

shape his thinking and historical writing, especially in two of his most celebrated and controversial books, *The Troublemakers* and *The Origins of the Second World War*. Manchester, Oxford, L. B. Namier, Hugh Trevor-Roper, G. N. Clark, *The Manchester Guardian*, the *Times Literary Supplement* Lord Beaverbrook, the Oxford histories of modern Europe—all figure prominently in the rich narrative that Sisman gracefully weaves, one that can also double as a superb study of the English historical community from the 1930s through the 1970s.

Both Scott and Sisman are essential reading for students of twentieth-century English culture. Each also would be appropriate for use in graduate as well as upper-level undergraduate courses in historiography or historical method. The Dawson biography can serve to introduce students to a major statement of the mid-twentieth-century Catholic interpretation of the middle ages and the debate over the origin and extent of the “medieval synthesis.” Sisman’s biography of Taylor presents students with a wide range of historiographical issues, most especially the controversies over appeasement and the origins of the Second World War. And because both Dawson and Taylor frequently wrote for a public outside of the academy, each biography implicitly explores the tension between professional scholarship and popular writing. Their lives, professional and personal, open a revealing window on the “historian’s craft.”

Pace University

Michael Rosenfeld

Merry E. Wiesner. *Women & Gender in Early Modern Europe*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993. Pp. xii, 264. Cloth, \$49.95; ISBN 0-521-38459-1. Paper, \$14.95; ISBN 0-521-38613-6.

Merry Wiesner’s *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* is a well-written college-level textbook that presents an introduction to research on women in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries. In her introduction she explains that until recently, women’s historical research focused on two major issues—how women contributed to accepted developments in history (the search for “women worthies”) and the effect of these developments on women. More recently, additional questions have centered on women’s biological experiences and on private or domestic matters. In addition, the ever-expanding quantity of research has resulted in four rather conflicting conclusions: Historical experience of early modern women was much less uniform than thought; the role of gender in determining historical experiences of men and women varied over time, and from group to group; the kind of questions asked about the female experience must also be asked about the male; and, gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power. Throughout the book, Wiesner has attempted to keep these conclusions in mind while presenting research on women’s lives and gender roles in early modern Europe.

The book is divided into five sections. The first is an overview of ideas and laws about women during the time period. The main body of the book is divided into three parts corresponding to traditional Western philosophy—the body (women’s life-cycle and economic role), the mind (literacy and learning and women’s creation of culture), and the spirit (religion and witchcraft). The final chapter discusses gender and power.

A central theme in the book is the discrepancy between what we might expect to happen in early modern Europe and what actually happened. We might expect an expansion of rights, opportunities, and power because this is what traditionally has been described (for men). For women, however, in many instances, roles and opportunities became more restrictive. For instance, in their economic roles, women were increasingly pushed out of craft guilds. Also, there were no women in financial or political affairs of the church. In a third example, middle- and upper-class women could pursue experimental science because little equipment was used. However, their knowledge would not be used professionally; in fact, the field of science increasingly came to be considered male, a field beyond the limited capabilities of women.

Another major theme that emerges in the book is the centrality of marriage, which dominated all roles and activities for women. In the early modern period, women were still seen as dependent on men,

even though increasing numbers of women chose not to marry and to pursue their own interests. Many others pursued interests even if they were married. A third theme is the rather obvious class differences.

Wiesner is thorough in her review of research, and she also suggests areas in which further research will probably reveal new perspectives on women's roles in early modern Europe. One of the major strengths of the book is the bibliographic information. Each chapter ends with an extensive bibliography related to specific points on the topic discussed. For example, in the chapter on the female life-cycle, Wiesner cites sources on early modern family, childhood, sexuality, female homosexuality, ideas of women about their own bodies, motherhood, and widows. This textbook provides plenty of bibliographical material for any student to continue research on topics about women.

Maryland State Department of Education

Diane Nagel Johnson

David Chandler. *On the Napoleonic Wars.* Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1994. Pp. 270. Cloth, \$23.95. ISBN 1-85367-158-4.

Perhaps the greatest ambition of a professional historian is to become so associated with a subject that he or she is instantly recognized as the "leading" authority. Many distinguished scholars are readily known by their work in a certain field—G.R. Elton on the Reformation and C.V. Wedgwood on the English Civil War, to name but two. Similarly, when one thinks of Napoleon, one immediately associates the name David Chandler with him. Chandler is easily identified by his mammoth and weighty tome, *The Campaigns of Napoleon*, certainly the most exhaustive and lengthy study of the erstwhile French Emperor. Chandler has added to his work with the recently published *On the Napoleonic Wars*, a collection of essays that updates and offers new interpretations in many areas of Napoleonic history.

On the Napoleonic Wars covers a wide range of Napoleonic topics, from strictly military questions to more universal historical themes. The first essay, "The Origins of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars," is a concise and useful summation of the many wars fought during the French Revolution and Napoleon's time as ruler of France. This essay also helps to clarify and differentiate the many coalitions of nations arrayed against the French Emperor. From this overview, Chandler proceeds to specific topics. There are essays on several of the largest Napoleonic battles, such as Austerlitz, Borodino, and Marengo. These essays are not mere narratives, however, and Chandler seeks to address historical problems or themes within them. The essay on Marengo, for example, attempts to put to rest the idea that the battle was a brilliant Napoleonic victory; Chandler tries to show that French victory was rather an extreme case of good luck on Napoleon's part.

Chandler also provides an essay on Wellington and his ability as a commander as well as an excellent essay on Napoleon's colorful and intriguing subordinates, the French Marshals. Finally, perhaps the most important theme in the book concerns the personality and ability of Napoleon himself. Chandler does not seek to deify Napoleon or enhance his already bloated historical reputation. Instead, he seeks to interpret Napoleon as a real person and give him credit and criticism as it is deserved. The essays on Borodino and Marengo offer criticism of Napoleon's conduct at these battles. Similarly, Chandler also seeks to demonstrate that Napoleon was not, as is widely believed, a great innovator. Rather, he simply built upon ideas and concepts begun during the French Revolution.

Perhaps the only criticism of Chandler's book can be found in its somewhat "anglocentric" view. As an Oxford graduate and British Army officer, this is somewhat understandable, but Chandler gives far too much attention to the British perspective on the Napoleonic Wars. There are, for example, several essays on Wellington and the tactics of the British Army. Considering that England was Napoleon's most implacable enemy, this is certainly justified, but there are no essays concerning Prussia and Austria, nations that suffered much worse than England at Napoleon's hands. Also, it was these nations, not England, that were the primary continental enemies of Napoleon and fielded the largest armies and fought the biggest battles against the French. Similarly, while there is an essay on the Russian Army, Chandler writes it from the perspective of a General Wilson, who was the British liaison to the Russian Army. The Napoleonic Wars were certainly not simply a case of the English versus the French, and a