

Crisis (1997). Ireland figures prominently in his accounts of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I.

The *Tudor Monarchies* is highly recommended as an introductory text for undergraduate or graduate courses that feature major primary or secondary materials. McGurk's excellent study will provide the necessary background for your students.

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Charles McAllister

Allan Todd. *Revolutions, 1789–1917*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Pp. iv, 140. Paper, \$11.95; ISBN 0-521-58600-3.

This interesting little book summarizes and analyzes four great upheavals: the great French Revolution, the Revolutions of 1848, the French Commune of 1871, and the two Russian revolutions of 1917. Written in a lively style, the volume contains a wealth of factual information, including revealing anecdotes and memorable quotations. Clearly Todd has invested a great deal of research and thought in the preparation of the volume. Like other works in the series, *Cambridge Perspectives in History*, it includes a short selection of source materials, a few well-chosen illustrations, a chronological outline of major events, and a select bibliography of about two pages.

Many history teachers, unfortunately, will be unhappy with the organization of the book. Rather than writing narrative chapters devoted to the individual revolutions, Todd has devoted each of the ten chapters to a major theme, including historical background, revolutionary violence, the influence of ideology, leadership, mass participation, the role of women, counter-revolutionary reaction, and enduring legacies. Although this organization will perhaps please teachers who emphasize the comparative approach to history, it will be a major obstacle for those who prefer to concentrate on each of the revolutions as a unique and individual occurrence.

For students without any prior knowledge of the material, this thematic organization seriously detracts from its potential usefulness as a text. Students who have no idea about what happened in 1789, 1848, 1871, and 1917 will likely find this arrangement bewildering and confusing. In order to assimilate such a comparative approach, in my opinion, readers need to possess a basic knowledge about the people and events of the revolutions. It would be possible, of course, for the teacher to approach the individual revolutions chronologically by assigning the readings according to page numbers rather than according to chapters, but this would entail a certain amount of discontinuity.

Todd is very inconsistent in his use of the term "revolution." Initially drawing a sharp distinction between a reform movement and a revolution, he defines the latter as an instance "when people attempt to completely transform the social, economic, political and ideological features of their society." Many of the events described in the book, indeed most of the occurrences of 1848, do not appear to correspond to this definition.

Sometimes Todd writes as though two revolutions occurred in Russia in 1917, and elsewhere he suggests that the March Revolution was a modest political reform that was only important for its role in preparing for the Bolshevik Revolution in November.

Although Todd's interpretations are usually balanced and reasonable, several of his generalizations about Marxism, Leninism, and the Bolshevik Revolution are uncritically favorable and highly questionable. He finds, for example, that the early Bolsheviks instituted a system of "direct democracy," and thus he denounces the Constituent Assembly of 1918, although elected, as a focus for "the growing counter revolution." Likewise, he asserts that "orthodox Marxism" is a logical extension of "the 1789 ideals of liberty, equality, and fraternity," and he fails to acknowledge the logical connection between Stalinism and Lenin's theory of an elite party as the vanguard of the working classes.

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Annika Mombauer. *The Origins of the First World War: Controversies and Consensus.* London & New York: Longman, 2002. Pp. ix, 256. Paper, \$16.00; ISBN 0-582-41872-0.

Debate on the origins of the First World War, "the great seminal catastrophe" of the twentieth century according to George Kennan, has continued for almost a century. Oceans of ink have already been devoted to the topic, yet excellent new contributions continue to pour from the presses. Small wonder that it is difficult, if not impossible, for an instructor or graduate student to keep up with the nuances of this long-continuing debate. Annika Mombauer's *The Origins of the First World War: Controversies and Consensus*, is, therefore, a welcome, and affordable, addition to the still-burgeoning literature on the topic.

Mombauer, a Lecturer in European History at Britain's Open University and author of a recently-published monograph on the origins of the war (*Helmuth von Moltke and the Origins of the First World War*, 2001), attempts here to provide a panoramic overview of the historiography of war origins. Her aim is "to explain why the search for an explanation of the outbreak of the war has been 'almost obsessive,' [and to provide] a guide through the maze of interpretations on the origins of the war."

Proceeding chronologically, from the war years themselves to the present, Mombauer argues that in every era there was an "intimate connection between the political concerns of a society and its interpretation of history." For instance, during and immediately after the war it was in the interest of all belligerents, especially the Germans, to displace the blame from their own leaders. But, by the 1920s, says Mombauer, a consensus emerged that diluted the harsh anti-German verdict of the Versailles Treaty in favor of interpretations that emphasized shared responsibility or argued that the war was no one's fault in particular. This outlook reflected, of course,