

liberalism of the Victorian middle class and its belief in the eventual triumph of "sweetness and light."

That optimism was badly battered by the Great War, in which Trevelyan spent three years, and a more chastened view of humanity and its prospects for progress can be found in his early interwar books. Still the prevailing spirit of those books (*Lord Grey of the Reform Bill* is typical) was a cautious optimism not unlike that which characterized the hopes of some of the Great War's younger survivors.

By the late 1920s, however, Trevelyan had begun to despair. Labor unrest in Britain, Mussolini's ascent in Italy, and the transformation of English life all contributed to a darkening of his perspective and a growing sense that the twentieth century represented more a blight than an advance for man. This is the era of his great trilogy, *England Under Queen Anne*, as well as *Grey of Fallodon* and *English History in the Nineteenth Century*. A sense of nostalgia and a distinct preference for the past over the present suffuse these works. Also appearing for the first time, especially as a second war with Germany approached, was a powerful pride in England, her past, and the traditions that had made her great. One might claim that *English Social History*, for example, was propaganda masquerading as scholarship, but Trevelyan believed deeply that the democratic evolution of English society had given it a form of government infinitely superior and more humane than the fascist one it was battling in a death struggle.

By 1939 Trevelyan was already in his sixties. For most of his adult life he had lived as a private scholar. Even his appointment as Regius professor did not interfere with his writing. Nor did it check many of his public commitments, especially his influential work with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. In the decade or so of public life that remained to him after the war, Trevelyan found himself regarded as the Grand Old Man of English Letters by many; yet others, especially younger scholars like J. H. Plumb and Herbert Butterfield, were beginning to consider him as passé as the old century. "I do not understand this age we live in," Trevelyan confessed to his brother, "and what I do understand I don't like."

Liberal internationalist or rural elegist, appeaser or nationalist: Cannadine has captured and delineated all aspects of his subject's life and work. This is an especially noteworthy feat because Trevelyan took pains to deter future biographers by destroying his papers. Even his 1948 *Autobiography* concentrates solely on his intellectual and public rather than personal and private life.

Trevelyan: A Life in History is biography on a grand scale. It is a joy to read, almost impossible to put down once begun, and reflects the disciplined, sophisticated craftsmanship of its author. My only concern is with omissions. I was startled to find, for example, no mention of either A. J. P. Taylor or Arnold Toynbee: Could they have missed crossing paths with Trevelyan? A. L. Rowse is mentioned, but a discussion of his relations with Trevelyan, especially in view of their strong and antipodal views on appeasement, would have been illuminating. Nor is there any mention, except to note his presence at Trevelyan's eightieth birthday honors, of W. H. Hoskins, author of the classic *The Making of the English Landscape*. Given Trevelyan's passionate commitment to rural England and the preservation of its heritage, one would imagine a significant professional relationship with the father of local historical studies in Great Britain. But these are minor points. They take nothing away from an absolutely magnificent book.

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Glenn Blackburn. *The West and the World since 1945*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993. Third edition. Pp. xiii, 147. Paper, \$20.70.

The brief history of the world since the end of the Second World War is organized around four topics. "The Cold War and Its Legacy" deals mainly with the Soviet-American rivalry and Teaching History 19(1). DOI: 10.33043/TH.19.1.41-42. ©1994 Teddy J. Uldricks

its impact on the rest of the world. "The Wealthy Nations" describes the recent evolution, successes, and problems of America, Western Europe, and Japan. "The Developing Nations and the Poor Nations" discusses the decolonization process and the political, economic, and social development of the "third world" countries. "Intellectual and Spiritual Issues in a Technological Age" surveys a range of topics from the problems of science and technology, through the conflict of democracy and totalitarianism, to the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary religious movements. While most of the book is devoted to recent history, the author also broaches the many questions of contemporary politics, economics, and social policy. The coverage of recent events runs through 1991 and the author projects likely future developments at several points. Each chapter concludes with a useful annotated bibliography. This book is not the product of original research, but rather a work of synthesis based on a selection of some of the best studies on each of the four topics emphasized.

Of necessity, given the global scope but brief length of this book, the writing is marked by a high level of compression. In general, the author has selected the most important developments in recent global history. His analysis of most issues, though quite brief, is clear and informative. Occasionally, however, this degree of compression does lead to distortion of complex historical realities. For example, unsophisticated undergraduate readers of this text would be surprised to learn from other sources that the USSR did fight against Japan in World War II (however briefly) and that some of the Soviet Union's East European satellite states did request Marshall Plan aid (even though Moscow subsequently forced them to withdraw their applications). The decay and collapse of the Soviet Union is well described, but the ephemeral Commonwealth of Independent States is treated as a genuine successor to the USSR and the degree of internal violence within several of the post-Soviet republics is seriously understated. Similarly, twentieth-century Chinese history is so briefly summarized that the reader may not understand how the communists came to power in China. Also, in discussing Marxist revolutions and regimes in Latin America, the author neglects to mention the role played by the consistent, powerful opposition of the United States government.

These are no doubt inevitable flaws in such a compact treatment of the post-war world. Yet, this very compactness is a strength, since, with only 138 pages of text, instructors will be able to supplement this book with specialized social science or humanistic studies and novels, without overburdening their students. This text should prove valuable to instructors in courses on modern or contemporary world history as well as in social science or interdisciplinary courses dealing with current global issues. The writing and level of analysis make this work most appropriate for college-bound high school seniors and for university freshmen and sophomores. The author does not assume much knowledge of current affairs or recent history on the part of his readers. He frequently identifies geographic locations and defines political or military terms (e.g., "strategic weapons") so that college freshmen should have no difficulty following his analysis.

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