

historiography. The title is clearly appropriate to his main argument: Because history is interpretive, it requires continual re-thinking and re-organization.

After concluding that history and the past are not isomorphic, the author argues that history and the historian are "theoretically backward," since they do not, as the philosopher of history does, bring their conceptual apparatus to the surface. The historian buries it into the framework of his quest. History is embedded in an intertextual, linguistic construct, and is limited by its epistemology, methodology, and ideology. Stating that "history is never for itself; it is always for someone," Jenkins believes that ideological motivations cause each generation to rewrite its own history. For the potential writer of history Jenkins lists the pressures of publishing: familial obligations, demands of the work-place, and perhaps, most informative, the pressures and restrictions from publishers.

Jenkins's treatment of the nature of history is well-argued. His conception of "truth" as fluid and subject to deconstruction is perhaps the heart of the book. From this springboard he evaluates the fact/interpretation argument, and the questions of bias and empathy. Well-stated, the book effectively argues that interpretative overlays and the absence of bias and empathy are impossible to achieve. Jenkins's use of "traces" for evidence allows him to state his case that "evidence is the term used when . . . traces are used 'in evidence' on behalf . . . an argument (interpretation) and not before."

The last chapter is strong in its definition and history of such terms as the "post-modern world" but very weak in what should be its primary focus: how to "do" history, given all his iconoclastic observation. His advice to the post-modern student is to develop a reflexive attitude toward the search for history. To Jenkins, this means that one must determine one's contextual perspective and select content that would "help us to understand the world that we live in and the forms of history that have both helped produce it and which it has produced."

Jenkins's discourse would be most helpful to the naive historian who has failed to recognize that the tools of his inquiry are often flawed. Naturally, this information lends itself well to class discussions, particularly in graduate courses where students need to be concerned with the basic questions of historical study. For example, he can quickly disabuse those who think that the problems of bias can be circumvented, empathy achieved, and such concepts as continuity and cause and effect employed. His comments concerning publication restrictions are on target and should be a revelation to those who have not yet embarked upon the publication carousel.

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Sandra Weldin

Piotr S. Wandycz. *The Price of Freedom*. New York: Routledge, Chapman, and Hall, 1992. Pp. xv, 330. Cloth, \$29.95.

Here is a book for students and instructors alike who lack the necessary historical context to make some sense of the often bewildering contemporary events occurring in the erstwhile Soviet Union and its satellites since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the apparent collapse of communism. Piotr Wandycz, Bradford Curfee Professor of History at Yale University and author of numerous works on Poland and East Central Europe, offers a crisp, readable survey of the history of East Central Europe since the middle ages without resorting to historical clichés, oversimplification, or national stereotypes. Within the compass of not quite 300 pages of text, he narrates the political and diplomatic history of the area and at the same time devotes considerable attention to the cultural, social, and economic developments that make the historical events understandable. The author avoids the mere recounting of the separate

histories of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary by adopting a comparative, regional approach, stressing broad historical themes and emphasizing fundamental problems of historical interpretation. All of this is accomplished by placing East Central European developments within the even larger context of general European history.

Treating East Central Europe as a region has advantages. Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary form a middle zone of the lands between Germany and Russia that is neither wholly eastern nor western in heritage. This approach avoids the stark contrast of Cold War ideological views of an eastern bloc opposed to and confronted to by the West. Wandycz presents a subtle, dynamic account of the region as a part of the West since the adoption of Christianity in the early middle ages. Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, in differing ways, participated in the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the French and Industrial Revolutions. Yet, as a cultural crossroads, the region experienced some "orientalization," thus creating a unique historical experience.

This book can be used with profit in undergraduate courses in the history of East Central Europe. Parts of it can be added to readings lists of advanced surveys of European history. Instructors will find many useful ideas in developing comparative approaches to the study of East Central Europe and in comparing its historical development to that of western Europe.

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Robert J. Gentry

Forrest E. Baird, ed. *Human Thought and Action: Readings in Western Intellectual History*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992. Pp. 322. Cloth, \$46.50; paper, \$19.50.

The search for primary source materials for use in a team-taught general education course on the history of philosophy led Forrest E. Baird, professor of philosophy at Whitworth College, in Spokane, Washington, to compile the excerpts included in *Human Thought and Action: Readings in Western Intellectual History*. Though Baird's original intention was to focus upon the historical role of rationalism, or the origin of human knowledge and action, in the Western intellectual tradition, the criteria for selection were expanded to allow the inclusion of works from "those who have had a major impact on the development of Western thought." The resulting anthology is a single-volume work limited to passages from the more traditional sources of Western thought, unlike the multi-volume collections now available for those college instructors who incorporate influential non-Western thinkers into their courses.

Baird explains the limited scope of the present anthology by reasoning that for the American reader, the Western tradition is the prevailing framework of society. In fact, Baird claims, any criticism of the limitations of Western intellectual thought must begin with ideas we have inherited from the great thinkers of Western history—ideas such as freedom, democracy, and the importance of examining intellectual traditions other than our own.

Human Thought and Action comprises 35 selections from the works of 28 influential writers, from Plato's *Republic*, St. Augustine's *City of God*, and Pico della Mirandola's "Oration of the Dignity of Man," through Voltaire's *Candide* and Pope's *Essay on Man* to Freud's *The Ego and the Id* and Sartre's *Existentialism Is a Humanism*. Each section is introduced by a short explanatory paragraph giving pertinent biographic information about the author, as well as some context for the selection or selections that follow. Several passages include brief prefatory statements that guide the reader's attention to specific points or arguments in the material. Appendices provide a short-answer self-test for students entitled "Programmed Text on Epistemology," as well as a one-page "Summary on Epistemology" with a diagram illustrating the different processing paths for rational and non-rational knowledge.