

In their final collaborative chapter, the authors consider the possible uses of history. They have no patience with the idea of history for its own sake, nor do they think its prime use should be for establishing public policies. Rather, they believe history's greatest value is in creating self-identity, both personal and shared, and their hope is that improved self-identity will lead society away from its present pessimism toward a brighter future.

Conkin and Stromberg are apologists for the Old History; Gertrude Himmelfarb's essays in *The New History and the Old* are, in its first six chapters, a blistering attack on the New; only in the last four does she directly defend the Old. All ten essays have been published previously, though most have been revised for this work; all are flat-out polemics, but for this "Old" historian, they are pure delight.

Himmelfarb's main thesis is that while the Old History has tolerated the New, the New refuses to tolerate the Old; the New will accept nothing less than complete victory, and indeed, the New is on the verge of achieving that victory, a victory that will be a disaster, both for history and for society. The irreconcilable differences between the two histories, both in philosophy and method, are that the New historian cannot concede the importance of politics, the idea that man is a political animal, and the Old historian cannot concede that man is merely a social animal; further, the New historian cannot admit the importance of ideas in shaping history, nor the Old historian the determinism of the New. The crux of the matter is the latter: to admit determinism is to admit the inevitability of Hitler, the Holocaust, World War II, and all that followed, and, what is worse, to deny the moral responsibility of not only of individuals, but of the entire human race, and even the value of reason itself.

In the final four essays, Himmelfarb begins by defending national history on the grounds that while nationalism is (or should be) obsolete, national history is not, and for the very reasons of self-identity so important to Conkin and Stromberg. From there she goes on to praise the nineteenth-century Whig historians, for their "overriding respect for the 'Noble Science of Politics'." The penultimate chapter calls for a return to the Idea of Progress in a purely secular sense, not so much to signify our faith in the future as to signify our faith in ourselves. Finally, she asks a most interesting question: Does history talk sense? Taking her cue from Friedrich Nietzsche's question, "suppose history is a woman?" she attacks Michael Oakeschott's contention that the past is dead and has no meaning as nothing less than an invitation to historical nihilism. For Himmelfarb, history is no mere prostitute uninterested in truth, nor is she Oakeschott's irreproachable (and dead) virgin. Instead, she is a sensible wife, who, while she may not tell the whole truth, does talk sense and can tell us something important about the past and (presumably) about ourselves. Does history really talk sense? Maybe. Maybe not. But Gertrude Himmelfarb certainly does.

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Loren E. Pennington

D. H. Pennington. *Europe in the Seventeenth Century*. London and New York: Longman, 1989. Second edition. Pp. xiii, 622. Paper, \$20.50.

It has been two decades since the first edition (1970) of the highly acclaimed *Seventeenth-Century Europe* appeared in the "General History of Europe" series. D. H. Pennington, now Emeritus Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford, has produced an expanded, extensively rewritten, revised edition. The author offers new information on aspects of seventeenth-century social history, neglected topics in 1970, but does not succumb to the trendy issues of social history. The book retains the topical and narrative flavor of the earlier work. One example of the revision is dividing the original chapter on "The Thirty Years War and The Habsburg Empire" into two new chapters, "The Thirty Years War" and "Germany and the Habsburg Empire." The bibliographies that originally appeared at the beginning of each chapter are updated and placed in a separate bibliography. Redesigned maps, more appropriately located, enhance the overall quality of this new edition.

This work has an important role in a class, but probably not as the primary text for a course. In many ways it is most comparable to the appropriate volumes in the *New Cambridge Modern History* series. Each chapter is an entity in itself and any one of them could be assigned as reserve, ancillary

readings. "Peoples and States," "Society," "Government," and "War" are examples of a few chapters that contain succinctly analyzed information unavailable elsewhere.

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**J.M. Roberts.** *Europe 1880-1945*. London and New York: Longman, 1989. Second edition. Pp. xv, 631. Cloth, \$35.50; paper \$20.50.

J. M. Roberts has written a traditional history, the sort of history for which Jacques Barzun pleads with wit and eloquence in *Clio and the Doctors* (Chicago, 1974). *Europe 1880-1945* is a narrative built on a chronological frame with the author's comments and analysis included as digressions. As Barzun says the historian should, Roberts has eschewed graphs and tables and charts, preferring to use words to explain even economic trends. Though the methodology might be thought, by some, old fashioned, the book is filled with not only facts but also astute comments about what those facts meant for the development of European society.

Although it is unlikely that author and publisher predicted the recent revolutionary events in Eastern Europe, their timing for the issuing of this book could hardly have been better. Confusion about these changes is widespread, and Roberts—who seems to have a taste for diplomatic history—provides a good foundation for understanding not only the regional problems with the Soviet system but also the ethnic problems that have produced violence in a number of places. He is able to give due attention to the Great Powers before, during, and between the World Wars without allowing the Lithuanians and Bulgarians (or for that matter, the Sanjak of Novi Bazar) to get lost. This volume is certainly appropriate for anyone who wants to understand the current situation in Europe.

Roberts's chapters about social and cultural development and change are also very good. He is deft at pulling together pieces of national history into discussions of Continental trends and attitudes. Literature, science, families, sex, religion, all aspects of human life, in fact, are grist for his mill, and the reader is left with an appreciation of the similarities and differences among Europe's regions and peoples. His breadth of knowledge and understanding is impressive indeed.

It is unfortunate, after so much praise, to have to warn those who might consider using *Europe 1880-1945* in the classroom that they may be disappointed. Roberts assumes a degree of historical literacy rarely found outside well-read graduate students. For instance, in one sentence he refers to *errages* and Blanqui, giving no identification at all. Those studying mid-nineteenth century French radicalism will, to torture a phrase of Marx's, find the slender, black-clad figure of Auguste Blanqui haunting their pages. An undergraduate, however, could have a pretty fair knowledge of European and even French history without even recognizing the name. Roberts has written a very good book, but it is a work that demands much from the reader. For students who have the background or who—if there are any—will look up references they do not understand, this will be an excellent text. For the average student, caution is advised.

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Fred R. van Hartesveldt

**Richard Cust and Ann Hughes, eds.** *Conflict in Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics 1603-1642*, London and New York: Longman, 1989. Pp. ix, 271. Paper, \$17.95.

**Roger Lockyer.** *The Early Stuarts: A Political History of England 1603-1642*. London and New York: Longman, 1989. Pp. ix, 411. Paper, \$17.95.

On January 30, 1649, the diminutive Charles I of England became a head shorter than all his contemporaries. Historians agree on that fact, but they disagree on nearly all others, especially on the causes of that decollation. "Whit," historians on the English Civil War proved that the early Stuart kings illegally resisted the natural development of liberty in England. Marxists on the English Revolution proved that it was a matter of class warfare during the transition from feudalism to