we know about slave systems and slavery in the Indian Ocean World and provide a further comparative perspective on studies of slavery globally.

In several ways, however, Resisting Bondage in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia falls short—both in a quantitative and qualitative sense—when compared with its more substantial companion volume. A little over 100 pages cannot fully do justice to the expansive topical, spatial, and temporal reach of the book. Regrettable also is the fact that the publisher decided to place an exorbitant price tag on this valuable, but succinct, collection of essays.

Markus P.M. Vink, State University of New York, Fredonia


This study, which traces the introduction of European smallpox vaccination techniques in
Japan, provides a keen social history of the globalisation of medicine and scientific knowledge as well as a fresh perspective on many intersecting themes in Japanese and world history in the mid-nineteenth century. The Vaccinators is a valuable study of the role of vaccination in the complex restructuring of Japan's modernisation and of the nation's relationship with "accelerated expansion of networks of knowledge across time and space" (xv). In particular, Jannetta fruitfully examines how individual physicians, translators, diplomats, and ideas helped to catalyse and shape the political and social structures of Japanese modernisation.

Jannetta also provides key background information on the history of smallpox vaccination and medical practice in Japan, and on the critical relationship with the imperialist powers, particularly the Dutch. She explains how smallpox, as a public health emergency around the world, demanded transformation of the existing system of medicine in Japan. Unlike Europe, Japan was closed to knowledge sharing, and "the transmission of medical knowledge in Japan was almost entirely a private matter" (5). Jannetta thus traces what she calls "the social transformation" of Japan in "universities, publishing houses, professional societies, and a new government bureaucracy attuned to the importance of the public's health" (5). She deepens our understanding of the tenor of Japan's encounter with the Dutch trading station at Dejima in Nagasaki by examining the roles of Japanese physicians who were trained in Dutch medical practices and utilised important translations of Dutch medical works, such as Kaitai shinsho (1774) and Haruma wage (1796).

In addition, Jannetta plumbs the complex ways that both rangaku (Dutch studies scholars in Japan) and ranpo ("Dutch-method physicians") individually helped to transform the structure of Japanese policy toward medicine just as they helped open the closed society. She focuses on important individuals, Japanese as well as foreign, who created the fluid and vital Japanese-Dutch relationship and intellectual exchange that helped to propel change. She argues for the centrality of individual agency in driving historical change on the part of people such as Hendrik Doeff and Baba Sajuro, who oversaw information exchange through translations even while operating under the strict information control regime of the bakufu. Jannetta argues that rangaku scholars drove the changes, spreading information "through private, quasi-clandestine Japanese networks" (77).

The early chapters provide an overview of early smallpox vaccination techniques from around the world, starting with variolation, which is the general term for the deliberate exposure of children (who were the most vulnerable to smallpox) to weak forms of the virus. The European powers practiced relatively more sophisticated Turkish variolation procedures, and the development of inoculation techniques on the continent was aided enormously by the free flow of information. The Chinese invented a systematic version of variolation in the seventeenth century which spread north in China and was eventually brought by migrants to Japan. There it was slowly adopted by some ranpo, but never given official support. In Nagasaki, a critical centre for medical learning in Japan, individuals like Ogata Shunsaku (1748-1810) took the lead in learning about and disseminating foreign vaccination techniques.

Jannetta details the familiar story of the rise of smallpox vaccination from the revolutionary research of Edward Jenner, the first to prove the connection between cowpox and smallpox (and the originator of the use of the word vaccinae, a derivation of Latin vaca), to the rest of the world within five years of its discovery. Jannetta discusses not just Jenner's experimental design and findings, but also his effective use of local populations for his trials and the rapid diffusion of his findings throughout Europe and then the world. She stresses the crucial fact that knowledge spreads through the actions of individuals. Seemingly impressed, Jannetta notes that "the transmission of Jenner's cowpox vaccine to warmer climates and across greater distances...require[d] extraordinary commitment, ingenuity, and perseverance" (38). She traces the spread of the vaccine through Europe and then, via the Spanish, Portuguese, English, and Dutch, throughout Asia.

A valuable contribution of this book is the detailed description of the introduction of
vaccination techniques into Japan by major figures such as Philipp Franz von Siebold, who built the important medical school in Nagasaki called Narutaki. Von Siebold also helped create an essential *ryu*, or school of thought, that disseminated his ideas and techniques throughout Japan through the actions of his many students. This was revolutionary (coming as it did from a Westerner), and it inaugurated “a multidirectional network...that had the potential to challenge Japan’s vertically constructed institutions controlled at the top by the Tokugawa bakufu” (96). Jannetta describes the important role played by the Udagawa family in deepening and furthering this medical knowledge. As Jannetta demonstrates, “the Udagawa spanned the entire Tokugawa period, bridging the transition from Chinese-style to Western-style medicine in the mid-eighteenth century” (99). Jannetta continues her emphasis on the actions of important Japanese physicians with a series of biographical treatments of seven major *ranpo* physicians involved in the vaccination efforts, with unusual attention paid to the social contexts of their origins, the environment in which they operated, and the networks they created in “a generation of medical scholars with a common knowledge base and intellectual connections to European physicians” (126).

The story of smallpox vaccination in Japan culminated in the use of cowpox vaccination methods in 1849, where the technique was supported and encouraged by Japanese elites. Jannetta shows that the government of Japan was not similarly supportive. But, as she demonstrates throughout the last two chapters, “what is of particular interest is that Japan’s vaccinators used the existing Tokugawa system of divided political authority—devised two and a half centuries earlier to forestall regional opposition movements—to launch a national movement from regional foci” (138). Jannetta thereafter traces the diffusion of vaccination throughout Japan within six months of its initial arrival in Nagasaki. An important and interesting section of the book details how illustrations were used to convince the public of the critical importance of vaccination.

The final part of the book broadens the perspective on *ranpo* physicians in order to discuss their influence in government at the end of the Tokugawa period, and explain the connections between individual medical leaders, vaccination, and Westernisation. Jannetta has proven how vaccination efforts and related intellectual developments created a new group of elites who took “a central role in creating the political, social, and intellectual infrastructure of the modern Japanese state” (181).

This book, concise and clearly written, provides a readable and enjoyable narrative that strongly showcases Jannetta’s important interpretation of Japan’s evolving relationship with the European powers and their knowledge systems. Though drawn from archival materials and situated in the appropriate secondary literature in at least four different languages, *The Vaccinators* is relatively unencumbered with footnotes and designed to be read by a non-specialised audience. Jannetta includes illustrations, a chronology of vaccination in Japan, maps, a solid bibliography, and helpful glossary of terms, as well as a list of the Japanese names used in the text. All of these help the reader keep the information and names clear and enhances the utility of this worthwhile book.

Daniel S. Margolies, *Virginia Wesleyan College*

**EAST ASIA**


The book under review is a contribution to the TANAP (“Towards a New Age of Partnership”) series of monographs arising from a project intended to stimulate intercontinental collaboration in work on the Dutch East India Company (or VOC) archives in the Netherlands, South...
Africa, and Asia. This particular volume is the product of co-operation between the universities of Leiden and Xiamen. Rather like a work of modernist architecture, the supporting structures are given high visibility, with half the volume taken up by a streamlined, systematic text; the other half is made up of maps, tables, notes, a glossary, an extensive bibliography in four languages, a very serviceable index, and an impressive array of appendices. It is a clear success for the author, and for the TANAP project.

The words that most obviously characterise Dutch overseas trade in the eighteenth-century aftermath of the Golden Age are “stagnation” and “decline”. These are not, however, words that apply to the tea trade, which kept the VOC afloat in its final decades. The simple necessity of securing marketable teas at competitive prices in November of 1756 led the Company to go so far as to institute a China Committee to oversee the trade with Canton, cutting across the responsibility of the High Government in Batavia for operational control of Dutch trade in Asia. It was, in the author’s words, “a unique type of institution within the structure of the VOC for it focused exclusively on the trade in one single commodity with one single region for nearly half a century” (41). It indicates how important the tea trade had become to the VOC’s viability. The institution of the “Canton system” by the Chinese authorities in 1760 set the terms of the trade on the Chinese side, and despite initial misgivings (described here in detail), the Dutch settled down to two decades of stable and lucrative business dealings with a handful of Hong merchants.

Liu’s study of this trade begins with the institutional structures and dependencies of the VOC, first with a chapter on the China Committee in Amsterdam, then with a chapter on the role of the High Government in Batavia. The China Committee completely recast the Amsterdam-Batavia-Canton relationship. At the beginning of the century the Dutch tea trade depended rather haphazardly on whatever junks happened to bring tea to Batavia. A direct China trade was initiated in 1729, briefly under the auspices of the Company directors and then managed from Batavia from 1735 to 1756. The increasing tendency of the Company officials in Batavia to run the Asian trade in their own interests was what prompted the directors in Amsterdam to take direct control back into their own hands through the medium of the newly formed China Committee. Batavia was not cut out of the loop completely, retaining control of the VOC’s intra-Asian China trade, and providing supplementary trade goods, bullion, personnel and supplies to the Company’s efforts in Canton. The great problem of the China trade was that, in return for silk, porcelain and tea, European merchants could offer little of interest to the Chinese except silver. Even linen, the stand-by of Dutch trade expansion in the seventeenth century, was no use in China, where the Dutch themselves were among the buyers of smoother, glossier Nanking linen. The best that the VOC could do in terms of European trade goods was pigs of lead and bales of Leiden woollens (often camlets and woollen-cotton mixes). The availability of hard cash and trade goods from Batavia often gave the Dutch an advantage over their European rivals in Canton.

The procurement of teas in Canton is dealt with in the third chapter, which briefly outlines growing, processing and shipping in the South China hinterland; the individual Hong merchants with whom the Dutch did business; Dutch purchasing practices; and some of the problems encountered with quality and packing. The most basic of the China Committee’s functions was European market analysis, which supplied the Company’s representatives in Canton with purchasing targets for teas of different grades (good, better, best) and various types (black Congou, Souchong and Pekoe, green Songlo, Tawnkay, Hysin skin, Hysin and Imperial), to match every purse and taste. The exception was Bohea, the staple black tea, for which the standing instruction throughout the period dealt with was simply to buy as much as possible. Between 1760 and 1783, the VOC routinely shipped two to three million pounds of Bohea out of Canton each year (although from 1775 the share of Bohea declined relative to Congou). Green teas, at the top end of the market, never made up more than ten percent of VOC shipments; given that at retail they might sell for three or four times as much per
pound as Bohea, it is unfortunate that the statistics do not reveal what proportion of the VOC’s profit they represented.

Although this trade was predictable in its routines, and not the stuff of high historical drama, unforeseen frictions could arise. The fourth chapter uses three case studies to illuminate how complicated relations could get between the VOC and their English and Swedish rivals, the Hong merchants and Chinese officials in Canton, and the Portuguese authorities in Macao. Each of the examples provide a good story of conflicts, deceits and evasions, and they illustrate the value of persistent, diplomatic lobbying. One case brings out how the Dutch broke ranks to become the first Europeans to agree to do business in the new Canton System in 1760; the second deals with the unexpected difficulty in 1772 of getting the customs officials in Macao and Canton to allow passage to a ship without a cargo (bought in Macao to replace a vessel lost at sea); the third concerns an English “country trader” who breached Chinese neutrality by seizing a Dutch vessel in Chinese waters in 1781, and recounts the determination of the Chinese officials to recover the vessel for the Dutch and make the EIC take responsibility for the behaviour of other Englishmen.

The fifth chapter follows the tea to the Netherlands, taking in the VOC’s tea auctions; sketching the Dutch culture of tea drinking, with the eighteenth-century transformation of tea from a medicinal to a social beverage; and setting out the structures of tea retailing and the duties and taxes imposed—duties from which certain privileged groups, such as professors of Leiden University, were exempt. This chapter also briefly examines the re-export of Dutch tea, partly as licit trade with Germany and Russia, but mostly as contraband trade with Britain, through the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. When the British lowered the duty on tea in 1784 it was a blow to Dutch smugglers, but the inability of the EIC to keep pace with rising demand meant that tea brought to Europe by the VOC continued to be sold in England.

Liu’s final conclusions are presented in a sixth chapter: as far as the Dutch trade in tea is concerned, the “Golden Age” was not the seventeenth century, but the second half of the eighteenth, and it was brought to an end not by any economic dynamic, but by the impact of war, first in 1780-84, and then again after 1795.

Paul Arblaster, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven


Whenever one’s own country and allies suffer an ignominious defeat, particularly at the hands of a brutal and unapologetic enemy, it is left to the historian to explain what happened. However, too often the temptation is to demonise the other side, to find scapegoats for the defeat or to simply portray the enemy as being such a vaunted fighting force that nothing could have stopped them. Fortunately, in Britains Great Defeat: Singapore 1942, Alan Warren has written a balanced and detailed examination of how the forces of the British Empire were so thoroughly trounced by the Japanese in Malaysia and Singapore in 1942.

Warren begins his work by providing a brief summary of the British colonisation of Malaysia, and the development of the rubber and tin industry there. Next, he outlines British defence policy in the Far East up to the Second World War. This discussion includes an examination of the impact of the Washington and London Naval Treaties on the Royal Navy, and the decision to construct a fortified naval base at Singapore. He argues that British defence policy was based on a number of flawed assumptions, including the supposition that a fleet would be sent to the Far East if hostilities broke out. He adds that both the British government and the Royal Navy likely realised that this was wishful thinking. Ultimately, Warren concludes that due to the reductions in British naval strength, and the need for them
to concentrate their limited forces elsewhere, Britain had little choice but to hope that resources they allocated to the Far East would be enough to deter a Japanese attack on their colonies in the area.

The author then examines the ground, air and naval forces that both empires deployed in the battle. This includes a discussion of the composition and structure of the British Indian Army, which formed the bulk of the British forces at Singapore. This was of particular interest to this reviewer, as this force is often overlooked in general histories of the Second World War. Warren also provides some background on the key commanders on both sides, including Lieutenant General A.E. Percival, General Officer Commanding (GOC) Malaysia, and General Tomoyuki Yamashita, the commander of the Japanese XXV Army.

At this point, Warren moves on to discuss the campaign itself. First, he outlines the Japanese landing at Kota Bharu and the breaching of the Jitra Line in early December 1941. He then elaborates a number of other Japanese victories, such as those at Slim River and at Laynag Layang, which resulted in the retreat of the British Imperial forces from the Malaysian mainland to the island of Singapore by the end of January 1942. He also describes the sinking of the HMS Prince of Wales and Repulse of Force Z by land-based torpedo bombers, and the failed efforts of the Royal Air Force to contribute to the defence of the colony. He concludes the work by examining the events surrounding the fall of Singapore, and the effect it had during the Second World War and afterward. This includes an analysis of why so many former Indian Army officers and men joined the Japanese sponsored Indian National Army (INA), and provides a look at the various Japanese atrocities carried out against the local Chinese population in Malaysia.

Overall, Warren has produced an excellent history of the fall of Singapore. In particular, he uses solid historical research to illustrate the extreme weakness of the British position in the area, as he argues that Singapore was simply a fortified naval base with neither a fleet to support it, nor an effective airforce presence. It had no fixed defences on its northern coast facing Malaysia and it was garrisoned with forces that were generally too inexperienced and ill-trained to resist the Japanese advance. As a result, it was not the bastion of imperial power that British propaganda touted in the inter-war period.

The author further excels in exposing the extraordinarily poor military leadership that the British had in this campaign. This inadequate leadership ranged from the general failure to prepare for jungle warfare, to Admiral Tom Phillips' underestimation of Japanese airpower, which led to the destruction of Force Z. Other examples of poor leadership included field commanders such as General D.M. Murray-Lyon of the Indian Army, and General H.G. Bennett and Brigadier D.S. Maxwell of the Australian Army, each of whom failed to effectively lead their forces in battle. In addition, while Warren is careful not to blame the British defeat entirely on General Percival, he does argue that Percival’s performance was problematic. For example, Warren states that the inability of Percival to concentrate his forces against the Japanese earlier in the campaign hastened the British defeat. Warren ultimately determines that Percival’s First World War experience simply did not prepare him for the fast-moving jungle campaign that the Japanese fought.

Warren makes a number of other interesting points throughout the book. For instance, he is careful to argue that, while the desertion of thousands of Australian troops during the final days of the battle was a problem, it was a result of the defeat rather than the cause of it. Moreover, he does a skilful job in explaining how the Japanese were able to win so easily, despite having fewer troops than the British. For Warren, the factors that made victory possible were Japanese air and naval superiority, the ability of the Japanese Army to outmanoeuvre their British opponent, and the poor strategic situation of the British Empire in 1942. Finally, Warren has produced a book with a number of useful maps, as well as some interesting appendices, including one on Operation Zipper, the cancelled British operation to recapture Singapore in 1945.

Nevertheless, there is one minor problem with the book that needs to be mentioned. While
Warren does discuss the negative implications of the Washington and London naval treaties on the Royal Navy, he seriously underestimates the willingness of the American and the Japanese to embark upon a naval build-up in the 1920s. Indeed, all one has to do to understand this is study the Lexington Class battle cruisers that were under construction by the U.S. Navy, and the massive capital ships’ hulls that were converted into the aircraft carriers Kaga and Akagi by the Japanese (Preston, 37-41). Moreover, a little more detail about some of the weapon systems used by each side would have been helpful in gaining a greater understanding of how the battles were fought. In particular, more information on the tanks that the Japanese Army employed in the campaign would have been useful.

Despite these criticisms, *Britain’s Greatest Defeat* is an excellent work of history. It is an extremely sound and balanced account that focuses on the diplomatic, political and military aspects of the fall of Singapore. Warren has also produced a detailed historical assessment of the reasons behind this defeat and the impact it had on the British Empire. Thus, it is a very useful work that will help greatly in the understanding of operations in the Pacific in the days after the attack of Pearl Harbour in late 1941 and early 1942, and will be a valuable resource for historians for many years to come.

Matt Trudgeon, Queen’s University, Kingston

**SOUTHEAST ASIA**


In *Silk for Silver: Dutch-Vietnamese Relations, 1637-1700*, Hoang Anh Tuan has given us a fascinating window into the workings of the internationalisation of Northern Vietnamese society in the latter two-thirds of the seventeenth century. This epoch of Vietnamese history is actually quite well-chronicled; established scholars such as Alexander Woodside, Keith Taylor, Esta Ungar, and John Whitmore have all written about the crucial changes that engulfed the expanding Vietnamese polity in this period. Yet where these scholars for the most part examine Vietnamese society primarily on its own terms, or at best in relation to the colossus of China to the north (John Whitmore’s work on precious metals being a partial exception to this), Hoang Anh Tuan has gone in the opposite direction and has made Dutch sources and records the central evidentiary spine of his story. This is a sea-change in advantage; examining this time period from the locus of the coasts changes many suppositions. The result is an increasingly internationalised story where the cosmopolitanism of the maritime trade routes comes to the fore. Vietnam appears to be one part—but now an increasingly important part—of a burgeoning trans-regional system that was both highly political and irrepressibly commercial in nature at the same time.

Hoang’s command of the Dutch sources is impressive. Documents from this period are notoriously hard to read, yet they are well-preserved and conveniently centralised in the National Archives of the Netherlands in The Hague. Very few historians of Vietnam have used Dutch sources in any kind of systematic way prior to Hoang, and he had almost complete *terra incognita* to map out in his study. At the same time this meant that a very large amount of data that he reported is seeing light for the first time. The Dutch were nothing if not admirable record-keepers. They chronicled political relationships (which pre-conditioned their trade), commercial relationships (which actualised the day-to-day interactions of trying to make a profit), and even social relationships (which oiled the wheels of their business empire in a number of important ways). Hoang echoes these Dutch archival concerns with the structure of his own book, turning to each of these subjects in turn to try to explain how the relationship between the Dutch and Vietnamese evolved over the course of more than sixty years.

The results are slightly mixed. Hoang’s reportage on political relationships between the
Trinh and the VOC is certainly competent, and it lays out the backbone of these interactions in interesting ways. Yet some of the flesh, sinew, and blood of these day-to-day dealings seems to be missing; the story of the ongoing political dance between two sets of regimes of a very different character does not get told here. There is an arc to the story and we see tentative beginnings, done deals, misunderstandings and eventual failures, but we don’t feel the everyday quality of the relationship as each side tried to figure out the other and extract maximum advantage from this same understanding. It may be slightly unfair to critique this section as Hoang can only be as good as the sources at his disposal for this information. The Dutch records do appear to be rather limited and stale in this respect, with the Vietnamese sources even less forthcoming on exciting details.

Hoang is stronger on part 3 of his book, which deals with the actual economics of this evolving commercial relationship through a number of interesting products. Cash and precious metals form one of these subjects; Hoang is not the first to write on these trades, and one can see how he builds nicely on previous literature to open up his discussion here. The arms trade (important), musk, gold (for southeast India) and trade ceramics (for the rest of Southeast Asia, particularly the island world to the south) are all explored with fascinating results. Yet it was the sale of Vietnamese silk—largely to Japan, carried by VOC ships—that makes up the lion’s share of his discussion here. Hoang shows how important this sub-trade was not only to the Dutch, who transported the fabric, and to the Japanese and Vietnamese, who bought and sold it respectively, but also to the entirety of this regional Asian system. Dutch ships calling for Vietnamese silk traded at many ports, and linked many economies and societies through their passage. Hoang understands this and takes pains to show how Vietnam became an increasingly important coast for merchants on their oceanic travels through the region.

Part 4 of Hoang’s book, which deals with the social and cultural implications of this deepening contact as the seventeenth-century progressed, is considerably shorter and less developed than his discussion of either politics or commerce in earlier sections. Here again, one surmises that the author is at the mercy of his sources in this respect, and that the Dutch had less to say on these matters in general than they did on the hurly-burly of statecraft and business on a seasonal (or even weekly) basis. Yet some of Hoang’s story here is fascinating, and equally rare—discussion for example on whether the seeds of capitalism first appeared in Vietnam at this time, or on the romantic (and sexual) relationships between Dutch men and Vietnamese women, are eye-opening and instructive in their own right. Cultural awareness of the “other” was a matter of daily interaction at this point on the Vietnamese littoral, with “others” comprising not only the Dutch but also Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese and English merchants as well. All of this was happening before the French became the most important foreigners on the scene later in the nineteenth century.

Silk for Silver is an important book; it is one of those volumes that quietly passes into the academic canon, but which will leave a larger and larger impression with time. It is written in a sober and understated tone, and its use of data-accumulation and difficult sources will make it valuable well into the future. More than this, however, its emphasis on using truly underutilised materials to try to re-orient the story of the Vietnamese coasts in the later seventeenth century succeeds in traversing new ground where older orthodoxies have long held sway. This is not a book to set the world on fire. Yet it is one that will repay careful reading with that most precious of commodities, more valuable even than the silk or silver of Hoang’s title: the opening of new vistas and new possibilities on a long-vanished past.

Eric Tagliacozzo, Cornell University

Originally conceived and engagingly written, Susan Dwyer Amussen’s latest book provides a welcome addition to slavery studies. By exploring the changes slavery wrought on English attitudes toward law, labour, race, and gender, Amussen enriches our understanding of how Caribbean slavery transformed colonists, their culture, and the country from which they came.

Amussen makes a convincing case that Caribbean colonists struggled in vain to replicate early modern English culture; organising their world around slavery, as the author pointedly observes, made this an impossible task. The first chapter lays the groundwork for this argument, surveying the rhetoric of law and liberty in English culture alongside the English labour ideal of “service”. Almost everybody in early modern England served an apprenticeship, Amussen writes, where the mutual obligations of master and servant, at least ideally, worked to preserve the social order while preparing the rising generation for the social and political responsibilities of economic independence. Taken together, Amussen argues, the ideals of service and liberty underscored the disdain for slavery rampant in English society.

Maintaining her focus on cultural perceptions, Amussen moves on in chapter 2 to assess how the unfree Caribbean labour regime undermined the traditional labour ideal of “service”. Here the author stresses how the notion of service gave way to a new, planter-inspired construct called “servitude”. Servitude rendered “servants” into the chattel property of their masters, who eschewed their former social responsibilities in favour of exerting tyrannical control over labour time and labour costs in the proto-industrial world of the sugar plantation. But as Amussen correctly argues, the old English abhorrence of slavery died hard even in burgeoning slave societies such as Barbados and Jamaica. With close attention to how language evolved in concert with the development of slave societies, Amussen notes how planters referred to white workers as “Christian servants” and black slaves as “Negros” or “Negro servants”, even though they clearly reserved “perpetual servitude” for blacks. Using the published observations of Richard Ligon (Barbados, 1647-50) and John Taylor (Jamaica, 1686) as a guide, Amussen shows how this ambiguity was accompanied by a growing inclination to view blacks as animal-like savages, the natural inferiors to whites. This, as the author astutely discerns, was not itself a natural conclusion. In contrast, racism arose among colonists who ordered the perception of new experience to conform to the dictates of their slave societies, which the English, despite their unfamiliarity with slavery, proved cruelly adept at building. Amussen’s account of Ligon serves as a case study of the contorted logic that racialised perception produced in the Caribbean. Although he wrote in sometimes flattering terms about the black people he encountered earlier in Africa, three years in Barbados led Ligon to conclude that white servant rebellion entailed a natural recourse to liberty while black resistance evidenced the natural treachery of Africans. Consequently, the old medieval worldview that all humanity was “of one blood” slowly gave way to one based upon racial differentiation.

In chapter 3, Amussen provides a dense description of the industrial character of the sugar plantation system on Barbados and Jamaica. Here she introduces the reader in detail to the Helyar family of East Croker, Somerset, and their fickle fortunes as owners of the Bybrook plantation on Jamaica. Amussen uses their story to illustrate how absentee landlords seldom made profits due to unscrupulous or incompetent stewards; the Helyars only made money when son John personally ran the plantation for a brief period. Along the way, Amussen describes how high mortality rates and geographic mobility within the colonies, and between the colonies and Old England, led to frequent transfers of plantation property. Despite this, the capital-intensive nature of sugar production and slave investment led to the rapid con-
centration of property in the hands of fewer and fewer planters. In 1640, 10,000 people owned land in Barbados; by 1680, 175 planters owned roughly half the island’s land and slaves (75).

Amussen describes at length in chapter 4 how planters laid claim to traditional English liberties, in the midst of creating slave societies, to protect their interests against the encroaching hand of the imperial government. A battle for sovereignty in the English Caribbean resulted, where the language of English liberty served both colonial assemblies and the empire as a weapon in the war for control over trade and taxation. But perhaps most importantly for Amussen, despite planter attempts to defend the colonial labour system in terms familiar to its English critics, “the language of servitude masked the most brutal realities of enslavement” (98). Although she does well in tracing the increasingly racialised justifications planters used to place enslaved Africans outside the purview of English liberty, Amussen stumbles in her account of white servants. While noting how the invention of “indentured servitude” obliterated the ideal of service, Amussen argues, along with most slavery scholars, that slave societies developed in the Caribbean when indentured servitude gave way to a majority black slave labour force over the course of the 1650s. More attention to language might have produced a more nuanced argument, for contemporaries who burned through the mystifying planter language of “servitude” often referred to white servants as “bond-slaves”, reflecting more precisely the temporary chattel status that “servitude” assigned to white workers. Moreover, Amussen downplays the fact that many if not most European workers had not migrated voluntarily; instead, they had been seduced, kidnapped, arrested, taken captive in war, and pulled off the streets and from out of orphanages to be sent to the colonies to work against their will. Before the 1660s, thousands of these involuntary, white migrants worked next to black slaves in the fields of Caribbean plantations; only later would they serve, for the most part, as overseers and craftsmen. These facts, coupled with the systematic, colonial expropriation of white worker rights that Amussen dutifully catalogues in the transition from service to servitude, suggest that England's Caribbean colonies had become slave societies of a sort before the introduction of widespread black slavery. In this construct, racialised, permanent slavery, rather than the sine qua non of a seventeenth-century slave society, marked an extraordinarily exploitive and profitable step in its maturation.

If Amussen falls short in this regard, she prevails where other slavery historians rarely venture by drawing attention to the understudied though critical gender differences that racialised thinking introduced into English Caribbean slave societies. Unlike white female workers, black women slaves did the same work as their male counterparts. Moreover, although white women “bond-slaves” and black women enslaved for life were both the property of their masters, masters sexualised the slavery of black women with impunity while white women found legal protection from their masters' predatory behaviour. Amussen's gender analysis thus reveals how racism could sever the last, frayed cords connecting colonial slave societies with older notions of English equity.

Chapter 5's discussion of resistance chronicles both English critiques of colonial slavery as well as the chronic problem that slave rebellion posed to planters. Although she errs in saying that the English seventeenth century produced no principled rejection of slavery—Rhode Island briefly abolished bond and perpetual slavery in 1652—Amussen presents a subtle and discerning discussion of how Richard Baxter's and Thomas Tryon's strident condemnations of slaves' brutal treatment in the Caribbean rejected abolition in favour of bringing the slave system in line with both Christian morality and enlightened self-interest.

Chapter 6, perhaps the most fascinating section in the book, explores how Caribbean slave societies produced changes in seventeenth-century English culture that ranged from new foods, fashion, and commodities, to literature and plays about slavery, to the formation of a small black community in England itself. Amussen's discussion of plays by William D'Avenant, Aphra Behn, and Mary Pix reveals how the English mind wrestled with the
challenges that Caribbean slave societies posed to English notions of stable social hierarchies, moral virtue, justice, and political liberty. Whether allegorised or presented in character, when English playwrights brought the Caribbean planter on stage, they emphasised his vice, mean birth, grasping ambition, lust, greed, and political hypocrisy. England's colonial slave societies, then, seemed out of step with English ideas of moral propriety and human freedom. Curiously absent from many of these plays, however, were the slaves themselves. For Amussen, it seems that the English, while condemning planters as rapacious outliers, found it difficult to admit that slavery had become enmeshed within the cultural fabric of their own country, one woven through with an ostensible hatred of slavery.

In her intriguing epilogue, Amussen notes that the lessons drawn from seventeenth-century Caribbean slave societies taught the English ruling class of the next century how to organise their industrial empire and discipline its social creation, a new and restive proletariat. While the author admits that this is not a new insight, it nonetheless brings her back full circle to what drove her to write this book. Professor Amussen set out to study the transatlantic impact of slavery in order to create a "fruitful memory" of the past, this to better understand how our own problems involving race, economic exploitation, and inequality came to be. Measuring her book by this invaluable standard, Amussen succeeds brilliantly.

John Donoghue, Loyola University, Chicago


*Russian Empire* is an important new collective work that reinterprets the fundamental nature of Russian imperial rule. I use the label “collective work” advisedly, for while the volume includes eighteen essays by eighteen authors, it achieves an admirable unity of focus and argument. Collectively the authors propose that imperial Russia ought to be understood not as a nation-state in the making, but as an “empire-state” that endured for more than two centuries because it found ways to accommodate a wide variety of ethnic and cultural groups without forcing upon them a single homogenising national identity.

This empire-state thesis is a sharp departure from past accounts of the Russian experience. Most scholars of Russian imperialism have focused upon the autocracy's efforts to impose control over its various colonial subjects, placing Russia within the standard framework of scholarship that emphasises core domination and peripheral resistance. *Russian Empire* proposes that imperial Russia should first be understood territorially, as a space to be governed, and from this the volume focuses on the political forms that Russia developed to address the widely variable geographic, economic, and ethno-cultural circumstances that it encountered in that space. The argument is that Russia institutionalised a differentiated form of governance that legitimised and perpetuated regional differences.

*Russian Empire* is divided into four sections—"Space", "People", "Institutions", and "Designs"—that address various aspects of the larger argument. "Space" focuses upon how the empire defined itself, stressing both the challenges of size, and of variability. The authors of this section skilfully frame the basic argument, that the Russian empire defined itself as a territory occupied by diverse peoples, and that the autocracy accepted this diversity as a characteristic to be administered rather than as an obstacle to be overcome. There were important hierarchical distinctions within this diversity: European Russia formed the national core, while Asian Russia was viewed as an "extension" that lagged behind the core and needed to be modernised. This might sound like a traditional core-periphery framework, but the section problematises this assumption by showing the fluidity of the borders between and within core and periphery.

The second and third sections explore the implications of the main argument through
case studies of particular regions, events, and policies. These sections give scope to an implicit debate about the survival of the empire-state after 1863. Chapters by Paul Werth, Shane O’Rourke, Vladimir Bobrovnikov, and Elena Campbell suggest that the Polish Rebellion of 1863 marked a defining moment after which Russian imperial policy shifted from the empire-state model to a more traditional colonial trajectory. In contrast, chapters by Jane Burbank, Nikolai Ssorin-Chaikov, Irina Novikova, Ekaterina Pravilova, and Aleksei Volvenko suggest that the empire-state model extended beyond 1863 and even into the Soviet period. This debate goes unresolved, but it does not undermine the basic empire-state thesis, for all of the essays are rooted in and build upon the concept of the empire-state.

The final section, “Designs”, returns to the big picture. One of the many important achievements of Russian Empire is that it provides western readers access in English to the work of leading Russian scholars of empire, and the essays in this section by Anatolyi Remnev and Sviatoslav Kaspe are particularly welcome. Remnev is the single most persuasive proponent of the empire-state thesis. He argues for a “functional logic of empire” based on “polyvalent power structures” that sustained the empire into the Soviet era (425). Remnev does not deny the desire of the central government to standardise administration across the empire, but he insists that peripheral realities were as important as central ones in shaping the empire-state. In contrast, Kaspe is, on the face of it, a persuasive opponent of the empire-state thesis. While he clearly acknowledges that the empire permitted regional ethno-cultural particularities to survive, he stresses “a significant number of examples of ‘nation-state’ policies that narrowed the scope of local autonomy, [and] rationalised and unified the administrative system” over time (458).

Kaspe describes a cycle of centralisation and devolution of imperial policy that is strongly reminiscent of Alexander Gerschenkron’s theory of Tsarist economic development. Kaspe is not wholly opposed to the empire-state thesis because he allows for periods, even in the soviet era, of strong regional particularism. However, his essay does highlight the most notable lacuna in Russian Empire: with the exception of Pravilova’s study of monetary policy in Poland, the volume pays no serious attention to the reign of Nicholas I, a period which, as Kaspe notes in passing, experienced “the highest tensions” between centralism and particularism. Nicholas’s reign saw the creation of the ideology of “official nationalism”, which explicitly linked Russian national identity to Orthodox Christianity, and it also saw the creation of the Ministry of State Domains, which launched extensive empire-wide investigations of ethnic and cultural minorities and provided the basic groundwork for the Great Reforms of the 1860s. The empire-state thesis, and the emphasis on the 1863 Polish rebellion as a watershed event, both need to be tested by a close consideration of the Nicholaevan reforms.

In a carefully crafted introductory chapter, two of the volume’s editors, Jane Burbank and Mark von Hagen, summarise Russian Empire’s major findings and reflect on how those findings fit into both Russian imperial studies and the broader discipline. The editors recognise that this volume raises unanswered questions, and they make no claim that they have provided the definitive interpretation of all aspects of the Russian Empire. They do convincingly argue that re-conceptualising the empire as a place where “desires for uniformity and the reality of multiplicity” were institutionalised into a unique, stable state form provides an extraordinarily fruitful framework for future scholarship, both on Russia and other empires (17). The degree to which the empire-state thesis will survive such scholarship, and the shape it will ultimately take, are still in question, but it is unquestionable that Russian Empire is a major contribution to the study of empires.

John Staples, State University of New York, Fredonia
Dear Readers of this Esteemed Journal, I wish to commend the work of Paul D. McLean to you. You will find that he has written it with honour, sincerity, and the utmost friendship to his scholarly colleagues of the Academy. Such is the language employed in the patronage letters written by and to the Medici rulers of Florence in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and examined in depth in McLean’s book, *The Art of the Network*. Through the lens of historical sociology, McLean wades through a voluminous collection of extant letters and wrings meaning from his recalcitrant source material in a way that is boldly imaginative.

Historical sociology, like many hybrid fields, can suffer from not doing enough to satisfy either side, i.e. historians or sociologists, in its ambitions. Sociologists, for example, will likely appreciate McLean’s emphasis on modern theories of social network and strategy and his attempt to refine those theories and combine them in new and interesting ways within the context of Renaissance Italy. He draws on several fields of inquiry, including network economics, political science (think social capital), and cultural theory to develop a sophisticated theory of how social networks function(ed). In his vision, previous theories come up short in explaining the dynamics of networks and the role of the individual within those dynamic structures. As he puts it, the Florentine patronage structures were both “strategic and constitutive” (226) as individuals were as constrained or defined by their network as they were active creators and users of its connections. Historians, on the other hand, might find their affection for the humanities challenged by his claims for the universality of this model (“Florentine strategic interaction in some sense is an exemplary illustration of our social life—a well-chosen case in the sociology of (contemporary) culture” [229]).

McLean redeems himself with the historians through a close reading and qualitative analysis of the vocabulary employed in the letters over time. For example, he expends a full chapter noting the multi-valent and contested ways in which writers employed the term honor (in Italian, *onore* or *onestà*). It should be noted that at first glance, the letters seem unpromising as objects of research. A lesser scholar would likely dismiss the patronage letters as largely formulaic and find their repetitive elements dull and disingenuous. McLean, however, evokes the metaphor of a tool kit (borrowed, in part, from Erving Goffman) to suggest that, taken collectively, the letters represent a set of rhetorical tools that Florentines were conscious of and that they could use strategically and tactically to achieve their desired goals. He suggests that those tools could be utilised differently by people with varied relationships with one another or, in other words, that the existence of the various rhetorical patterns is indicative of the subtle dynamics of social networks. While the patterns in the representative letters do not constitute a smoking gun with direct causation between any single type of social repair and the tool selected to fix it, the overall impression is one of conscious calculation amidst a set of defined elements; in other words, between the rhetorical structures and the agency of the writers and recipients. McLean’s methods of capturing the dynamics of a system defined by its constant flux should prove quite valuable to those historians who have been increasingly turning their attention to the study of social networks.

Later, McLean redons his sociologist hat and draws conclusions from a more quantitative analysis of the relationship between certain key words in the letters and the politics of office-holding under the various Florentine regimes. In both chapters five and seven, McLean tries to tie patronage networks not to the specifics of Florentine political trials and tribulations, but to sociological theories about the rise of the state. The failure of the Italian cities to become modern states as the result of a lack of military might is an argument that McLean does not directly dispute. Rather, he moves these considerations to the background as he examines letters relating to office-holding and tax relief, to suggest that certain fundamental assumptions about the nature of the modern state and the role of state actors may be in need of
refinement. In the end, McLean argues, the “stalled transformation” of the Florentine state owes much to the schizophrenic nature of its office holders, both rulers and ruled, who simultaneously desired and ducked the trappings of a modern state. The social dynamics he elucidates will not surprise historians who have long developed a sophisticated understanding of the role of faction in the Renaissance city-states, but sociologists should find these broader theoretical claims noteworthy.

It is the last chapter where McLean’s account is most effectively inter-disciplinary, even multi-disciplinary. Historian Jacob Burckhardt had once proclaimed the Renaissance as the harbinger of modernity, particularly the birth of the self. His precocious modernity thesis has in large part been dismantled by subsequent generations of historians, but McLean revives his vision, albeit with a twist. The Florentine letters frequently express ideas of dependence (“your slave”, “your creature”) and relational identity (“dearest to me like a brother” [156]) that do not, at least at first glance, seem compatible with modern ideas of individuality and independence. Again, McLean chooses to complicate a dichotomy, this time between the idea of self and the doctrine of individualism. While modern readers may not find much to identify with the rhetorical flourishes of long-dead Italians, McLean suggests that they might well see glimmers of familiarity in the tactics with which they employ them. He positions the Renaissance as a transition point between modern and pre-modern identities, suggesting that the utilisation of patronage networks moved Renaissance Florentines beyond the corporate mentality of medieval Europe and one step closer to the independent self of the contemporary world. Taken collectively, McLean suggests that the letters show an intermediate form, which he calls self-in-interaction, wherein the writers use certain words, or tools, to suggest an awareness of the difference between their personal and public values and qualities.

These subtle distinctions and overlaps between public and private, between citizen and state, between patron and client, between structure and agency, between word and action, between history and sociology, are what enliven and enrich the perspective of The Art of the Network. Reading between the lines of the letters of these wealthy and influential Italians, McLean has found a sense of empathy with his subjects that goes beyond his ability to prove all that he claims (a fact which he recognises), but that does not make either his theories, his methods, or his insights any less tantalising.

I pray that I have been of service to you, most noble readers.

Laura Cruz, Western Carolina University


How can historians grasp and explore the contradictions and connections within the French empire in ways that do not make a sharp dividing line between metropole and colony? The very breadth and daunting heterogeneity of Greater France has inspired a veritable boom in colonial studies, yet the practical and intellectual challenges of tracing the impact and importance of imperial connections remains difficult. Martin Thomas and Gary Wilder provide two very different approaches to French colonial history. Informed by Foucault’s discussions of political rationality and Marxist theory, Wilder contends that the seeming contradiction between the universal rhetoric of French republicanism and the diverse forms of colonial administration and racist hierarchies in the empire in fact articulated the paradoxical nature of the French imperial nation-state. For him, republican values and colonial equalities were inextricably linked, rather than examples of the failure of the French empire to live up to uni-
versal and democratic political ideals. In turn, Africans in the Negritude movement, rather than simply inverting racist hierarchies, expressed the co-existence of universal republican values and subjective distinctions based on race and culture that they worked through in their writings and activities. Thomas, by contrast, presents a thorough review of historical research on different parts of the empire, including metropolitan France, to denote major themes in the historiography of Greater France. While Wilder privileges literary theory and political philosophy with excursions into archival material, Thomas plunges into an intimidating array of literature on seemingly nearly every part of colonial France. Each study offers a great number of insights. Rather than pitting them against each other, historians of 20th century France and its colonies ought to place them side by side on their bookshelves.

Wilder’s study hinges on the notion of antimony (in which co-existing opposites can both be equally valid) to describe the complex relationships between universal claims of liberty and membership in the French nation with the existence of different classes of individuals marked by racial, colonial, and ethnic differences. Discourses and implementations of policy regarding the empire were both imagined and real, rather than working against each other. French policymakers and African immigrants in Paris equally imagined a Greater France that was both very real and entirely fictional. For example, the 1931 Colonial Exposition’s carefully constructed image of ordered colonial rule brought on anti-colonial protests from African and Vietnamese immigrants (37-40). This linking of opposites also appeared in theories and practices of governance in French West Africa. Though friction developed between administrators’ goals of preserving and transforming African societies, as well as constructing Africans as both abstract individuals and members of racial and ethnic collectivities, these different poles remained bound together. These colonial humanist ideas shaped the state’s promotion of policies that tried to promote welfare, efficiency, and order informed by ethno- logical knowledge of African peoples. Though this knowledge might in fact accentuate the very inferiority of the colonised who supposedly were being helped through administrators’ scientific investigations, the intellectual results of this research became material that African immigrants such as Leopold Louis Senghor could appropriate in their own imaginings of Africa and Europe.

Students and other intellectuals of African descent in France created their own space within the imperial nation-state through poetry, journalistic reports, and other prose. Though some extolled an idealised African past, they did so not in opposition to French universalistic republican values, but as a complimentary identity that had much to offer European civilisation from the particular Pan-African standpoint. They thus positioned themselves in ways that consciously embodied the paradoxical nature of the imperial nation-state. The last three chapters that consider this African humanism within the Negritude movement offer the strongest and most intriguing analysis in this excellent study. All in all, the author succeeds in offering an analytical model for other scholars of French colonialism to follow.

There are, however, a few drawbacks to this approach. Wilder’s exertions to show the success of his middle way between high theory and more empirical-minded studies are a bit tiresome at times. His study should be lauded for its wide scope and its boldness in imaginatively conceptualising Greater France; but bashing the supposed “fetishization” of social histories dealing with ordinary people (22), “idiographic empiricism” (301), and “(banal) but impeccable documentation” (302) seems unwise when the secondary literature on French West Africa that provides his evidence for the workings of the French colonial administration are for the most part social histories themselves. This sort of unnecessary posturing detracts from his presentation. And, as Thomas’ overview suggests, much of the supposedly tired microhistorical and documentary-based research on the empire actually confirms many of Wilder’s points, especially on the “intrinsic messiness” of the imperial nation-state “that was expressed equally in projects and practices” (22).

Thomas’ study is a magisterial review of literature on the French empire between the wars on three main themes: politics and administration, economic and cultural ties between
metropolitan France and its colonies, and internal and external threats to the empire, from rebellions to nationalist movements and the onset of international war in 1939. His comparisons are often intriguing, ranging from a discussion of nationalist movements in North Africa, the Levant, Vietnam, and Madagascar, to contrasting armed conflicts in Morocco, French Equatorial Africa, and Southeast Asia. Many of the themes he considers will be familiar to colonial historians. The majority of metropolitan French politicians and the general public paid little attention to colonial affairs save in times of dire crisis. Though the empire became France’s biggest trading partner in 1928, the empire ultimately allowed for the survival of French industries that could not compete in the world market, and colonial policies often favoured the export of raw materials rather than expanding economic opportunities in the colonies. Despite rhetoric that celebrated the strength the empire provided to France, defence planners never developed coherent strategies to defend France’s overseas possessions between the wars.

Even more than Wilder, Thomas’ scope makes judging his conclusions difficult for those of us who have not read up on seemingly every colony in the empire. Rather than examining the development of colonial rationality, Thomas, like Alice Conklin, finds the republican values of the empire ultimately to be merely platitudes. His approach is more conventional than that of Wilder, and, for better or worse, eschews critical theory for the most part in favour of developing narratives. From the standpoint of a historian of French Equatorial Africa, his conclusions are depressingly sound, in that this colonial federation received the least funding and attention from the French state.

Scholars of French empire in the twentieth century should own both of these books. Although the density of Thomas’ evidence will make this book a hard read for most undergraduates, it is a very useful resource for historians looking to make comparisons within the empire. Wilder focuses on broad themes rather than furnishing a detailed case study, but his method of analysis will be of practical benefit to historians exploring interactions within the imperial nation-state, and will be excellent for use in graduate seminars on imperialism and French colonialism. Though these books have very different methodologies, they both deserve praise.

Jeremy Rich, Middle Tennessee State University


The title of Daniel Castro’s latest work succinctly captures the multi-faceted nature of the Spanish conquest of the New World embodied in the life of colonial Latin America’s most famous friar, Bartolomé de Las Casas. Castro’s intention is to “re-evaluate the Dominican friar as a significant and dynamic historical agent with marked flaws and attributes, and to define his role as a benevolent agent of Spanish political and ecclesiastical imperialism, not as the abstract, heroic, and mythological figure that he has become” (15). The conflict at the heart of Castro’s humanising treatment is how Las Casas, himself an encomendero and proponent of African slavery, sought to balance and justify his temporal desire for a better material life with his sworn duty as priest to improve the physical and spiritual lot of his trustees, the Amerindians.

In chapter 1, Castro succinctly examines the theoretical, juridical, and practical foundations of sixteenth-century Spain and America that informed the early colonial effort in the New World. The author includes both the medieval precedents and theological rationale that gave impetus to, and justified, Spain’s imperial pursuits. Castro’s analysis of the “School of
Salamanca” and its formation of a religious and juridical logic to justify Spain’s dominion in
the New World is especially edifying.

Chapters 2 and 3 examine Las Casas’s experiences after his arrival in the Indies. It was
the Caribbean experience that informed and guided him throughout his life, and he failed
to learn or adapt his message to the vastly different conditions and requirements that
Spain faced when gaining control of the high civilisations it encountered in Mesoamerica
and the Andes. Castro analyses Las Casas’s early colonial development schemes, which
reflected the young priest’s naïve and myopic perspective about the nature of colonisation
during his early years as a reformer. The schemes, while well-intentioned, always faltered
under the weight of a material and spiritual dichotomy. Castro exposes the blind spot that
hampered the Dominican’s efforts throughout his life, reminding the reader that Las Casas
never once questioned forcing the natives to renounce their gods and religious practices in
favour of the more “benevolent” Christian deity, revealing the ecclesiastical-expansionist
“face of empire” as “voraciously swallowing and assimilating all other cultures on its own
terms” (89).

Castro’s narrative achieves a truly exciting dramatic arc in the fourth chapter when Las
Casas accepts the Chiapas bishopric. The excitement of the priest’s confrontation with the
agitated colonists, in his royal position of “protector of the Indians”, reaches a climax in the
“politically and emotionally overheated climate” of southern New Spain. Here, Castro expos-
eses the sixteenth-century roots of the nineteenth-century revolutions of independence in the
Americas, when, “In a rare show of colonial unity” that foretold the rise of Creole identity and
subsequent civil war, the encomenderos galvanised in opposition to Las Casas’s call for an
end to the institution from which they benefited so greatly (124).

The final two chapters treat Las Casas’s return to Spain and his legacy. Las Casas engaged
the semi-feudal and exploitative components of Spanish colonialism until late in his life, but
in 1547 abandoned the Americas in favour of all-out argument against the destruction of its
indigenous inhabitants, choosing access to the King’s ear in the Spanish courts rather than
labouring in the Americas. Undertaking the role of lobbyist so far from those he sought to
protect and defend diminished his effectiveness, according to Castro, but did not render him
impotent. On the contrary, Las Casas’s efforts were clearly visible in the New Laws of 1542.
However, they, like other imperial legislation, lacked the mechanisms for effective enforce-
ment in the Americas, as Castro continually reminds us. Perhaps given the vast differences
between the New World and the Old, or perhaps given his own ambivalence, Castro argues
that Las Casas never bridged the “cultural gap” between himself and his indigenous wards:
he never even bothered to learn a native language (demonstrating perhaps the friar’s sense
of linguistic imperialism), nor did he ever choose to live among and fight for his charges for
any extended time.

There are a few minor errors in the text, such as the occasional clunky gerunds-used-as-
verbs, of which, it seems, historians are becoming so enamoured (“conforming”, “obtain-
ing”), a handful of definitional errors (reducciones as “modern-day reservations” instead of
“colonial-era” reservations), as well as a reference to Chiapas as a “Mexican state” rather than
a bishopric of New Spain. These few mistakes do not, however, detract from the overall elo-
quence of Castro’s study. One of the obstacles facing the historian in search of the “real” Las
Casas is the dearth of primary material about the priest-encomendero’s life beyond that pro-
vided by the subject himself. Also, to get at the man behind the myth, Castro must clear away
hagiographic substantives like “Father” and “Apostle”. Any successful revision requires a
clear understanding of the extant literature, and included in the references are some seventy
monographs, articles, and chapters, including Las Casas’s own writings, which Castro
carefully examines and summarises for the reader. The resulting compendium provides both
academic and casual readers with a comprehensive reference list. And by addressing con-
clusions drawn by well-known colonialists, Castro exposes what he perceives to be flaws in
their analysis. For example, Castro locates the irony within Lewis Hanke’s hagiographic por-
trayal of Las Casas and the Spanish “fight for justice” for the Amerindians without diminishing the importance of Hanke’s contribution to our understanding of Las Casas. As Castro demonstrates convincingly throughout the book, Las Casas’s efforts to end the oppression of the Indian simultaneously carried with them the extension of the same attitudes and structures that made such oppression possible: “For Hanke to praise imperial Spain for plunging into such a struggle for justice is akin to praising a pyromaniac for calling the firefighters after setting a building on fire” (174).

Finally, the editors of this book’s particular series, Latin America Otherwise identify as a further objective an exploration of the “strategies of resistance” that Indoamericans employed. However, with only minor and relatively forgettable exceptions, such as the case of the guerrilla Enriquillo in Espanola, concrete examples of native resistance are lacking. Even in the case of Enriquillo, Castro describes the chief’s actions more as those of self-preservation than organised resistance (96). Instead of actively seeking examples of resistance where they might not actually have existed, Castro reminds the reader that, after decades of oppression, many Indians had perhaps learned that by exhibiting “a modicum of understanding with the colonists [and by collaborating or appearing to collaborate with their oppressors] they could retain far more of their traditional prerogatives” (125). Again, these are but minor quibbles that should not deter the interested reader, nor should they be considered the author’s fault.

The voice of the oppressed is often rendered inaudible in the historical record and, sadly, it is seldom at the forefront of the universal struggle for the promulgation and protection of human rights. Castro respectfully addresses the intellectual importance of the priest’s efforts, without failing to address the ambivalence of his actions or the myopia of his vision. He avoids both the detractor’s agenda and the hagiographer’s undue reverence, and illuminates the face of imperialism that Las Casas presented to both Old and New Worlds. In doing so, Castro reveals the blindness that afflicts reformers past and present: that is, the inability to better hear those repressed/stilled voices. Latin Americanists, upper-level undergraduates, and graduate students will benefit from reading this thorough and thoughtful narrative.

Charles Heath, Sam Houston University


There is by now a sizeable historical literature concerning creole perceptions of the Indian in Spanish America. This book shows how images of the Indian created by creole elites served as a crucial ingredient in the intellectual concoction of national identities during the “long nineteenth century”. Stretching from the late colonial collapse of empire to the consolidation of nation-states in the early twentieth century, it reads as a broad synthesis of the extant literature at the same time that it offers novel arguments constantly in dialogue with the field. As the cultural construction of the Indian has persisted in various forms ever since 1492, it has also lent support to the notion of long-term continuity across the colonial-national divide, a staple of social history which has tended to dispense with independence as mere political veneer. Without dismissing such obvious continuity, Earle places more emphasis on the ideological shift that took place after independence, when usages of the “Indian” became strongly linked to the political agenda of nation-building. This process formed both the intellectual matrix and the political telos for creole elites throughout Spanish America, in which ancient Indians as much as contemporary ones were imagined. Things Indian could be regarded either as a source of national pride and legitimacy or as an acute problem to grapple with, an impediment to national progress and consolidation. At any rate, the Indian
past and present was an issue that creole intellectuals felt compelled to confront in their efforts to construct a national identity.

Unfolding along the chapters is a story which could schematically be described as a dialectic process sans the typical teleological fallacy. The glorification of ancient Indians before and during independence slowly gave way to the other extreme, their outright condemnation by positivist intellectuals toward the end of the nineteenth century, who viewing them as barbarian. With the consolidation of nation-states in the early twentieth century, indigenismo, a dominant ideology in some countries, presented a synthesis of previous versions of praise and denunciation. Once again Spanish American elites celebrated the Indian heritage of their nation. They also became more concerned with contemporary indigenous affairs, though usually as problems, which paradoxically required that Indians shed away any feature constituting their “Indianness”.

The book is remarkable in three respects. First, it is grounded in stunning archival research carried out in several countries, in addition to using published material from a host of other nations. Second, based on its wealth of both primary and secondary sources, it advances comparative arguments on a topic usually examined within national boundaries. One of the fascinating findings is the pervasiveness of Indianesque nationalism in its various manifestations throughout the region, even in countries such as Colombia and Argentina, where indigenous societies had remained relatively marginal from a creole perspective. Finally, the use of literature, art and artefacts as evidence, complemented by conventional materials of intellectual history, results in a thick description of sorts, a comprehensive view of the discourse of nation-building; that is, not only what elites talked about but also how they talked about it.

While no explicit argument unifies the seven chapters, they all address various aspects of the relation between Indian image and nation within elite ideology. Organised partly thematically, partly chronologically, the book revolves around what Earle calls “Indianesque nationalism”, the appropriation and celebration of the Indian past by creole intellectuals. The first two chapters address this discourse during its heyday in the era of independence, whereby creole intellectuals portrayed Bolivar and San Martin as the heirs of the forerunners Cuhautemoc, Atahualpa, and Caupolicán, Indian leaders who had heroically resisted the Spanish conquest. According to the rhetoric of the day, independence was but a just revenge against Spanish colonial oppression, a progeny of indigenous heroic struggles against the conquistadors. Interestingly, Earle shows that the intellectual distinction between past Indians and contemporary ones, a commonplace of Latin American history, became somewhat muted during the era of independence. One gets the sense that contemporary Indians would have nodded in agreement with Marx’s dictum that history repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce.

In the aftermath of independence, Indianesque nationalism provided the fledgling nations a source of iconography and names. Coins, stamps and flags alluded to an imagined Indian ancestry, serving creole elites to highlight national independence and cultural difference from imperial Spain. The rest of the chapters examine various aspects of Indian imagery after the demise of Indianesque nationalism towards midcentury, which nevertheless remained an undercurrent in the creole mind.

Earle argues that the search for “founding fathers” gradually led to the rejection of the precolonial era as the cradle of national culture. By the time of the centenary of independence, with the Spanish heritage rehabilitated, creole intellectuals located their national birth either in the independence era or in the Spanish conquest. Interestingly, Earle shows how despite their ideological cleavages, conservatives and liberals alike acknowledged the Spanish origins of their national culture.

Using the prism of cultural objects rather than themes, chapters four and five discuss the writing of _historia patria_, fiction and plastic arts, as well as national museums and archaeological excavations. All of these cultural products contributed to an ideological enterprise
linking a distant, exoticised Indian past to modern nations, whereby creoles discussed such questions as the level of civilisation of ancient empires, the integration of the Indian into modern society, and the mournful chasm between the Indian’s ancient glory and modern-day degradation.

The very merits of this work, which mark its contribution to the field, also contain its weaknesses. The abundance of primary sources raises the perennial question of selectivity and representativeness, aspects which seem all the more crucial for a comparative study. To take one example, in her discussion on Chile during the “Pacification of Araucania” Earle argues that any description of the Mapuche as civilised was criticised as antipatriotic, but the extent and weight of such views remains unclear. This is not to say that the increasingly negative assessment of the Indian towards the end of the nineteenth century is not well documented. But here and there further analysis of discord rather than unanimity could have advanced the argument off the well-beaten path. As a result, the tapestry-like account of intellectual opinions gives the impression that elite ideology implicitly boiled down to coherent, tangible motivations. While such an explanation seems plausible, it nevertheless requires closer scrutiny, particularly because in some countries, notably Mexico, elites may have been trapped in the reified myths created by themselves or by their ancestors. This kind of reductionism also results from the absence of a systematic consideration of the relation between text and audience. Assuming that audience matters, it is not always clear how the ideological content of, say, exhibitions at world fairs, differed from that of national museums. It is also reasonable to assume that the massification of society in the late nineteenth century, along with country-specific ethnic characteristics, affected the meaning of indigenous aspects within national identity. Earle points out how both Argentinean and Mexican intellectuals viewed their nations as partly rooted in a bygone Indian evolutionary stage. But since nation builders in Argentina confronted European immigration while their Mexican counterparts saw a growing mestizo population, it is also possible that they were simply not talking about the same thing.

Notwithstanding these shortcomings, the book is filled with insightful observations, which this review falls short of addressing. Written in a lucid and flowing prose, its scope and arguments will be appreciated by readers interested in the formation of national identity in Spanish America and beyond.

Hillel Eyal, Tel Aviv University


It is common knowledge that the Caribbean is characterised by fragmentation, insularity and heterogeneity on the one hand, and similarities in social structure, economic dependency and political insubordination on the other. Scholars writing on this region face the difficult task of balancing and reconciling these seemingly opposing trends. They are expected to simultaneously pay attention to the complexity and diversity of separate states, societies, cultures and economies, and to display underlying patterns, basic structures and prime movers determining the overall development of these territories. The possibility of constructing a nuanced and coherent “grand narrative” depends largely on the authors’ focus of interest, selection of data and—the preliminary question in every overview of Caribbean history—a definition of the region.

In *The Caribbean*, Gad Heuman—an acclaimed expert on Caribbean slave and post-emancipation societies—employs the “non-Hispanic European” definition of the Caribbean. This includes the islands in the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean, the mainland territories of the Guianas, and Central American Belize. Aware of the constraints of the book’s series
and the inherent impossibility of providing a comprehensive coverage of the region's past, Heuman chooses to concentrate on the social history of the Caribbean. His aim is to explore the way Caribbean people have reacted to four centuries of colonial dominance rather than to investigate the origins of imperial authority. This attention is not only in tune with current research agendas in Caribbean studies; it also dovetails nicely with the expertise of the author.

A good example of the latter, as well as a representative specimen of the quality of The Caribbean, are the two chapters (4 and 9) Heuman dedicates to the group of free coloureds, initially offspring of black slaves and white masters, who were born slaves but obtained their freedom by manumission. As an in-between category they suffered a wide range of legal disadvantages which limited their civil rights, restricted their economic possibilities and curtailed their social interactions with the whites. Yet, in the course of time their number increased and their economic progress proved significant. In 1833, freedmen in the British Caribbean attained full civil rights, which gave way to the emergence of a new middle class that would gradually take over the economic and political supremacy of the white elite. But this is not where the story ends. Heuman convincingly demonstrates that, despite the legal equality of free coloureds and whites, the structure of plantation slave society continued long after the abolition of slavery, as did colour distinctions as obstacles to social mobility for most people of mixed race.

It is not simply the apparent expertise of the author that makes The Caribbean a highly accessible, well-organised and enjoyable introduction to Caribbean history. Another asset of the book is its clear design. All seventeen chapters are focused around a major topic which is explored for a number of countries and which covers a specific time period. This combination of a thematic approach, a comparative perspective and a chronological treatment of events provides his book a great sense of lucidity and survey. This is further enhanced by the summarising paragraphs at the end of each chapter. An additional strength of The Caribbean is Heuman's balanced dealing with sensitive topics such as master-slave relations, "African" and "Creole" agendas in slave uprisings, and day-to-day patterns of resistance. The same holds for the author's assessment of important academic debates surrounding issues such as the Haitian revolution (77), the Williams' thesis (87), the "American Century (137-8) and the 1930s labour protests in the British Caribbean (148). His appraisals are invariably fair and well-argued, representing a personal stand but also leaving room for readers to judge for themselves. Nowhere in the text does Heuman resort to sweeping statements or easy answers to complex questions.

Some weaknesses can also be distinguished. In The Caribbean the emphasis is on the British and Spanish Caribbean. Apart from Haiti (its revolution receiving a separate chapter) the French Caribbean is mainly dealt with in passing, whereas the Dutch Caribbean—long the stepchild of Caribbean studies—is almost non-existent. These different degrees of attention are understandable considering the unequal distribution of 40 million people over diverse Caribbean territories, but definitely diminishes the usefulness of the book as a reference work. Another striking feature of The Caribbean is its accentuation of processes of Africanisation and Creolisation. These reflect the author's expertise and intellectual orientation, and are justified by the composition of the population in most Caribbean countries and the importance of these processes in the shaping of Caribbean societies and identities. However, this immersion does not warrant the absence of serious consideration for practices of Indianisation or Chinisation. On the whole, in The Caribbean the Asian population groups are markedly underexposed. Finally, in the last two chapters of the book the thematic approach falls short. Both sections cover many subjects and issues without much coherence. Instead of a chapter (16) on "contemporary themes" a separate chapter on migration and one on regional integration would have been appropriate. The chapter (17) on "the cultures of the Caribbean" appears to be a tombola of references to expressions of music, art, literature and sports, with an
emphasis on specimen of Creole literature. Regrettably, the author fails to prudently systematise this hotchpotch of (in itself seminal) information and to provide for a cross-section of the main cultural advancements and phenomena in the present-day Caribbean.

In *The Contemporary Caribbean*, Olwyn Blouet—a Caribbeanist who published on nineteenth-century Barbados and Haiti, and co-edited and co-authored *Latin America and the Caribbean: A Systematic and Regional Survey*—employs a stricter definition of the Caribbean. Unlike her demarcation of the region in the above mentioned handbook, in *The Contemporary Caribbean* Blouet confines herself to the insular parts of the region, leaving out Belize and the Guiana mainland (in terms of square kilometres, by far the largest territory). Focusing on post-1945 developments she pursues three objectives: “to survey the Caribbean in a historical context; to describe the environmental, demographic, political, economic and cultural changes that have occurred since the end of World War II; and to present a profile of the characteristics that both unite and divide this multifaceted island territory” (7). These aims allow Blouet to address a variety of issues and events crucial for a better understanding of the (post)modern Caribbean. Her examinations and analyses in some areas supplement the findings presented in Heuman’s volume.

Following two chapters dealing with geographical and environmental issues and pre-1945 affairs, Blouet tackles the issues announced in the preface of her book in the six remaining chapters. One of the best chapters in terms of transparency and overview is the one (5) on Caribbean economy. It succinctly describes the decline of the (traditionally strong) agricultural sector since the 1960s. Particularly sugar and bananas are losing ground as preferential trade agreements with the EU are increasingly challenged and production costs remain too high to generate goods that can be competitive in world markets. Only if ethanol, produced from sugar, gains importance as a fuel source, Blouet believes that a further dwindling of the Caribbean sugar production might be halted. The industrial, manufacturing and construction sectors still being small, the service sector (including government jobs) has become the largest employer in the islands. Tourism and offshore services have boosted Caribbean economies markedly, but have also confirmed the lasting dependency on countries outside the region. Nowadays most Caribbean governments tend to favour sustainable tourism focused on long-term local benefits, yet their success to a great extent is still subject to developments beyond their control. Blouet furnishes reliable information on the major economic changes in the Caribbean, although her commentary on CARICOM (of which Haiti has been a member state since 1999, a fact that seems to have escaped her attention) unfortunately lacks an examination of the opportunities and challenges of the Caribbean Single Market in operation since 2006.

The *The Contemporary Caribbean* also contains relevant data on people, society and culture. In this respect the book offers added value compared to Heuman’s observations, particularly when pertaining to topics such as human development, diversity, health care, sports, and food. Another feature of Blouet’s work is that, apart from an incidental confusion of Haiti and the Dominican Republic (24) and the unjust equation of St. Maarten and Aruba as parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands enjoying a *status aparte* (13 and 66), its information is sound and accurate. There can be no doubt that the author has a thorough knowledge of the modern Caribbean and is truly empathic towards its inhabitants. Nonetheless, the reader wonders why she underscores the creativity and vitality, energy and zest, vigour and vibrancy of Caribbean people throughout the book. True as these qualifications may be, in essence they do not deviate from the tourist-brochure-like phrases from which the author most likely wishes to stay aloof.

Set against Heuman’s authoritative overview, *The Contemporary Caribbean* does not reveal a specific approach nor an appreciable personal touch. The display of facts and developments is not supported by a well-articulated vision, a marked and consistently applied perspective or a captivating style of writing. In general, the author seems to prefer the stance of neutral observer to that of the compelling scholar engaged in academic discussions. This
less inspiring attitude is particularly manifest in the final chapter of the book entitled “Problems and Prospects in the Twenty-first Century”. In this auspicious text, Blouet considers environmental management and protection, expansion of modern communications technology, educational improvements, regional economic integration, and the embedding of the tourist industry in the local economy, as basic to the solving of current problems in the Caribbean. No one will contest this conclusion, as it is a valid one, but many will deplore that in her “grand finale” the author has no more to offer than a flat summary of findings already presented in her previous chapters.

Heuman has produced a more gripping and insightful book than Blouet, an achievement which is the more telling when we compare the time periods and territories the authors decided to cover. *The Caribbean* can be recommended to undergraduate students of Caribbean history, but for in-depth introductions to the contemporary period they should preferably rely on edited volumes such as *Understanding the Contemporary Caribbean* by Richard Hillman and Thomas D’Agostino or *The Contemporary Caribbean* by Robert Potter cum suis. It can be no coincidence that both titles feature prominently in Blouet’s section of references.

Peter Meel, Leiden University


The Holy Office of the Inquisition arrived to Portugal in 1536. Lisbon, Évora, and Coimbra were each home to one of the kingdom’s three standing tribunals. As Portuguese America grew in importance, it drew the attention of metropolitan authorities and, in 1551, was placed under the jurisdiction of the Lisbon tribunal. But between 1591 and 1769—that is, for over a century and a half—inquisitors from the imperial capital made only four separate visitations. Thus, for most of the nearly three hundred years in which Brazil was under its jurisdiction, the Holy Office relied on an array of commissioned representatives and minor personnel to carry out its business.

Yet scholars know remarkably little about these officials. Most research on the Inquisition in colonial Brazil focuses on the lives of its victims and sketches the behaviours and traditions that the Holy Office sought to eliminate. Such work tends to portray the Inquisition as a powerful but anonymous, oppressive and violent institution imposed by Spain and Portugal upon their overseas colonies. Since the lives of inquisitorial personnel have remained a mystery, scholars made the untested assumption that financial gain was the primary motive for seeking an inquisitorial post—a conclusion that ignores the central role of honour in structuring social relations in the colony.

Through an examination of the lives of its personnel, James Wadsworth has produced a more nuanced interpretation of the Inquisition’s role in colonial Brazilian society. With information on over one thousand applicants to inquisitorial posts between 1613 and 1821, Wadsworth answers three big questions: How strong and imposing was the Holy Office in Portuguese America? Why did inquisitorial positions appeal to colonists? And what explains the Inquisition’s loss of influence in the early nineteenth century?

Wadsworth argues that the power of the Holy Office was always quite limited. Because Brazil never had a standing tribunal, the Inquisition had to work closely with a variety of secular and religious authorities (such as Crown-appointed administrators or the Society of Jesus) and institutions (such as secular prisons) in order to police behaviour and ensure religious orthodoxy. These reduced the autonomy of the Inquisition. Moreover, Portuguese America was too vast and too thinly settled, and communication too slow to allow the Inquisition more immediate influence over colonists’ lives. For that reason the Holy Office developed an organisational structure comprised of *comissários* and their subordinates, the
familiares do número. Comissários coordinated investigations, oversaw hearings, and corresponded with officials in Portugal; they formed the backbone of the Inquisition's presence in the colony. The familiares carried out the day-to-day business of summoning witnesses, taking prisoners, and occasionally escorting captives back to Lisbon. This structure provided the Holy Office with a network of representatives, servants, and informants who, while based in cities and towns primarily along the coast, could and did extend the reach of the Inquisition to less populous regions.

Wadsworth also demonstrates that the Inquisition was not simply an institution imposed upon the colony from Iberia. Rather, these appointments appealed to colonists because office holders were able to use them to their own advantage. Depending on their office, personnel enjoyed privileges that could include exemption from sumptuary laws, various taxes and mandatory loans, obligatory public office, or forced guardianship of children. They were protected from seizure of property without compensation and from military impressment. And, if brought to trial, they faced judgment by Inquisitors rather than secular magistrates. Wadsworth is careful to point out that appointment did not guarantee a substantial income and that, moreover, the application process was both costly and dangerous. Applicants paid for the background inquiries required to verify both their “purity of blood” (that their background was free of non-Christian, non-European ancestry) and the honour of their family. Therein lay both the risk of the application process and the real value of the appointment. Rejection often implied impurity and, regardless, was always a mark of dishonour that could prove difficult to erase. But for residents with means in a society bereft of noble titles but which was nevertheless structured by a code of honour underwritten by lineage, appointment to an inquisitorial office confirmed the purity of one’s ancestry and thereby safeguarded a family’s honour. Appointment was a priceless mark of distinction in a colony often reviled in the metropole for the mixed heritage of its inhabitants.

The author argues that the 1680s and 1690s marked a period of transition. There were efforts to reduce the number of allowable familiares, and tax exemptions and the retention of privileges after retirement from office were curtailed. Because the influence of the Holy Office depended on its network of personnel, and since these changes threatened some of the advantages that made inquisitorial office appealing in the first place, Wadsworth views them as a threat to the power and prestige of the Holy Office. He interprets the 1693 creation of a confraternity (the brotherhood of St. Peter Martyr) and the 1713 creation of a militia (the Companhia dos Familiares)—both of which were limited to inquisitorial personnel—as efforts to consolidate group identity (via military drills) and to maintain public recognition of the power and authority of the Holy Office (through public rituals of worship). With these changes, the author argues that the role of the Inquisition in Brazil shifted from one of social control to one of “social promotion” and the number of familiares grew rapidly (37).

By the end of the eighteenth century, however, both the confraternity and the Companhia had fallen on hard times and neither could preserve the flagging influence of the Inquisition. The Pombaline reforms removed the purity-of-blood requirement, rendering appointment less exclusive and far less prestigious. And the Inquisition, an institution founded on privilege and censorship, seemed incongruous in Pernambuco in the early-nineteenth century, a time when the influence of the Enlightenment led local leaders to espouse the ideals of individual rights and freedoms.

Wadsworth has placed the Inquisition alongside the Santa Casa da Misericórdia and perhaps the senado da câmara as an institution that acted as both a guarantor of honour and as a vehicle for social mobility for newly arrived Portuguese settlers. The book is thus an important contribution to the literature on linkages between colonial institutions and social life in the Portuguese empire—a body of work that has addressed topics ranging from the High Courts to hospitals.

Wadsworth insists that the Inquisition was a metropolitan institution that needed restructuring to operate in a colonial setting. And, indeed, the book might provide a platform for
comparison of how distinctive colonial settings shaped the structure and function of the Inquisition. But Wadsworth’s analysis weakens when he discusses the key issue of honour. He offers little in the way of a clear definition of what it meant for the people whose lives are the focus of his study. Certainly the lack of detail on any one individual is partly a product of the available source base and is precisely what led the author to the prosopographical approach of which he makes such effective use. But greater biographical detail and definitional clarity are crucial for the story that Wadsworth aims to tell. Honour was composed of many variables that included gender, class, race, occupation, and lineage. Did honour really mean the same thing from 1550 to 1800? Or did the importance of any one of these traits for defining honour vary with time and place? If so, then did the precise meaning of “honour” and the real value of an inquisitorial post, shift over time? Without more detail or clarity, such questions remain unanswerable, but Wadsworth has enabled historians to pose them.

Hugh Glen Cagle, Rutgers University

MIDDLE EAST


This book is the second part of Kees Brouwer’s triptych on al-Mukhâ. Whereas the first part of the triptych, Al-Mukhâ: Profile of a Yemeni Seaport, comprised a thorough investigation of the city and its shipping in historical context—the Turkish-Yemeni struggle—the second book in the series focuses on several aspects of al-Mukhâ’s international commerce: the trade in coffee, spices, and textiles. At first sight, coffee would seem to be the most obvious of the three—after all, al-Mukhâ was once a world-famous coffee port. This becomes more obvious when one considers the name of the city as it appears in many contemporary records: Mocha, or Mocca—this is how mocha coffee received its name. Brouwer, however, calls this “the mocha myth”. He shows how al-Mukhâ has come to be perceived as a coffee port through local and “coffee” historians, but that it really has no right to be considered as such when based on historical research into the region at large, or on the various European companies that traded there. There are actually two myths that Brouwer debunks here: al-Mukhâ was not primarily a coffee port, nor was it the only coffee port: in many instances, he found Jedda to overshadow al-Mukhâ in the volume of exports. As Brouwer concludes: "Mocha was not at all synonymous with al-Mukhâ.”

The second part of the book is dedicated to the spice trade. Interestingly, Brouwer shows that there is no linear development from the old spice routes to Venice, to the new routes via the Cape the Good Hope: when the Ottomans reduced various Red Sea ports in the sixteenth century, the old routes largely recovered in spite of the Portuguese presence. It took until the seventeenth century to permanently shift the spice flows destined for Europe. Another interesting feature of Brouwer’s treatment of the port’s commodities is that he considers fluctuations in demand and supply from an ocean-wide perspective, by comparing, for instance, the Indian supply versus that of the VOC, or by considering changes in demand through governmental changes or acts of war in the region. This approach enables the reader to accurately appraise al-Mukhâ’s role as an Indian Ocean trading station.

Brouwer treats the various spices by category, focusing not just on al-Mukhâ as an entrepôt, but also looking into ports of origin and destination, showing by whom spices were sold, bought, and marketed; in which quantities and for how much; and whether as import or transit goods. It is an impressive feat of scholarship that he is able to treat both the sea routes and the land routes by which spices travelled into Yemen.

The third and largest part of the book is devoted to textiles of all kinds—silks, gold threads,
woven fabrics, turbans, kaftans and many others. Here too, the ocean-wide perspective prevails. The book explores in some detail the large role that Indian freighters played in supplying textiles to the port, but the question turns out to be bigger: how did Indian cargo vessels deposit Chinese silks in South Arabia? The answer is to be found in Dutch observations from the period. Every year in September, Indian vessels carrying relatively expensive Gujarati textiles called at Aceh and on Java. In February they sailed back with—among other things—Chinese silks provided by Malays and Javanese. Aside from Dutch and Indian traders, subchapters are also allotted to other actors, such as Portuguese freighters, English cargo ships, Turkish boats, and Syrian caravans. That this is more than a sketch of less-mentioned actors in the VOC sources may be concluded from Brouwer’s treatment of the Portuguese here; not taking the lack of records of Portuguese textile freighters at face value, he is able to judge from various sources that it was Indian vessels from Portuguese-ruled cities that called at al-Mukhā.

The book definitely delivers on its promise of treating al-Mukhā’s transoceanic trade in coffee, spices and textiles. Brouwer has managed to go into product volumes, prices, origins and destinations, as well as the respective backgrounds of the Dutch, Indian, British and other merchants who called at the port, without ever losing sight of al-Mukhā as the star of the narrative. But the sheer mass of economic information provided tends to obscure some true gems of analysis that appear throughout the book. One such is the subchapter on ‘global pepper policy’ (109-11), in which Brouwer connects the Indian merchants’ objective of turning pepper into hard cash, to the Dutch desire to do the same, revealing a conscious policy to use the market of al-Mukhā to turn Indian Ocean and Archipelago products into precious metals. He then ties this to more general VOC trade policy and examines its wider consequences. Even though the VOC was not a major player in the Mukhāwi pepper trade, this led to some violent obstruction of Indian pepper vessels. But as this is the first comprehensive account of al-Mukhā’s trade as mapped through Dutch sources, such excursions are not the book’s prime objective, and connections such as these have to be happened upon as the commodity-based narrative unfolds.

The book reads like a combination of historical investigation into ocean-wide trade, travel account and commercial handbook. As in the preceding volume, it starts with the author’s twentieth-century experiences in al-Mukhā. The book is a sequel in every sense: readers learn of the signs of revival in the port city since the visits that resulted in Profile of a Yemeni Seaport, and the torrential monsoon rains he experiences there show a marked contrast to the sweltering heat he described in his previous book. But this volume is also a handbook, and in the best sense of the word: it incorporates a massive amount of processed data on the spices and textiles that changed hands at the port, and offers extensive reviews of practically all the existing literature that mentions al-Mukhā’s trade in the commodities under review. This is no small feat, considering that in most publications, as well as archival material, the port does not receive more than a passing reference.

Carolien Stolte, Leiden University

NORTH AMERICA


From 2003 to 2006, Americans celebrated the two hundredth anniversary of the Lewis and
Clark expedition, the journey of a small group of American explorers from St. Louis to the Pacific and back again. Museums mounted exhibitions, filmmakers produced public television documentaries, and a legion of portly historical re-enactors dressed up and pretended to be raw-boned frontiersman. Historians, for their part, published a host of books examining the journey, the Louisiana Purchase, Lewis and Clark’s writings, and every other aspect of the “Corps of Discovery”, as the travellers called themselves.

Lewis and Clark’s voyage, however, was not the only Jeffersonian mission into the West. As the Corps of Discovery travelled through the northern portion of the Louisiana Purchase, three other parties explored waterways to the south. In the fall and winter of 1804-1805, William Dunbar and George Hunter led a small group up the Ouachita River in present-day Louisiana and Arkansas. In 1806, Thomas Freeman and Peter Custis explored the lower Red River, a significant southwestern tributary of the Mississippi. The same year, Zebulon Pike left St. Louis to chart the upper Arkansas River and to look for the headwaters of the Red. Each of these men wrote detailed accounts of their travels, and, in the recent surge of scholarly and popular interest in Lewis and Clark, new editions of these lesser-known exploration narratives have begun to appear. Oklahoma University Press recently republished Dan Flores’s edition of the Freeman-Custis journals (Southern Counterpart to Lewis & Clark, 2002). The two books under review are a republication of a 1930s edition of Pike’s account, and a new scholarly treatment of the Dunbar-Hunter diaries.

The Louisiana Purchase and American westward expansion are important topics, but that does not necessarily mean that these journals are significant or worth reading. Explorers’ narratives promise at least four kinds of information about the American West. Many offer descriptions of the native peoples encountered by the expeditions, although travellers seldom spent enough time in Indian communities to understand what they observed. Some expedition narratives illuminate American political relations with native peoples and with European colonial powers. Since the goals of exploration generally involved science as well as politics, the journals often provide information on the natural history of western places. Finally, as works of literature, expedition diaries allow one to study the mind of early western expansion—the ideas and outlook of historical actors participating in the creation of an American empire. Judged according to these criteria, the Dunbar-Hunter journals are of limited significance. Pike’s narrative has greater value, but this particular edition could be improved substantially.

William Dunbar was a Scottish-born planter living near Natchez, Mississippi, and a member of Thomas Jefferson’s circle of scientific correspondents. Trained in astronomy, he enjoyed a reputation in the southwest as a skilled botanist and surveyor. In 1804, Jefferson and Secretary of War Henry Dearborn asked Dunbar to oversee an exploration of the Red and Arkansas Rivers, and they sent George Hunter, a Philadelphia businessman and chemist, to assist with scientific observations. At this time, the Americans believed (incorrectly) that the headwaters of the Red and Arkansas lay close to one another, and the plan was for the expedition to travel up one waterway, locate and portage to the other, and then float back down to the Mississippi. Jefferson and Dearborn delayed the mission, however, when they learned that a band of Osage Indians believed to be hostile toward Americans had settled on the Arkansas. Dunbar decided to paddle up the Ouachita River instead, using the trip as a warm-up exercise for the proposed longer journey.

They set out in mid-October, 1804, with Dunbar and Hunter joined by thirteen American soldiers, Hunter’s teenage son, two slaves, and Dunbar’s personal servant. On the slow ascent, Dunbar and Hunter made detailed notes on the condition of the river and on the soil, plants, and animals of the surrounding countryside. In early December, they halted in the foothills of the Ouachita Mountains and travelled overland to present-day Hot Springs, Arkansas, where they spent several weeks resting and examining the springs. In January 1805, they returned to the river and travelled back to Natchez the way they came.

The editors of the expedition journals have performed their duties well. The introduction
establishes the context for the mission, the notes are clear and helpful, and the text of the diaries is easy to follow. The problem is that Dunbar and Hunter’s journey was simply not very interesting. It covered a small geographical area, and its leader seems to have viewed the trip mainly as a trial run for grander endeavours in the future. The travellers encountered relatively few people, and Dunbar and Hunter’s descriptions of frontier life are flat and lack nuance. Their accounts of the land and plant life are much more thorough, as are the descriptions of the hot springs. Since much of the landscape they observed has since been altered or obliterated, the journal offers real value as a source for the environmental history of this particular place. One needs to be extremely interested in northern Louisiana and southern Arkansas, however, to find these diaries compelling.

Zebulon Pike’s journal is a different matter. Pike was an army officer with limited education, so his writings lack Dunbar and Hunter’s scientific detail. His comments on natural history, in fact, seldom extend beyond his daily tally of animals shot for food. Pike, however, showed a talent for getting lost and making dangerously bold decisions, and, as a result, his narrative is frequently quite entertaining.

A New Jersey-born lieutenant, Pike, led an unremarkable existence until he accepted a post in southern Illinois where he came to the attention of General James Wilkinson, the army’s senior commander in the West and governor of the northern portion of the Louisiana Purchase. He was also a paid spy for Spain and a participant in Aaron Burr’s conspiracy to create a separate nation out of the western half of the United States. Wilkinson made Pike his protégé and in 1805 sent him north from St. Louis to chart the upper reaches of the Mississippi River. Satisfied with the outcome of that mission, he ordered Pike to prepare for a journey to the west.

The new expedition had several purposes. Pike would visit Osage and Pawnee communities and, if possible, contact the Comanches. He would explore the Arkansas River to its headwaters and then find the Red, on which he would travel to Natchitoches and the lower Mississippi. This itinerary brought Pike into a significant tangle of international politics. The treaty formalising the Louisiana Purchase had described the boundaries vaguely, and for more than a decade Spain and the United States argued over the size of the new American possession. Thomas Jefferson claimed that Louisiana extended west to the Rockies and southwest to the Rio Grande. Spanish leaders, in contrast, insisted that the Americans had bought a far smaller area, a narrow column of land along the southern half of the Mississippi River. Expeditions like Pike’s were partly intended to aid the United States in this dispute. Establishing positive relations with western tribes would strengthen America’s hold on the region, while gaining knowledge of the major rivers would help American diplomats argue for their preferred borders. Geographical information would also prove valuable to the American military should the argument with Spain lead to war, a development many considered likely.

Pike left St. Louis in mid-July 1806 accompanied by twenty soldiers, a physician, and an interpreter. When he arrived at the Pawnee villages on the Republican River he learned that a large party of Spanish soldiers had come through just a few days earlier. While the Spanish visit complicated Pike’s Indian diplomacy—the Pawnees were far more impressed with the Spanish than with Pike’s small company—he found that by following the Spanish soldiers’ trail he was able to lead his party to the Arkansas River, the next stage of their journey. As directed by Wilkinson, they followed the Arkansas toward the Rocky Mountains, where Pike sighted and described the high peak that today bears his name.

By now, it was mid-November and winter had arrived. Having little knowledge of western geography, Pike had expected to be back in Natchitoches by now, and his party had neglected to bring cold weather clothing. Rather than return down the Arkansas, however, Pike decided to carry on with the mission and seek out the headwaters of the Red, which he believed to be nearby. In fact, the Red was hundreds of miles to the south, and Pike and his men became hopelessly lost, trudging through the snow in their tattered summer uniforms.
They nearly starved on several occasions, and some of the soldiers suffered frostbite severe enough to leave them permanently maimed.

Eventually, in February 1807, a Spanish patrol rescued Pike's company. By this point, the Americans had wandered into territory that even Jefferson would have admitted belonged to Spain, and Pike and his men were placed under arrest. The Spanish brought them to Santa Fe and then to Chihuahua, where Spanish colonial officials interrogated them as possible spies. The governor in Chihuahua, concluding they were harmless, ordered them escorted back to the United States by way of Texas. They arrived in Natchitoches in late June 1807, almost a year after their departure from St. Louis.

With his combination of fortitude and incompetence, Pike is an engaging character. Moreover, the journal offers a glimpse of a very interesting moment in the history of the southwest. By 1806 Spain was a fading power in North America, but it was still a power the United States had to take into account as leaders like Jefferson dreamt of a new American empire. The journal documents the Americans' fumbling advance into the southwest and Spain's fighting retreat, and it illuminates a time when the political future of the region was still quite open.

As noted earlier, this version of Pike's writings originally appeared in the 1930s, and, while the editing is competent, the volume shows its age. Stephen Harding Hart and Archer Butler Hulbert seem to have been concerned mainly with tracing Pike's route and defending his standing as a frontier hero. Hulbert, for example, contributed a long, overly strident essay dismissing the notion that Wilkinson had instructed Pike to spy on the Spanish. As an army officer, Pike obviously took a keen interest in Spain's military strength in the region; whether his mentor explicitly told him to spy is irrelevant unless one happens to be a Zebulon Pike biographer. The editors' narrow interests prevent them from providing contextual material adequate to reveal the richness of Pike's account. As a pathfinder and a writer, Pike fell far short of Lewis and Clark; however, his story is appealing enough to merit a new scholarly edition of the journals.

In the recent Lewis and Clark bicentennial, Americans celebrated the Corps of Discovery for their courage, resourcefulness, and determination. Commemorators apparently meant to cultivate those old values in the contemporary public. Zebulon Pike, however, may be a better explorer for Americans in the George Bush era to contemplate. Like Lewis and Clark, Pike was brave and determined, but those qualities did not prevent him from losing his way.

Andrew Denson, Western Carolina University


Those who know the Moravians today tend to regard the church as a quiet faith with a number of distinctive, but harmless, beliefs and practices. Aaron Foglemen is one of several recent scholars seeking to remind us that Moravians were once regarded as heretical fanatics with beliefs and practices that threatened the very fabric of Christian, European civilisation. In particular, Jesus is Female seeks to establish that, although eighteenth-century Moravians seemed threatening for a number of reasons, it was their views about gender, marriage, and sex—what Fogleman calls "gender order" (1), that proved especially unnerving and that led during the 1740s to "widespread religious violence" (185) in the German and Swedish communities of Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Fogleman begins by establishing the legal and intellectual worlds in which Moravian radicalism emerged. Chapter 1 emphasises the relative weakness of established churches in a colonial environment. Eighteenth-century Pennsylvania, in particular, attracted religious radicals from across Europe because its Quaker government, itself the product of a radical sect,
was neither interested in nor capable of enforcing religious orthodoxy on those who settled there. This created a situation that religious minorities such as the Dunkers or Mennonites welcomed, but that horrified orthodox establishments. Chapter 2 then surveys the gender and confessional orders of eighteenth-century Protestant Europe. By gender, Fogleman means both the socially accepted roles of women and men and the nature of sexual relations between them. Regarding the former, both state churches and many dissenters shared a belief in the supremacy of men. In particular, most Reformation theologians held “a masculine view of the Trinity” (38): God was the Father; Jesus was his son; and the Holy Spirit acted male. Most also rejected any leadership role for women in the church, although Quakers routinely allowed women to preach and Methodists sometimes did during their formative years. Attitudes toward marriage and sex were slightly more complicated due to the emergence of more romantic notions of marriage and marital sex during the course of the eighteenth century. Significant uniformity remained, though. Marriage was between one man and one woman, sex should be confined to marriage, and it was chiefly a means of procreation. As for confessional order, Fogleman describes the mid-eighteenth century as a world in which most orthodox religious leaders “demanded that confessional walls be built around their churches to protect them from the radicals and their dangerous religious-social order” (64).

Having sketched the world in which they emerged, Fogelman then goes on to describe several ways in which eighteenth-century Moravians seemed to threaten that world. It is here, perhaps, that Jesus is Female makes its greatest contribution. Chapter 3 provides a fascinating account of the multiple ways in which Moravians of the mid-eighteenth century challenged the orthodox gender order. First, they employed vivid language and images that ascribed feminine characteristics to members of the Trinity. God the Father remained. The Holy Spirit, however, became female. She was the mother of Jesus and the mother of human souls—“Our Complete Mother” (75) in the words of one Moravian pamphlet. And while Jesus remained the Son, he was feminised. Hymns and sermons emphasised his nurturing, motherly nature, and depicted the wound in his side as a womb. Moreover, miniatures depicting daily life within this womb showed it looking very much like a vagina. Second, Moravians held a very different view of marital sex. Their feminised view of Christ often led Moravians to describe their relationship with Jesus in highly erotic terms and Christian worship as a form of sexual union between believers and their Saviour. Thus they regarded marital sex, which brought two believers into a similar union, as a form of worship as well. In fact, marital sex became almost a sacrament to the Moravians. In many of their communities, husbands and wives did not live together. Members lived in “choirs” distinguished by age, gender, and marital status. Married brothers and married sisters lived in separate choir houses, and individual married couples met regularly in designated facilities. There “they could have sacred sex in what they called their ‘marriage quarter hourlies’” (94). The division of their congregations by gender also brought Moravian women into positions of responsibility and authority that represented a third departure from the prevailing gender order. Women served on many of the boards and committees that governed Moravian communities and were critical in the church’s extensive missionary activity.

Eighteenth-century Moravians were not remarkable solely for their views on gender, marriage, and sex. Chapter 4 discusses another aspect of Moravian theology that challenged eighteenth-century religious orthodoxy. To the Moravians’ leader, Nicolaus Ludwig, Count von Zinzendorf, different Christian denominations were all part of a greater “Community of God in the Spirit” (109), and individuals could be both Moravians and members of an established denomination. Zinzendorf, for example, continued to identify himself as a Lutheran, and many of his followers retained their membership in other faiths. This was frequently true of Moravian missionaries, which Zinzendorf sent in growing numbers to the American colonies, especially Pennsylvania, during the early 1740s. According to Fogelman, “by 1743 the Moravians had more German, Swedish, and English speaking preachers in the ‘Penn-
sylvania field’ than all other Lutheran and Reformed authorities combined” (112-13), and they were enjoying great success.

These, then, are the contending forces in Jesus is Female. On one side were orthodox churches, such as the Lutherans and the Dutch Reformed Church, with their emphasis on male authority, sexual conformity, and confessional identity; on the other side were Zinzendorf’s Moravians, with their feminised Trinity, unorthodox sexual roles and practices, and catholic indifference to denominational boundaries. The final chapters of Jesus is Female focus on the conflict that ensued when these two forces met during the 1740s. Chapter 5 describes the torrent of polemical literature that Lutheran and Reformed authors aimed at their Moravian rivals’ unorthodox view of the Trinity, their ecumenism, their willingness to grant temporal and spiritual authority to women, and their deviant marital practices. Chapter 6 describes the belated efforts by the Lutheran and Reformed establishments to dispatch more clergy to Pennsylvania in response to Moravian missionary work there. And Chapter 7 details what happened when those orthodox ministers sought to regain the support of Lutheran and Reformed congregations in which Moravian missionaries had established themselves. The result, says Fogleman, was “widespread religious violence” (185)—violence that does not, however, fit the pattern most often described by studies of the Great Awakening. It was not members of a congregation challenging ministerial authority; rather, it was members fighting among themselves over whether or not to accept the continued presence of a Moravian missionary in the face of growing evidence that Moravians were dangerous heretics bent on undermining the established gender and confessional order of European and Euro-American Christianity.

Jesus is Female does a wonderful job of restoring the frightening face of eighteenth-century Moravianism. To many of their contemporaries, the Moravians were dangerous radicals who had to be stopped, and Fogleman conveys this effectively and convincingly. It does seem, however, that Jesus is Female may go a step too far in concluding that the Moravians’ enemies “used their gender transgressions more than anything else to convince men and women in the communities that the Moravians were not merely a problem but a serious Satanic threat” (215). Fogleman acknowledges that it is difficult to find clear evidence of any individual’s motives for physically attacking Moravians. He suggests, however, that “we can consider how people in similar circumstances during this era reacted” (191) and cites literature on communal violence in the early modern era to support his view that those who attacked Moravians in the 1740s believed their actions were a legitimate means of defending their community’s values. This is no doubt true, but it does not address the issue of what specific threat motivated those attacks. Moravian challenges to the gender order were certainly one of the things that frightened their contemporaries, but they may not have been the principal threat prompting attacks such as those that occurred in Pennsylvania. In Zinzendorf’s day, Moravian liturgy was even more infamous, perhaps, for its graphic celebration of the bloody wounds of the crucified Christ—what one litany described as the “juicy wounds of Jesus”. The Moravians’ tendency to focus on blood gushing from the side wound was probably better known to non-Moravians than was their tendency to depict that wound in the shape of a vagina, and the few statements that Fogelman provides from actual attackers (207-208) suggest they were motivated by opposition to this blood-and-wounds theology rather than to Moravian views on women, sex, or the feminisation of the Trinity.

Even if the Moravians’ threat to the prevailing gender order was not the chief target of their enemies’ wrath, it was certainly one of them, and Fogleman does an outstanding job of highlighting this largely unknown element of eighteenth-century Moravianism. That alone makes Jesus is Female a fascinating and important book.

Daniel B. Thorp, Virginia Tech
In Children in Colonial America, editor James Marten begins with the statement “There were many childhoods in colonial America” (1). Given many childhoods, and a multiplicity of experiences, he and the authors have oriented this collection around a set of central themes that Marten defines as a set of questions: “First, how did the colonial experience shape or even alter perceptions and assumptions about children and childhood? Second, how can research on the history of children reorient our knowledge and interpretations of colonial history?” (8). The assembled authors attempt to answer these questions in a dozen secondary essays, supplemented by seven primary sources and various pedagogical aids, such as discussion questions and a large supplementary bibliography. The essays have a broad geographic and ethnic range, from Indian children in Mexico and southern New England, to Jamaican slave children, to white children of various origins from New England to the South.

The essays form a very interesting group and cover considerable ground. The topics the editor has chosen to highlight are race and colonisation, family and society, cares and tribulations, and becoming Americans. One of the most interesting essays is Mariah Adin’s “I Shall Beat You, So That the Devil Shall Laugh at It: Children, Violence, and the Courts in New Amsterdam”. Her essay very ably demonstrates the conceptual distance between current and past perceptions of the moral and legal position of children. The courts judged Dutch colonial children, in spite of their youth, as people with interests and with power. In the case of sexual abuse, that might mean that the child would be punished as well, although not as severely as the adult. They were not dependents, with a special place within the law. Also of special interest is Parnel Wickham’s “Idiocy and the Construction of Competence in Colonial Massachusetts”. Colonists walked a delicate line between sympathy and Christian charity for the mentally disabled, and horrified at the challenge disability presented to the Puritan sense of order. While obligated to provide for the less fortunate, the presence of the mentally incompetent challenged parents’ conceptions of appropriate Puritan upbringing, and the importance of an orderly society. While all of the essays in the collection are engaging, these two are particularly useful to teachers. The concepts presented run so thoroughly counter to modern conceptions of proper child protection and rearing that they should provide ample opportunities to introduce the idea of childhood as a “construction” rather than a simple, biological reality.

While the breadth of materials will allow readers to draw comparisons between children in various colonial contexts, what is missing is a reference point for comparisons between the colonies and Europe. While the authors often provide a comparative context for mortality rates in the Americas (mortality rates are an excellent measure of levels of health and well-being), they rarely make other comparisons that would help readers understand the differences in childhood between the old world and the new. Although a brief introduction to early modern European childhood would complicate the organisational scheme of the book, and would be as difficult to write as a general history of childhood in colonial America, it would provide a point of reference for those hoping to understand the big picture. In reference to comparisons between life in Africa and life in the colonies, Audra Abbe Diptee’s “Imperial Ideas, Colonial Realities: Enslaved Children in Jamaica, 1775-1834”, does bridge this gap. Diptee points out that, based upon their previous experiences in Africa, enslaved children in Jamaica would face their situation in very different ways. Children who had already lived as slaves in Africa would become accustomed to their situations much more quickly than children who had lived lives of relative privilege. Many of the more privileged, in fact, would protest their new situation by attempting to run away. Apparently, expectations were everything, which is why more comparative material would provide a useful point of departure.

That said, Children in Colonial America is a very welcomed volume. Although the quality of the essays is somewhat uneven, it is a highly useful text. The inclusion of essays cover-
ing a broad geographic range, and discussing youngsters from a variety of ethnic, socio-economic and religious backgrounds, provides the reader with a multi-faceted picture of the many childhoods in colonial America. The thoughtful selection of primary sources also provides a broad view of colonial society. While some are the standard sources that a reader would expect to see, such as writings by Benjamin Franklin and Anne Bradstreet, others are from lesser known writers. The authors have also provided a good, basic set of bibliographies on the history of childhood, colonial history, and the history of children and families in colonial America. With all of these features to recommend it, the book is an excellent teaching resource, as well as a beginning point for any scholar considering further research into the history of children and the family.

Pamela Riney-Kehrberg, Iowa State University


The “Atlantic World” approach to the study of what used to be called the “colonial era” has been one of the more salutary historiographical developments in recent memory. Looking through Atlantic lenses, scholars have been able to look at the period of European contact with and colonisation of the Americas as something far more complex than the march of European discovery (or conquest) from east to west. This analytical framework has also allowed students of the period to more fully integrate Africa and Africans into their scholarship, rather than the adventitious insertion of “slaves” as a faceless general category in order to merely cover the scholarly bases. Even with these apparent advantages, though, the Atlantic World approach has seen its fair share of criticisms. Some assert that what is old is new again, pointing out that this line of interpretation is nothing more than what Charles M. Andrews’s venerable (and unfinished) four-volume masterwork The Colonial Period of American History employed in the 1930s. But it must be pointed out that Andrews, while paying a good deal of attention to the transatlantic context of American colonial development, did so only in Anglophone channels; other than the Dutch (seen primarily as foils to the English), no other European power enters significantly into Andrews’s narrative, to say nothing of other societies on the Atlantic littoral.

Other critics, with more accuracy, suggest that the “Atlantic World” has become a phrase that means all things to all people, similar to what “republicanism” became for this historiography of the U.S. early republic. This is, at the least, a salient warning. There are many varieties of scholarship claiming to be studies in the “Atlantic World”; some works deal with one region (say, colonial Massachusetts) almost exclusively, but manage to slip in the “Atlantic World” reference (Massachusetts was settled by people from England!) and thus assume the transatlantic mantle. Others discuss a particular issue (such as slavery) across regions, or address attitudes, cultural exchanges, or physical interactions among groups hailing from different Atlantic neighbourhoods. There is, then, a legitimate concern that the Atlantic World label may prove so elastic as to diminish its scholarly utility.

The present volume avoids that unhappy pitfall. At its best, it seems, the Atlantic World approach integrates regions, peoples, and events in a meaningful way and is able to convey the significance of that integration. That approach works quite well for the theme of this collection of essays on the Atlantic World and Virginia from 1550 to 1624, which has its origins in a 2004 conference held at Williamsburg under the auspices of the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture. It is a large collection, numbering nineteen essays, but an intellectually coherent one as well. Peter C. Mancall opens the proceedings with a trenchant introduction placing the essays in the larger interpretive framework of colonial Virginia—or Ajacán, or Tsenacommacah—and its place in the Atlantic World of the sixteenth
and seventeenth centuries. In an era where commemorations of historical events often serve as opportunities for panegyrics and hagiography, as opposed to genuine scholarly engagement, Mancall’s summation of the volume’s purpose is a welcome observation that “[t]he Atlantic world...was far more complex and interconnected than previous historians of Virginia acknowledged. The story of Jamestown cannot be understood by erecting a statue to Captain John Smith or beating a pilgrim’s path to the shore of the James to worship at the shrine of democracy’s birth in North America”. “Virginia’s story”, he concludes, “only becomes intelligible when seen as a small, and not always significant, part of an Atlantic history” (24-25).

The individual contributions to this collection testify to the accuracy of Mancall’s characterisation. Space limitations prevent a full discussion of each essay individually, but that should not be taken to suggest that any of them is not a solid piece of interesting scholarship; indeed, unlike many volumes of this type, each essay not only speaks closely to the larger purpose of the volume, but stands on its own as an original contribution to the field. The volume is divided into five parts, each focused primarily on a particular Atlantic region, but consistently aware of the larger context within which they are placed. Placing the section on “Native American Settings” first in the volume foregrounds the notion that it was, after all, an Amerindian world in which other denizens of the Atlantic operated in the colonial period. Daniel Richter’s “Tsenacommacah and the Atlantic World” is a suggestive inversion of the Atlantic World paradigm, detailing the journeys of three Chesapeake-area natives across the Atlantic and their subsequent attempts to incorporate their experiences—and a large array of Atlantic goods—into political agendas that were geared toward advancement in a region defined by chiefdoms and a “prestige-goods” economy. Also in this section is James Rice’s “Escape from Tsenacommacah: Chesapeake Algonquians and the Powhatan Menace”, which reminds us that the peoples of the Chesapeake were hardly monolithic in their allegiances, and that polities literally and figuratively outside of the “Powhatan confederacy” played important parts in the interactions between themselves, the Powhatans, and the European interlopers in their lands.

The second and third sections—“Africa and the Atlantic” and “European Models”—contain essays that serve, among other things, to illustrate just how much on the periphery of the Atlantic world Virginia was in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. E. Ann McDougall’s essay invites the reader to reconsider the “received wisdom” about Saharan peoples and trade networks by invoking the images of “caravel and caravan” in her discussion of how the Atlantic trade begun by Portuguese encounters competed with more established, productive, and venerable networks embodied by the trans-Saharan caravans. Her conclusion is an excellent reminder of the importance of contingency in history, even in an examination of macro-processes such as international trade. The Saharan milieu, despite seeing the beginnings of European commercial inroads, McDougall argues, “was still one of uncertainty—but it was clearly not a world subsumed into the Atlantic hinterland”. Instead, the Atlantic connections were but some of many for the region and its peoples, ensuring that an Atlantic orientation was “far from inevitable” even after the seventeenth century (168-69). Building on McDougall’s allusion to the introduction of the Portuguese into the Saharan world, other essays in these sections develop the theme of the “Iberian Atlantic”, which is also the touchstone of J.H. Elliot’s essay (the original conference’s keynote address) in the volume’s concluding section. Marcy Norton and Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert examine the material culture of tobacco commoditisation from “an Iberian perspective”, arguing that the growth of Virginia’s tobacco enterprise must be seen as a result “of multinational exchanges and alliances between a wide set of actors—Amerindians, Africans, and Europeans of different nations and communities”, and thus “the early history of tobacco ranged across national boundaries and spheres of colonial empire” (252). Philip Boucher and Peter Cook, in their individual contributions, examine the “French Atlantic”, both in terms of its viability as an historically descriptive concept (Boucher) and as a set of cultural interactions; Cook
seeks to understand French views of “Native American Political Cultures” in light of the initial experiences of fur traders and their transference into a “protodiplomatic” set of relationships in North America by the early 1600s (340).

The concluding sections of the volume—“Intellectual Currents” and “The Atlantic World and Virginia, 1550-1624”—contain the volume’s most explicitly inter-regional and comparative essays (though, it should be noted, the essays are all informed by comparative and interdisciplinary perspectives to some degree—one of the volume’s chief strengths). David Harris Sacks examines the unpublished 1584 manuscript by Richard Hakluyt, A Discourse on Western Planting, and suggestively analyses its argument for English colonisation justified by both economic necessity and Protestant motivations. Walter Ralegh’s vision for an English presence in North America and the boost to its dissemination given by Ralegh’s purposefully-embellished accounts of lands like Guiana (complete with giant monsters!) is ably examined by Benjamin Schmidt, who argues that “[r]eading practices play a critical, yet largely unexamined, role in the encounter of the Old World and the New”. By placing Ralegh’s works within the material culture surrounding texts and their consumption in this era, Schmidt offers a convincing explanation of habits and idiosyncrasies in the writings of Ralegh (and other travel narrators of the time) that moves beyond writing them off as mere rhetorical flourishes that served readers’ tastes for the fantastic.

Three concluding essays, by James Horn, J.H. Elliot, and Stuart Schwartz, nicely synthesize the conclusions of the preceding chapters by exploring the themes of interaction, agency, and contingency in the context of Virginia’s station as outpost in the expanding Atlantic World of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Horn’s discussion of the various groups seeking to exercise power in the Chesapeake, and the ways in which they acquired information—and thus perceptions—of one another again evokes the importance of contingency (and, often, plain old error) as a force with significant historical impact. Elliot’s essay is an able summation of his larger discussions of the Iberian Atlantic (found most recently and fully in his Empires of the Atlantic World [New Haven, 2006]), and how its currents shaped the early history of the Jamestown enterprise; clearly, the English were not the only European power to have operated in the Chesapeake, and they had to reckon with the spectre of the Spanish and their hegemony in the western Atlantic rim in addition to the other travails Jamestown faced. Stuart Schwartz’s summary remarks close the volume with a meditation on the idea of Atlantic World history, and the contribution of these essays towards its understanding, that is both challenging and thoughtful. Urging scholars to acquire “less rigid” and “more fluid” categories of understanding and analysis, Schwartz declares that “[w]e need to be willing to break out of our geographic and historiographic boundaries of study and to be as willing to cross frontiers as were the people whom we study” (569). This is a simple—but not easy—injunction, and it serves as a fitting conclusion to a volume which goes a long way toward fulfilling that mission. The Atlantic World and Virginia is a rich and varied collection of scholarship that immediately becomes “state of the art” for Atlantic World studies. Readers of this journal will find it an important volume that deserves a wide audience; it is essential reading for any student of the early modern Atlantic—the Americas, England and Iberia, or West and Central Africa.

Kevin Gannon, Grand View College


The Mayflower Compact and similar documents of colonial founding have long been central to America’s view of itself as a society established upon the voluntary submission of more or less equal subjects. Most early Americanists, and probably many school teachers and their students, think themselves familiar with the background and wording of this and
other foundational texts. But in David Weir’s *Early New England: A Covenanted Society*, readers are invited to consider celebrated documents such as the Mayflower Compact in the context of other documents that established either a civic or church government in New England between 1620-1708. These documents were covenants in Weir’s view because, although frequently terse and even matter-of-fact, they articulated a communal relationship either “vertically with God and[or] horizontally between the residents of a community” (2). As he unearthed, after some two decades of research, all extant examples of these covenants, Weir has investigated the extent to which they could be described as theocentric, Christocentric, or secular, and how they related to the model of Puritan covenant theology first articulated by Perry Miller. In pursuit of these and related inquiries, Weir discerns several important trends that support his overall thesis that the content of church and civil covenants “reflected a counterpoint of unity and diversity” in the articulation of seventeenth-century New England society and culture. In particular, he finds that during the decades leading up to the Restoration, New World conditions fostered variety in civic covenants as each community and town responded to particular needs and conditions, but also uniformity in church covenanting as Puritans fell back on English experiences and practices. After 1660, however, the pattern was reversed: the centralisation of local and imperial authority meant that civic covenants became increasingly standardised and handed down from on high, while the church covenants reflected the religious diversity—of Anabaptists, Anglicans, and Quakers—nurtured by the Congregational Way and bubbling up from below.

The book is presented in six chapters and begins, following an introduction and a brief but helpful review of the European background to Puritan settlement, with a survey of the colonial charters pertinent to New England granted between 1606-91. Thereafter there are chapters on New England towns and civil covenants (or those documents which transferred the power of governance and the sword to town authorities); two chapters on church covenants, the first examining the orthodox Congregational Standing Order and the second surveying Baptist, Quaker, and Anglican dissenters. A final chapter examines the “confessional statements” generated by synods or individual congregations that supplemented the original covenants and, especially after 1660, played an important role in the diversification of faith. The great strength of Weir’s book is to make us look and think again, and in comparative contexts, about documents with which we have become overly familiar as formulaic and of fleeting significance and which have become obscured by hagiographic and presentist readings. Far from ceremonial texts left to gather dust on a shelf, Weir reminds us that these documents were carefully constructed, struggled over, and read and returned to time and time again. As such they provide insights into the formation and inseparability of civic and religious culture and the variations that played out across the century, variations Weir captures with his counterpoint of unity and diversity. Thus as civic covenants moved from heterogeneity to uniformity, popular involvement diminished and centralised provincial and distant imperial authorities took over. Simultaneously, the shift of church covenants from uniformity to heterogeneity resulted from and nurtured increasing toleration for dissenting faiths. These points are sustained by helpful appendices tabulating the incidence and character of the covenants studied. There is also extensive footnoting of primary and secondary sources and a bibliographic essay that together run to some 150 pages, making *A Covenanted Society* an invaluable work of reference as much as of interpretation.

Viewed more critically, there are points at which the research rather overwhelms the argument and it is difficult to know where to place the book in the historiography of New England. In keeping with recent studies, Weir situates his covenants within the long argument of English Puritanism beginning in the mid sixteenth century. He is also at pains to differentiate the variations in civic and religious ideals and praxis from the much-critiqued view of Perry Miller’s monolithic *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century*. But Weir’s cataloguing and commentary on the various forms of New England covenant makes for heavy going in place and readers may find themselves wondering to what end. Those seeking a neatly
constructed narrative filled with timely nods to developments elsewhere in the field—for instance recent studies of popular politics, radical religion, or print—are likely to be disappointed. That said, one cannot dissent from Michael McGiffert’s observation, in his William and Mary Quarterly review, that “never before has the documentary base of New England’s civil and religious polities been so generously measured and solidly laid”. Indefatigable readers will find their efforts rewarded with stylishly rendered vignettes of the establishment of New Haven or the early history of Quakers, backed by endnotes that offer a veritable gold-mine for those seeking references to long-forgotten but essential town histories and local records. Rather than contributing to a fleeting historiographical vogue, Weir’s book will qualify for a place on readers’ shelves as the definite source for studies interested in covenants and covenanting in New England for many years to come.

Simon Middleton, University of Sheffield