

constructed in a way that reaches beyond academia to an audience that would include the general reader who has an interest in the presidency.

Jacksonville State University

Scott W. Akemon

Jorge Canizares-Esguerra and Erik R. Seeman. *The Atlantic in Global History, 1500-2000*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc., 2007. Pp. 288. Paper, \$29.33; ISBN 0-13-192714-0.

"The Atlantic world" has in recent decades become a widely accepted unit of study and analysis among historians. Many global history textbooks devote at least a chapter to the "Atlantic world," with such chapters often referring in their titles to "Europeans, Africans, and the New World." Courses in Atlantic history have become increasingly common, and publishers have been quick to respond with textbooks and readers. But how exactly does the "Atlantic world" fit into "global history?"

Jorge Canizares-Esguerra and Erik R. Seeman, the editors of *The Atlantic in Global History, 1500-2000*, point out the "narrative restrictions" that have, up to now, often limited the relevance of the "Atlantic world" for global historical studies. Works in Atlantic history, they suggest, have tended to be "organized along national lines," have "prevented historians from seeing the global dimensions of certain processes," and have generally focused only on "the early modern Atlantic." The essays in *The Atlantic in Global History* are intended to challenge the existing paradigm of Atlantic history by situating it more firmly in a global perspective.

Religion has been a relatively neglected topic in Atlantic history, and several of the essays in *The Atlantic in Global History* seek to redress this imbalance. In "A Catholic Atlantic," Alan Greer and Kenneth Mills take a transnational approach to relating the European Reformation to missionary efforts in the New World, while briefly suggesting as well comparisons and connections to missionary efforts in Asia. This essay makes an interesting companion piece to Patrick McDevitt's "Ireland, Latin America, and Atlantic Liberation Theology," which discusses a key development in twentieth-century Catholicism in an Atlantic context. Jorge Canizares-Esguerra compares how Puritans and Spanish clergy both used the concept of struggling against the Devil to understand the New World, while Erik Seeman provides a fascinating glimpse of how Jews maintained and modified their faith in the early modern Atlantic.

While religion has been a relatively neglected topic, the African diaspora has been a central concern of Atlantic history since the 1960s. Essays by Pier Larson, Christopher Schmidt-Nowara, and Jason Young address various features of the African diaspora. The essay by Larson is the most successful of the three, making a convincing case that the Atlantic African diaspora must be seen in a global context, as part of a larger, transnational history that includes both the movement of slaves across the Sahara and the Indian Ocean and changes in the nature of slavery in Africa itself.

Jason Young's essay on black identities in the Atlantic world shares a problem with several of the other essays in the volume. Essays by Young, Jose Moya (on modernity), and to a lesser extent, Peter Coclanis (on the global rice trade) will prove difficult reading for undergraduates, particularly first and second year students, because of their sophisticated concepts and at times convoluted language. Patricia Seed's essay on Portuguese navigational technology is a bit too specialized to engage the interest of most student readers, while Claire Schen's comparison of piracy in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean never quite seems to come together. Claudio Saunt's essay on the Choctaw in the eighteenth century and Reed Ueda's essay on Hawai'i in the nineteenth century have the most direct relevance for United States history, as well as for current issues—proxy war and immigration—likely to be of interest to students.

The Atlantic in Global History will be a valuable addition to upper-level undergraduate and graduate courses in Atlantic history. By "pushing the Atlantic envelop," to use Reed Ueda's title, the book will encourage students to see Atlantic history in new and challenging ways. As a supplementary textbook in lower-level undergraduate world history courses, the difficulty and specialized nature of some of the essays in *The Atlantic in Global History* might prove problematic. Some individual essays might work well, however, and this is certainly a book that all teachers of world history will benefit from reading.

Broome Community College

Lorenz J. Firsching

James L. Gelvin. *The Modern Middle East: A History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. Pp. 338. Paper, \$34.95; ISBN 0-19-516789-9.

Due to recent events that are distressingly familiar to all, the Middle East currently occupies a more prominent place in American popular consciousness than ever before. As a result, we have witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of academic positions, course offerings, and publications that take the "modern Middle East" (however defined) as their focus. Among the more significant of such recent publications is James Gelvin's *The Modern Middle East: A History*. Gelvin, Professor of History at UCLA, is both a prominent scholar of the region and the recipient of multiple teaching awards. Thus, he is more qualified than most to produce a textbook for undergraduate surveys of the subject.

As such a text, *The Modern Middle East* comprises a comprehensive, yet critical selective, synthesis of the relevant secondary literature. However, in structure, content, and style Gelvin's text represents a departure from previous approaches to the topic, most of which were structured around discrete temporal and geographic units and frequently contained sufficient detail to overwhelm and thus discourage students lacking basic knowledge of the subject matter. *The Modern Middle East* adopts a conventional geographic framework, roughly comprising Egypt, Turkey, Iran, and the Arabian Peninsula. It nominally adheres to an equally conventional chronology by