

Reviews (Books)

Ailes, Mary Elizabeth.

Courage and Grief: Women and Sweden's Thirty Years' War.

Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2018. 234 pages. ISBN: 9781496200860.

Not quite gender history and not entirely military history either, Mary Elizabeth Ailes's *Courage and Grief: Women and Sweden's Thirty Years' War* reaches for both. Ailes's earlier book, *Military Migration and State Formation: The British Military Community in Seventeenth-Century Sweden* (2002), as well as her articles concentrating on Scandinavian military developments and the British Isles, affirm her interest in military history. More recently, Ailes, a professor of early modern European history at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, has focused on the involvement of women from different social backgrounds in campaign societies. Ailes refers to Barton Hacker's 1981 article "Women and Military Institutions in Early Modern Europe: A Reconnaissance," which argues that women were a normal component of early modern military systems, as well as Brian Crim's 2000 article, "Silent Partners: Women and Warfare in Early Modern Europe," which agrees with Hacker's assessment. She especially draws from John Lynn's 2008 book, *Women, Armies, and Warfare in Early Modern Europe*, which covers three centuries of European warfare and the respective impact of women. However, Ailes expands on the findings of these and other scholars by pursuing what she believes to be a missing component in the analyses presented thus far, namely, women who were not necessarily connected to soldiers and women from other social backgrounds: these women are the focus of Ailes's new book, *Courage and Grief*.

Courage and Grief presents Sweden's involvement in Europe's destructive Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) and argues that women played a key role in the Swedish military system. Supporting Ailes's claim are examples that illustrate the effect women had on the war campaigns, on the field, in local communities, and at home. Such activities were part of the fabric of Swedish society and highlight the nature of female power and authority. What did women do when their husbands left for the war? How did women cope with the loss of their husbands due to war? What roles did women play at the front or at home in their communities? In Ailes's *Courage and Grief*, these and other questions are answered in several chapters that utilize a wide range of historical sources dealing with women during the Thirty Years' War.

Chapter 1 of *Courage and Grief* deals with the relationship of women physically involved in campaigns, alongside male soldiers. The chapter offers a unique view of the regulations and laws that dealt with the way women could participate or join their husbands on military campaigns. Under Sweden's "Articles of War," only women who were married to soldiers were allowed to accompany the army. This law was put in place to minimize the distractions

women could pose to soldiers and to maintain order. Wives displayed dignified behavior and, most importantly, provided the vital support network for soldiers that mistresses or other women would not have been able to furnish. Not all wives who were present in the army were bound by legal marriages: "May marriages," which existed solely for the desired companionship, benefitted both parties. May marriages were "arrangements that women and soldiers created that lasted for a campaign's duration. Although couples would not legally marry, they would live and work together as if they were married during a military campaign." (23) This arrangement was made possible by the presence of women refugees who had no other viable options, women who craved the excitement, or women who had never known any life but army life. Ailes makes it clear that women who were present with the army usually had no other choice. However, military wives had much to gain by following their husbands, including monetary gain from plundering and the chance to elevate their status. Women excelled at mediating relations with local communities, and therefore women could enjoy positions of authority and the benefit that came from being influential advisors to their husband. Yet, Ailes presents the other side of the coin as well: the lack of provisions and the burden to maintain families; the lack of necessary means to care for ill family members; the inability to return home to give birth; or the family's safety within the camp community.

Women dealing with the mass conscription of males in their community found various ways of coping with their respective situations. *Chapter 2* deals with the politics of conscription, and how men and women attempted to escape the burden of war or, in the case of women who were left alone, live with the weight of their partners' absence. Because conscription commonly occurred at the peasantry level, Ailes reveals the hardships faced by the members of this low socio-economic bracket of society, especially by women, through Gunilla's story: "Gunilla took over running the family farm. This meant that she had to complete on her own the agricultural work that she and her husband earlier had done together. [...] Gunilla also had to care for a large family. Her household included three small children who were too young to help alleviate the work, as well as her husband's elderly parents." (68) Gunilla's story was not uncommon, as Ailes shares a number of similar accounts. Widows like Gunilla had to face legal battles for the rights to their land, as their authority as head of their respective households was perpetually shifting within the vortex of Sweden's justice system. Widows had to endure the physical labor of maintaining their families' farms or abandon their land altogether, resulting in begging on the streets; and even begging was regulated by the Crown. Ailes also makes a note of those women whose husbands were missing for years Without confirmation of her husband's death, a wife could not remarry, otherwise she had to face adultery charges, sometimes resulting in the death penalty. (80) Due to the strenuous effects of war, many men and women decided to leave the country whenever

conscription reared its ugly head. Ailes, in this respect, draws attention to a latent anti-war attitude in Sweden during the Thirty Years' War.

The second half of *Courage and Grief* is dedicated to officers' wives on the home front and to Queen Christina. *Chapter 3* demonstrates the resourcefulness of the officers' wives who, while they had more options than peasant wives, often needed to appeal directly to the Crown. Ailes refers to wives such as Catharina Guthrie who "wrote to Queen Christina asking for confirmation of land in Finland that the Crown had granted to her husband in 1636." (100) In her petition, Guthrie had to emphasize her husband's legacy and loyalty, and she promised to raise children who would be loyal to the Crown. Furthermore, Guthrie needed to secure her and the children's future by marrying another officer, Edvard Johnstone. Johnstone and Guthrie combined their wealth: Guthrie through land given to her by her parents, as well as her late husband's land, and Johnstone through his income, land, and status. Ailes shows that, for officers' wives, having to navigate the stress of widowhood was a common occurrence. Nobles like Guthrie fought for the right to own the land, but holding the land came with an asterisk. Land was given to officer families in a way that is best characterized as land rental. The Crown ultimately owned the donated land, and noble families had to ask for permission to continue holding the land whenever a new king or queen took the throne. The monarch could at any time reclaim the land. Ailes refers to the trouble that many widows had to go through to have their petitions confirmed, because of the many false cases that were presented. Officers' wives needed to put together a strong case, detailing "their husbands' length of service, the regiments in which they had served, and the names of officers who had worked with their husbands." (108) Land donations were not the only kind of compensation officers' wives could receive. Money was also being distributed, although via a carefully selective process; after all, Sweden was pouring tremendous amounts of resources into the war.

Transitioning to the final years of the Thirty Year's War, Ailes then focuses on Queen Christina who took over the kingdom in 1644, thus ending the regency that had begun after the death of her father, King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, in 1632. The final chapter of *Courage and Grief* is dedicated to Christina's rule and, more importantly, to the shifting attitude toward female military leadership or presence. Due to her upbringing and male-only role models, Christina was quite a masculine ruler: "As an adult, Christina walked like a man, had [a] gruff voice, and possessed an authoritative attitude," (146) characteristics that Christina deemed necessary to establish control and insert herself into the military command structure. Yet, Christina lacked the authority that a king would have had. A queen who acts like a king is still not a king. Ailes concludes the chapter by drawing attention to the shift in female military leadership and the disappearance of females in war campaigns due to the increasing use of guns and the emergence of professional armies.

Ailes's conclusion summarizes the achievements of women throughout the Thirty Year's War, arguing that they ultimately enhanced female authority and representation. Ailes encourages her readers to seek out alternative perspectives on historical events. *Courage and Grief* does not just address noble and royal women; it actually dedicates the majority of its pages to women of the peasantry. It combines women's history elegantly with Ailes's expertise in military history, and it incorporates gender history in its discussion of Queen Christina. One hopes that the blending of these methodologies will continue in Ailes's future publications.

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Bowden, Mark.

Hué 1968: A Turning Point of the American War in Vietnam.

New York: Grove Press, 2017. 608 pages. ISBN: 9780802127006.

Histories and, by extension, historians attempt to intelligibly communicate truth about events that have occurred in the past. But how is this best done? How are readers best shown what most of them have not experienced or that of which they may have no possible concept? Mark Bowden's *Hué 1968: A Turning Point of the American War in Vietnam* covers in impressive detail the conflict in the Vietnamese city of Hué between U.S., Northern Vietnamese, and Southern Vietnamese troops, but it also puts forward answers to these difficult questions.

Mark Bowden is an American writer and journalist known for a series of titles, including *Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War* (1999). Bowden's *Hué 1968* divides the conflict into three phases. First, it recounts the developments leading up to the events at Hué, contextualizing the future bloody combat with tense infiltration of the city against the mundanities that would soon be shattered. Next the action explodes, with Viet Cong forces quickly gaining control of much of the city through simultaneous actions and the brutal, efficient destruction of the opposition. Finally, the book devotes the largest portion of its text to the slow, methodical taking back of Hué primarily by American forces.

In his text, ostensibly about a brief moment in time, Bowden, through his methodological choices, examines and emphasizes the use of accounts from those who participated in these events. This may not seem to be a particularly controversial or shocking choice considering the privileged role firsthand accounts have in the historical discipline, however Bowden's work goes beyond what is typical. His very first chapter, in fact, is based on the experience of a young woman, Che Thi Mung, in 1967 as a resident of a small village and her deeply personal story of interaction with South Vietnamese and American forces. Bowden addresses, for example, Che's motivation which comes from the violent death of her older sister as an explanatory factor for her actions. (5-10) When

Bowden explains Che's role in scouting out military forces within Hué, the reader understands why she chose to take that course of action. Initially, this may not seem strange. Anecdotal accounts of pivotal events can be intriguing and, especially in cases when there are only limited primary sources available, necessary to form a picture that would otherwise be unattainable. Yet Bowden's purpose for including Che's entire story does not seem to be that there is a dearth of primary sources, nor does he feel the need to tie every detail to a greater story. Che's internal motivation is not generalized: Bowden does not suggest that it accurately represents the experiences of all or most Viet Cong troops.

Bowden's purpose in recounting more fully the experiences of those who lived through this dramatic event in global history is most clearly understood as juxtaposition to a character that is central to his writing, namely, General William Westmoreland, often referred to as "Westy." Westmoreland emphasized the numerical aspects of the war. His favorite defense of policy was to cite statistics detailing the number of Vietnamese soldiers killed when compared to the number of American soldiers killed. (24-25) These numbers were rendered inaccurate by a number of factors, including incentives for those reporting their engagements to inflate the number of enemy combatants they had killed. Westmoreland's overreliance on the numbers provided to him was not just flawed due to its methodology. Bowden shows that those involved in combat cannot be understood without learning about their lived experiences and how they perceived the events as they were happening. When a captain in the American forces is told that his troops will not fight, since they believe he does not care for their lives, and when he is eventually able to change their minds only to be struck violently by an explosion, (480) that experience cannot be reduced to a number. In telling these stories directly from the primary sources with much less interjection by the author than is customary in most historical texts, Bowden convincingly emphasizes the importance of individual narratives, eschewing typical writing styles that understand the truth of any event as best represented by numerical data.

Bowden reiterates this in his "Epilogue" where he points out the deep flaws of viewing war as an exercise in calculus. The many brutal, needless deaths in Hué, attributed to both Viet Cong and American forces, were based on ideas about lives as part of a broader game. (523) When Viet Cong forces enacted purges of perceived threats, this was weighed and rationalized as being for the sake of a greater good. If a child might grow up to take part in actions that would take the lives of other, perhaps more "important" Vietnamese citizens, killing that child could be seen as acceptable. Similarly, indiscriminate attacks against areas with large civilian populations were justified by pointing to the opportunity of killing enemy combatants. Soldiers could be weighed and evaluated by their contributions to the overall combat: sacrificing them could be reasonable as long as a sufficient number of enemies died as well. This disconnect between the values and experiences of individual historical actors on

the one hand, and how they were perceived both in the context of 1968 and even today on the other hand, literally has the potential to cost lives. If one fails to acknowledge and understand history from the bottom up, one enters combat without fully appreciating the consequences.

The purpose of making this point is not just to castigate the actions of military commanders during the Vietnam War; it also draws attention to the importance of historical writing that is alert to the human experience. Historians shape our understanding of past events. Yet, when analyzing war, they have far too often set aside the human toll for the sake of dealing with the logistics and topographies of battlefields. While the latter can certainly help us understand any given conflict, only a holistic approach that pays special attention to the ground levels of warfare will get us closer to historical truth.

For all the emphasis Bowden places on individual experiences, it would be a mistake to depict his writing as devoid of editorializing or of thematic points about the Vietnam War. After all, just as writing that mistakes the elimination of human experience for objectivity is problematic, writing devoid of interpretation is tedious and unhelpful. Bowden's work, although characterized substantially by its reliance on primary-source interviews, is not a mere collection of interviews. It also furnishes serious analysis of events beyond Huế in order to provide its readers with suitable context. This is especially true of Bowden's measured accounts of how events in Vietnam were perceived and interpreted by people in America. This allows readers to focus on the more pressing subject matter, namely, how people lived through one specific battle, without getting lost in a plethora of differing perspectives. If anything, this is perhaps the one difficulty *Huế 1968* has: it is too full of primary sources. Although these sources offer a substantial benefit to readers, they can also overwhelm. Historical actors enter and leave Bowden's story at a fast pace. Sometimes a person is introduced and then never mentioned again, while another person may return time and time again and take up substantial space in the book. This can leave readers unsure on who or what they should concentrate.

At the heart of *Huế 1968* are the fascinating accounts from direct participants in the events that unfolded at and around Huế. Mark Bowden commands a diverse set of sources complete with numerous Vietnamese accounts of the conflict. This is particularly helpful as some past scholarly and popular accounts have been hampered by a distinct lack of Vietnamese voices, resulting in a narrative that prizes American thoughts about the War to the exclusion of others. Meanwhile, Bowden effectively allows both Vietnamese and American understandings to shine through without one overshadowing the other.

So, who should add *Huế 1968* to their reading list? Bowden's work can serve several purposes. It is, first of all, a rich repository of primary sources from which one can draw, focused on a particular phase of the Vietnam War, and thus of interest to academics. Secondly, Mark Bowden's methodology may be an inspiration to those who are still developing their writing techniques and may

not have been introduced to this particular style of composition before. Thirdly, *Huế 1968* effectively communicates a broader understanding of the Vietnam War, but particularly demonstrates the importance and brutality of one specific battle by promoting an intricate understanding of the related events and individuals. In summary, this book is recommended to those with an interest in its subject matter, who are unfamiliar with its style, and who would like to find a broad range of sources for future use.

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De Courcy, Anne.

The Husband Hunters: American Heiresses Who Married into the British Aristocracy.

New York: St. Martin's Press, 2017. 320 pages. ISBN: 9781250164599.

Reading Anne de Courcy's recent work, *The Husband Hunters: American Heiresses Who Married into the British Aristocracy*, is like watching a pack of hyenas hunting gazelles on the Discovery Channel while listening to the 1996 song "Female of the Species" by the British band Space, which reminds us that "the female of the species is more deadly than the male." The hyenas, in De Courcy's case, are nouveau-riche American mothers, and they are not hunting for gazelles but for suitable old money, namely, male aristocrats, in Europe for their daughters to marry. De Courcy, a British author and journalist, makes the Gilded Age, roughly the 1870s to the early 1900s, come alive. (13-27) She prides herself not just on telling about people of the past, but relates what life was like for them, what shaped them, and how they in turn shaped society.

To begin, De Courcy sketches the economic and political environment of both England and America during the Gilded Age. At that time, England was losing money hand over fist due to bad crop years; thus, there was very little international trade. England's formerly wealthy land barons were becoming paupers, yet they retained their titles, because even a lack of money could not take those away. Meanwhile, America was experiencing a boom because of commerce, mining, banking, and better crop years, which in turn led to an increase in international trade. These two different climates are continually being referenced, so readers have a sense of what was going on. The middle class was being destroyed from the top in both countries, and there were political movements spearheaded by women. *Husband Hunters* is so well researched and documented that readers feel like they could be in either country during this time. De Courcy's language is flowery and light, yet she speaks with authority.

For this reviewer, an American, it is interesting to get De Courcy's British perspective. According to De Courcy, "Few English could understand that Americans, too, had a class system which, though unadmitted, was every bit as meaningful as their own." (237) The American class system was and is not so different from that in England, not at its core anyway: money talks. "Old" money, for example the Vanderbilt family, was looking down on "new" money,

for example John Mackay or Collis Huntington. Women who were coming into new money from their husbands building trains, creating steel empires, or striking it rich in the mines of the West badly wanted to be accepted by America's old money; according to De Courcy, "Their ruthless social ambition was the equivalent of the ferocious, no-holds-barred fights for power in the boardrooms of their men, in whom the early spirit still lived." (87)

This is the heart of *Husband Hunters*: women desiring to be accepted by the other women who were running society, using any means necessary to get there, and then turning around to help run or dictate society. American women did this in one of two ways: either marrying into old money themselves or marrying their daughters off to the impoverished nobles of Europe so they could gain a title, like "duchess." De Courcy focuses mainly on American-English relations, which is where the bulk of the matchmaking occurred. However, some women did marry wealthy Frenchmen. De Courcy recounts that some members of society in both Europe and America saw these matches as nothing better than prostitution. Indeed, these matches were business transactions, and they were concluded to the satisfaction of all parties involved.

Women in America were well educated, and they made sure that their daughters were well educated, too, not just with books, but also socially. Mothers encouraged their daughters to socialize with young men, something that was unheard of in England at this time. Debutante balls and other social gatherings were all designed by wealthy women in society to make good matches for their daughters, thus gaining prestige for themselves as well. Again, De Courcy recreates these social events with great accuracy: it feels like we are there. These young women were adorned in the latest fashion from France. The most expensive jewels dripped off them. They were loud and in charge, and they were there to be seen and heard. When mothers began taking their daughters to England and France for holidays or fashion trips, European men quickly took notice of these unicorns of women. As De Courcy beautifully puts it, "From the first tide of invaders, as the Gilded Age began, Englishmen from the Prince of Wales downwards tended to find American girls irresistible. The American girl was completely different from her opposite [the English girl] [...] She also exuded that compelling quality, complete self-confidence." (28) The "looking" of these European men did not go unnoticed by the mothers of these American ladies. Thus, the idea of marrying young daughters off was born. British men began calling the American mothers "husband hunters." The mothers were ruthless hunters. I would have been afraid if I had been an Englishman during this time.

Once these daughters were married off, the mothers would climb the social ladder in both Europe and America. For the most part, these daughters were still looked in on by their fathers. The daughters signed away their huge dowries and often an annual salary to their new husbands, but they often retained their own money that their husbands did not know about. Many American women ended up in unhappy marriages and were looked down upon in England, as they did

not know the English customs of the upper crust. Here De Courcy tells the stories of several women who made an impact in England. Their lives intersected at some point as they were all running in a very small social circle. Like a fine thread of a silk chemise, De Courcy weaves each person's tale intricately and perfectly. These American women may not have been accepted as perfect English women, but by no means did they have to stay in unhappy marriages. By no means did they just endure the status quo. Infidelity on both sides was common, but never discussed, even though all of society in England and America knew what was really going on behind the chamber curtains. Divorces were more common than one would think, given the time. Mothers and their daughters took no prisoners to get into society or reshape it once they were there. Eventually, the Gilded Age ended, ironically due to the lavish Bradley-Martin Ball that was just a bit too lavish and too opulent. In 1897, ostensibly to support local businesses, Bradley Martin, son of a wealthy banker and merchant, and his wife Cornelia vowed to throw the largest party America had ever seen. Roughly \$400,000, the equivalent of \$10,000,000 in today's world, paid for this catered soirée at the Waldorf in New York. To stage the event, the Waldorf was completely redone to resemble the French palace of Versailles. This theme alone should have been a red flag that this party was too much. The need to outdo every other socialite caught the attention of both the rich and the poor as being wasteful and tactless. This party was truly the beginning of the end. The socially climbing women basically helped kill the movement they were so caught up in. De Courcy does have several pictures of women in elaborate costumes from the Bradley-Martin Ball. The outfits were gorgeous, but all beauty fades eventually.

De Courcy wraps up her beautiful text by showing her English side. She grudgingly admits that, while she may not have wholeheartedly approved of the whole "husband hunting" business, nor of the attitudes of these Americans, more good than harm came out of the ordeal. Due to the related influx of money into England, castles, country houses, historic buildings, and businesses remained intact. Women in England were given a stronger voice by their American counterparts and even gained the right to vote two years earlier (1918) than women in America (1920). De Courcy credits American women with lighting the suffrage movement's fires in England. Finally, De Courcy expresses her thanks to people like Jennie Spencer-Churchill for giving birth to Winston Churchill. After all, Jennie Spencer (née Jerome) had been an American-born husband hunter. She would later divorce Lord Randolph Churchill, but not before giving birth to her two sons. One should add that the Gilded Age has also inspired great television shows, such as "Downton Abbey" in which an American woman, Cora Levinson, marries Lord Robert Crawley, and her money helps support her English husband's mansion in the country during the downturn of the economy. Several novels by Agatha Christie (the "Queen of Mystery") contain rich American women marrying poor English noblemen. De Courcy lays out the actual historical details for those of us who enjoy watching

or reading about this time in history that crossed continents. This book is over 300 pages long, but readers will turn them quickly. Anyone who enjoys history, drama, and intrigue should pick up this book and enjoy the “hunt.”

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Harline, Craig.

A World Ablaze: The Rise of Martin Luther and the Birth of the Reformation.

New York: Oxford University Press, 2017. 312 pages. ISBN: 9780190275181.

The man who set the world ablaze with his *Ninety-Five Theses* in 1517, Martin Luther, is usually seen through either an admiring or a condemning lens, but seldom just through a simple human one. In *A World Ablaze* by Craig Harline, the well-known Reformer is not painted with a broad brush as either a villain or a savior, but simply as a man. Harline, an esteemed religious-history scholar, transforms Luther from “the polished bronze figure on a pedestal” (dust jacket) we so often encounter in our history books, to an everyday German friar that was maybe just a little too paranoid about his salvation, and who did everyday mundane tasks just like everyone else.

A World Ablaze begins with the acknowledgement that Martin Luther has been researched and written about countless times over the centuries. Once Harline has established the broad range of academic attention that Luther has already received, he suggests that no story is ever told in the same way, especially in religious history. Harline points to the New-Testament gospels as an example. Thus, the primary goal of this book is not to tell the same tale of Martin Luther that has already been told so many times, but to bring this man to life. Harline even goes so far to refer to Luther in a more friendly or neighborly way than he is typically referred to; instead of calling him “Luther,” he refers to him as “Brother Martin” or “Dr. Martin,” which is what he would have been called in his time anyway. By doing this, Harline strives to provide a new perspective on this famous friar and to bring him to life, and superbly so.

Before moving farther into the book, readers should be aware of the unique style Harline chooses to employ. Appropriately, his style parallels that of Luther, which he spends a good amount explaining later in the book. Throughout the book, the tone remains academic, but also conversational, making the text accessible to an audience of any background. For example, before *A World Ablaze* even really begins, Harline tells the story of the “Hebrew-Reading Knight,” an almost fairytale-style account of Martin Luther disguising himself as a knight while having dinner at a local inn and his interaction with two young Swedish travelers. Scholar or not, anyone can enjoy a simple story like this. Harline does not just relate this as a historical incident, but he describes it as if the reader is

sitting at the table with Luther. His style is almost that of a novelist who is well equipped with descriptive language and historical reimagining. Thus, Harline's way of telling Luther's story is certainly different from the way this radical friar's story has been told so many times before. In addition to its writing style, the book's chronological flow is especially noteworthy. Harline moves through Luther's life systematically and chronologically, making it easy for any reader to follow along. This chronological approach is important, because if even one event is omitted from the story or told out of order this can significantly alter one's understanding of Luther and his impact.

Harline does not begin his story on the day Luther nailed the *Ninety-Five Theses* to the church door in Wittenberg (October 31, 1517), but much earlier, with Luther's childhood, education, and university studies. Harline spends time setting up Luther's academic background because he wants readers to understand that the man behind the *Theses* and the so-called "Reformation" was not just a man with a list of grievances, but a man who was well educated, who, after researching and referencing religious doctrines and texts, decided to question the Church based on the knowledge he had acquired through studying. This is a tactical approach to establish the validity behind Luther's argument and to assert that he was not just a man, but an educated man. At the beginning of each chapter, Harline indicates the exact setting, as well as the date, and either the weather or something else associated with the season. This not only helps readers envision what is taking place, but it also gives them a chance to meditate on the historical context before reading the chapter.

Like many other books on Luther, *A World Ablaze* focuses on important events in Luther's life, but Harline makes sure that these are embedded in the historical context. For example, *Chapter 6* ("The Rose of Gold") is devoted to Luther's time in Wittenberg, the logistics of his potential arrest, and the protection he received from Prince-Elector Frederick III of Saxony. Harline could have just mentioned these names and places and moved on to the next thing, but he takes the time to explain the role Frederick played in Luther's life, where and how he had acquired his power, and the very intricate details of his familial and political relations. This might be considered either a beneficial or a trivial addition, depending on the reader, but if the reader is sincerely trying to understand Luther, then the historical sidebars that Harline provides are certainly useful. Explaining history in its context always enhances its accessibility.

Authors typically approach internationally known figures and influential religious reformers and their impact on the world through a global lens. For example, there are many books on Luther that focus on him as the creator of Protestantism, how this new branch of Christianity changed the world, or how he caused the greatest split in the history of the Christian Church. *A World Ablaze*, however, gives an almost day-to-day human account of the man who unintentionally launched a new Christian denomination. Harline takes us on a journey of what it might have been like to walk in Luther's shoes or what it

might have been like to interact with him. One of the most notable instances of this is when he discusses Luther as a preacher. Harline mentions that Luther was a successful preacher not just because of his physical presence, but because of the language he used. He did not just preach in Latin, but primarily preached in vernacular German, thus making his words more accessible. Luther did not preach as an aloof theologian over the heads of the uneducated lower-class masses of Germany, he spoke on a conversational level, as a peer. Harline takes this detail a step further by describing Luther's long brown robes, tonsured hair, and even the marble detail of the pulpit he preached from. He underscores his historical illustrations by quoting from the appropriate primary sources and by showing pictures, such as Luther's handwritten letters during the time of his trial and original portraits of people and places related to Luther's story. In doing this, Harline further enforces his humanizing agenda of bringing Luther down from the bronze pedestal and transforming him into a man we can see, feel, and perhaps even learn from.

Overall, *A World Ablaze* is not your conventional text on one of the most influential religious reformers of all time; it is quite the opposite. It comes across as a story, making it easy for readers to imagine and interact with Luther, while at the same time remaining academic and historically accurate. Harline successfully talks about a man who changed the world, but also about his simple beginnings. *A World Ablaze* is an imaginative, albeit "partial" biography (as it focuses on the late 1510s and early 1520s), and by the end of the book one no longer sees Luther as a distant figure from the past who changed the course of history, but as an everyday man from humble beginnings or, dare I say, a peer.

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Paterson, Linda M.

Singing the Crusades:

French and Occitan Lyric Responses to the Crusading Movements, 1137-1336.

Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2018. 350 pages. ISBN: 9781843844822.

From songs of love, endurance, and self-reflection to songs of propaganda, war, and the Holy Land, Linda M. Paterson's new book addresses the lyrical legacy of the Crusades. It focuses on Old French and Occitan songs and places them into their political and social context. It is the author's intention to present and analyze these works to understand the attitudes toward holy war of their authors, namely, the *trouvères* and *troubadours*, poets and composers who hailed from northern and southern France respectively. Paterson, professor emerita of French Studies at Warwick University, divides her book into twelve chapters that proceed chronologically from the Second Crusade (1145-1149) to

the Eighth Crusade (1270). She also includes three appendices: the first appendix, by Majorlaine Raguin-Barthelmebs, discusses the songs' lyrics as "echoes" of Crusade preaching; the second appendix is a timeline; and the third appendix lists "melodies attested" in the manuscripts of these songs.

Singing the Crusades encompasses over two hundred lyrical works (songs) that are secular and shed an alternative light on the historical topic of the Crusades. (7-8) Throughout the book, these responses are quoted in the Occitan and Old French languages alongside English translations. Consequently, readers should keep in mind that the author's primary sources (songs) led her to a methodology that is not concerned with traditionalist or pluralist or other approaches to Crusading, nor does she seek to define the term "Crusade." (6-7) Rather, she discusses her sources in a large geographical context because the trouvères and troubadours responded to their local politics and the Crusades in the East, but troubadours mention the Reconquista in the Iberian Peninsula as well. (8-9) The book's central themes to consider are "exhortation" and "allusion."

The first two chapters discuss why and when the troubadours responded to the political atmosphere of the Crusades. Paterson maintains that the Crusade preaching of Bernard of Clairvaux was one reason why many troubadours reacted lyrically during the Second Crusade. An outspoken troubadour of this time was Marcabru who was living in Spain at the time. He sent songs to Jaufre Rudel who went on the Second Crusade and returned in 1148. He and Macrabru engaged in a dialogue both during and after the Crusade. (30, 32-36) According to the second chapter, a similar scenario developed during a pilgrimage from 1179 to 1180, when the troubadour Giraut de Broneil, who was accompanying Viscount Aimar V of Limoges, wrote a song that admired Alfonso II of Aragon's triumph against the Saracens. (42) These two instances showcase an important aspect of this book, namely, that the troubadours and their songs served as a form of communication that spanned across time and space, but dating these songs to a specific context will alter their significance. Paterson lays out a network of these instances because in the later chapters trouvères add their own dialogue and enter that of the troubadours.

The real substance of this book is the network of songs. In *Chapter 3*, Paterson pays careful attention to the Third Crusade because the "exhortation" theme appears in the songs that portray political figures such as Richard Lionheart, his father Henry II of England, King Philip II Augustus of France, and Saladin. Paterson now uses the primary sources extensively and quotes them to extract the dialogues. (48, 50, 55, 60-61) As an illustration, she starts with the trouvère Conon de Bethune who, in 1187, declared the Saladin tithe (the tax raised for the Crusade) an expression of greed. In 1187/1188, the troubadour Bertran de Born wrote a song after Richard had taken the cross, followed by Philip some time later. In another song, Bertran referenced Conon's position but then went further and denounced Philip who had become king in 1180 and Richard who would not be king until 1189. (48-52, 55-61) Paterson suggests that these instances

demonstrate “exhortation,” because both Philip and Richard lacked urgency, which is why Conon and Bertran mentioned them in their dialogue-network.

In *Chapter 7*, Paterson demonstrates this dialogue-network in the context of the Sixth Crusade (1228-1229) with an emphasis on Frederick II of the Holy Roman Empire who received much attention from the troubadours, but only from one trouvère. In 1223, Pope Honorius III pressed Frederick to head to the East and bring his military might to bear on the Muslims, as the papacy was influenced by the troubadour Periol’s “propaganda poems.” (137) The troubadour Elias Cairel reacted to Frederick’s plans to go to the East to demonstrate that his “exhortation” would influence Frederick. Elias may have been encouraging the preaching momentum of the Church as well. (138) Later in Frederick’s career, during his involvement in a siege on Cyprus, the trouvère Philippe de Novare saw Frederick’s actions as an illegal intrusion. (148-149). In this chapter, the dialogue is not centered on the troubadours or trouvères referring to one another, rather it centers on Fredrick. In the book’s overall structure, this chapter suggests a turning point, whereas the following chapters focus on the influence of individuals on the Crusades.

The “allusion” theme is not as definitive in this book. It appears whenever the primary sources refer to something such as the Holy Land, kings, and military orders. For example, in *Chapter 9*, one “allusion” occurs in a song by the trouvère Philippe de Nanteuil who was an associate of Thibaut de Champagne during the Barons’ Crusade of 1239. Paterson suggests that it appears when the trouvère is referring to the Templars and Hospitallers who chose not to assist the captives of the Gaza ambush. These captives were not freed until after Richard of Cornwall brought the negotiations to close between the French Crusaders, the Franks of Syria, and the Ayyubids of Egypt. (174-178)

In *Singing the Crusades*, Paterson engages with the works of many Crusade historians, including those by Nicholas Paul, Jonathan Riley-Smith, Norman Housley, and David Abulafia. Paul’s work emphasizes the troubadour Bertran de Born and places him into the context of the political tensions of the 1180s between Henry the Young King, his father Henry II, and Richard Lionheart. (13) Abulafia’s scholarship is employed mostly in *Chapter 7* when Paterson discusses Frederick II and the songs that refer to his actions. (137-149) Riley-Smith’s publications are referred largely in the first half of the book as a foundation for the book’s chronology. Housley’s publications become the foundation for the later chapters. Paterson’s conclusion proposes that the songs in her book “have revealed many particular details of potential relevance to historians.” (254)

Singing the Crusades is recommended to those who have an interest in how war shapes and transforms art. The book is also geared toward those who are enthusiastic about history, musicology, poetry, linguistics, literature, and religious studies. The highlighted aspects of the lyrical network, exhortation and allusion, showcase the historicity of Crusade songs and how they functioned in the large context of the Mediterranean world between the eleventh and

fourteenth centuries. These songs exemplify how the explicitness and implicitness of lyrics can move listeners to a greater sense of awareness of their own culture. A strong point of this monograph is its ability to tell the story of individuals, songs, societies, and their involvement in the Crusades. *Singing the Crusades* has increased my curiosity in how artistic expressions develop in various societies and subsequently become vehicles to serve these same societies. Paterson has provided a basis for scholars of many disciplines to consider and discuss how culture produces sources (in her case: songs).

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Rublack, Ulinka.

The Astronomer and the Witch: Johannes Kepler's Fight for His Mother.

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. 272 pages. ISBN: 9780198736776.

The seventy years between 1580 and 1650 saw a witch craze that ravaged Central Europe, and scholars have attempted to explain this phenomenon by exploring the period's mentalities. Because persecution became part of everyday life, society became unstable in this tense "mental climate." This instability was compounded by the fact that there was a surge in the population just when climate had caused multiple years of crop failure. It was in this unhinged society that Johannes Kepler and his mother Katharina lived. *The Astronomer and the Witch* by Ulinka Rublack examines the "untold" witchcraft trial of Katharina Kepler and how her son Johannes took over her defense. Rublack places Katharina's case into its various contexts and creates an effective microhistory.

Ulinka Rublack is a professor at the University of Cambridge. Her work focuses on early modern European history, and she has published multiple works on the period. In *The Astronomer and the Witch*, Rublack's primary focus is on the story of the Keplers, but her larger focus is on the ways in which society directly impacted Katharina's case. Rublack shows that Katharina's case was not an isolated case, but rather a case that was indicative of the time. Most of the primary sources for Katharina Kepler's case have been preserved because of her famous son's involvement in the case and because the community she lived in is rather well documented. There are two bundles of documents that pertain directly to Katharina's case, as well as a considerable amount of additional archival material that can be used to gain an understanding of what life was like during this time, including the records of other witchcraft trials.

Rublack places Katharina Kepler's case at the heart of the witch craze. She examines how Katharina was accused, tried, and ultimately released. She scrutinizes the way in which Johannes Kepler affected the trial. And she concludes with an examination of Johannes Kepler's life after his mother's trial.

The Astronomer and the Witch begins with Rublack explaining why witchcraft was such a focus of attention during the seventy-year period between 1580 and 1650. Anyone could be drawn into witchcraft, and it was this factor that corrupted the fabric of society. The witch craze was so pronounced that one could not even “trust” one’s own family members, let alone one’s friends, neighbors, or employees. The witch craze was not limited to one gender or social class; it hit everyone. The situation was so severe that communal accusations led to upward of three hundred witch trials with an eighty percent execution rate just between 1580 and 1630. Rublack explains that witchcraft accusations were based on the desire to explain misfortunes. People were already struggling with life, and as a way to cope with reality, they turned to accusations of witchcraft to account for any misfortune that entered their life.

Rublack then transitions to Katharina Kepler. She explains the hardships that Katharina had faced in her early life and that her husband was often absent when she was pregnant. Next, Rublack looks at how Katharina Kepler was accused. The very first person to accuse Katharina of witchcraft was her son Heinrich because he was upset with his mother that she did not have any meat in the dead of winter (1614/1615). The accusation stuck. Within a year, Ursula Reinbold, one of Katharina’s neighbors in the southwestern German town of Leonberg, made another accusation of witchcraft against Katharina. For Ursula Reinbold, the accusation of witchcraft against Katharina was nothing more than Reinbold’s inability to properly cope with her chronic illness. This was very common. People were looking for a reason to explain anything that was out of the ordinary and that they could not explain. According to Johannes Kepler, the reasons for the accusation of witchcraft against his mother were social factors, biological sex, and individual moral choices. Rublack completes an in-depth look at the various ways in which people accused Katharina and demonstrates just how absurd most of these accusations were.

As a result of having access to the court trial papers, Rublack is able to dive into the defense that Johannes created for his mother. She shows the different ways in which Johannes disputed and disproved the accusations against his mother, which were numerous. She looks at the court proceedings and portrays how the trial unfolded, which allows for a rich understanding of the trial and Johannes’s defense. Johannes Kepler succeeded in his mother’s defense because of his academic training. His success was dependent on his ability to confront an enemy and maintain a solid line of argument while refuting all of the enemy’s points. The fact that he had always had to counter his own opponents had properly prepared him for the fight during the trial.

Rublack also includes a case study of two other accused witches, namely, Margaretha Frisch and Lena Stüblerin. The fact that these two women had been accused of witchcraft and confessed with rather limited charges against them made things look very bad for Katharina because she had more substantial charges against her, suggesting that she had to be a witch because the last two

had confessed. This also underscores the stereotypes associated with witches because all these women shared numerous similarities.

The greatest strength of *The Astronomer and the Witch* is that Rublack successfully creates a microhistory. She situates this microhistory in the larger context of society, yet still makes the case for the Keplers. In doing so, she tells a story that is going to stay with people for a long period of time. Her book is not dry and overly academic, which allows for a smooth reading experience. Rublack makes her book accessible to a wider audience that does not just consist of fellow historians. The book's second strength is that Rublack extensively employs the sources available to her to strengthen her argument. By using the archival documents, Rublack is able to paint a very clear picture of the trial, leaving very little room for speculation. Working with the trial records allows her to lay out the defense that Johannes provided for his mother in a great detail. Moreover, the records from the community where Katharina lived enable Rublack to show what it was like to live in a witch-crazed society. Another strength of *The Astronomer and the Witch* is that Rublack acknowledges that even back then not everyone believed that everything inexplicable was the work of witches. She discusses that there were still the Lutheran theologians who believed that the struggles the country was facing were not the work of witches but, rather, the work of God.

One thing that the book lacks is that Rublack does not delve into more witch cases. She examines the microhistory of Johannes and Katharina Kepler, but she could have cited more case studies to strengthen her argument, either in the introduction or in the epilogue. On a different note, while Rublack's writing style makes her book eminently accessible, not every reader will find the author's style suitable for a work of non-fiction.

When examining a person's life, one does not have to create a biography that merely details that person's life. As Ulinka Rublack convincingly shows in *The Astronomer and the Witch*, one gains a much more comprehensive understanding of a person's life by not just looking at that person, but by considering how that person interacted with the people and mentalities around him or her. *The Astronomer and the Witch* is highly recommended due to its excellent scholarship and the ease of its style. Rublack's work is researched extremely well, and the sources she uses show that her microhistory stands on a strong foundation. Ulinka Rublack has retold and analyzed one of the most fascinating stories from the time of the witch craze, and for this she deserves our gratitude.

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Schechter, Joel.

Eighteenth-Century Brechtians: Theatrical Satire in the Age of Walpole.

Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2016. 288 pages. ISBN: 978-0859899970.

Theatrical satire is far from a modern idea, and Joel Schechter subscribes to the Marxian theory that history repeats itself at least twice. This is exemplified in his new book *Eighteenth-Century Brechtians: Theatrical Satire in the Age of Walpole*, in which Schechter demonstrates that the themes, methods, and characters employed by German playwright Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956) in the twentieth century were, in fact, anticipated by English playwrights in the eighteenth century, particularly during the era when Robert Walpole served as Great Britain's de-facto first prime minister (1721-1742). Schechter argues that numerous writers from this period should therefore be considered Brechtian writers. Joel Schechter is a professor of theater arts at San Francisco State University. He has written other books on historical and political satire, including *Durov's Pig: Clowns, Politics, and Theatre*, which also deals with Brecht (1985), *Messiahs of 1933* (2008), and *Radical Yiddish* (2013).

Schechter opens his book by explaining what characterizes the Brechtian style of theater, namely, an open-ended approach that is experimental. Even Brecht himself looked to the past to find the continuity of history by examining the topics that authors of his time were neglecting. Schechter then explains what specifically made Brecht's style so powerful. Brechtian theater was not just average, everyday theater. Brecht was the "Marx of modern theater." His theater was very political and indicative of politically engaged artistry. Brecht was known for visiting and utilizing the work of other authors to strengthen the message that he was trying to convey. To him, a political movement though the years was more significant than the work of a single author. Schechter comments on how Brecht addressed capitalism and beggars, and how he wanted to appeal to the working class by referring to their struggles and history.

According to Schechter, Brechtian style was (and is) not confined to Brecht. The political and satirical style employed by Brecht was common; Brecht merely made it popular. His use of other authors caused a default collaboration with them in creating a style that became Brechtian but had different origins. Schechter makes the case that the works of Henry Fielding (1707-1754) prepared the path for someone like Brecht. Henry Fielding was an English author known for his humor and satire. Fielding and Brecht were very similar in that they started their own companies and had a constant desire to politicize the stage. Brecht revisited Fielding's work multiple times to demonstrate that history is cyclical. Not only was Brecht very similar to Fielding; Schechter (and others) claim that Fielding may be considered one of the earliest Brechtians there was.

Schechter looks at numerous eighteenth-century plays and other texts to examine how they fit this Brechtian model of theater, including John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (1728) and *Polly* (1729), as well as Henry Fielding's *Tom Thumb*

(1730). *Tom Thumb* is significant because Fielding used this play as an audition piece for *The Author's Farce* (1930). Robert Walpole apparently tolerated *The Beggar's Opera* because he enjoyed its satirical lyrics, even though they were directed at him, but then had *Polly* banned. From these plays, Schechter transitions to the works of other authors that could be viewed as Brechtians around the time of Gay and Fielding, including George Farquhar, Charlotte Charke, David Garrick, and others. Schechter also considers theater censorship. Because eighteenth-century Brechtians had such strong interests in political and social discourse, they were regularly targeted by censorship. He then addresses the Actors' Mutiny of 1733 when actors got fed up with theater management and decided to revolt. This, perhaps not surprisingly, also resulted in a satirical play on the subject, *The Stage Mutineers*.

The structure of *Eighteenth-Century Brechtians* is a bit unusual. The first thing to note is that, while Schechter is the author, he takes on the personae of others in some of his chapters, which can be confusing (but is, of course, rather Brechtian). Secondly, while he uses a traditional chapter set-up, he also inserts subheadings in some of his chapters, which (while signaling changes in subject matter) at times hampers the book's cohesive flow. Thirdly, from the perspective of historical studies, *Eighteenth-Century Brechtians* does not proceed chronologically, which can make it a challenge for those who are used to a more traditional and sequential approach (but then, historians may not be Schechter's primary audience); on the other hand, this is also one of *Eighteenth-Century Brechtians'* strengths and pushes historical boundaries. To some, Schechter's work might seem too whimsical; on the other hand, Schechter's writing style is entertaining and lighthearted, which makes for a pleasant reading experience.

There are still relatively few works on Brechtians, particularly the notion that Brecht's style of theater was anticipated in earlier times (even all the way back to antiquity). Schechter's *Eighteenth-Century Brechtians* suggests that a considerable amount of work remains to be done in this regard. Overall, this book is recommended. It is perhaps best suited for those who are interested in theater and theater history. *Eighteenth-Century Brechtians* shows historians that there is certainly more than one way to write a book, and that complex topics, especially those that transcend time and space, call for new and creative approaches.

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Smart, Mary Ann.

Waiting for Verdi: Opera and Political Opinion in Nineteenth-Century Italy, 1815-1848.

Berkeley: University of California Press, 2018. 266 pages. ISBN: 9780520276253.

When we think of Italian opera we do not generally consider it as a cultural phenomenon that helped unify a country and free it from the tyranny of an oppressive regime. Usually, the image that comes to mind is a soaring soprano's high "C," breaking any plate glass windows and wine glasses within a five-mile radius. Nonetheless, Mary Ann Smart's *Waiting for Verdi* carries the reader into the wonderful world of opera in her end-all-be-all book on nineteenth-century Italian musicology and how it pertains to public consciousness in the formative years of the Italian Risorgimento (1815-1848). *Waiting for Verdi* takes place right after the fall of Napoleon and the ascension of Austria's power on the northern Italian peninsula as decreed by the Congress of Vienna. For various reasons, some of them based on centuries-old disputes, others related to Italian collaboration with Napoleon, Italy was carved up as conquered territory with the northern part put under the control of the Habsburgs.

It is in this context that the book begins. In 1816, the royal theatre of Milan sponsored the contest for a new libretto (the text intended for an opera), but a winner was never declared. One of the judges, Vincenzo Monti, came to the realization that Italian poetry was in crisis. In a letter to one of his fellow judges, he solemnly declared that Italian opera had been reduced to "a monstrous coagulation without words." Around the same time, the Milan-based fashion journal *Corriere delle Dame* had a contest of its own, which amounted to ascertaining who could create the most creative satire of Italian literature or opera, and at the same time poke fun at the overly dramatic Romantic-era ideals that were creeping in from the North. The contest was in direct response to the French exile and writer Madame de Staël's article, "On the Manner and Usefulness of Translations," in which she had disparagingly commented on the state of Italian poetry and recommended that Italian translations of such authors as Shakespeare and Schiller could best remedy this.

Waiting for Verdi is separated into six sections, all covering distinct themes as they pertain to the acquisition of "revolutionary" thought. Smart makes the point early on that Italian opera, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, was not taken quite seriously on the international stage. The fact that it developed, in just three decades, into a unifying certainly warrants investigation. Delving more deeply into the book, the reader is taken on a journey, one in which the author attempts to convey with precise imagery how Italian opera was experienced, especially in the context of the Italian aspirations toward unification. Smart argues that the more allegorical operas of the 1840s did not necessarily stir the Italian population to action against their oppressors and overlords, but that they planted the seed of future action in those Italians who were experiencing opera. This is to say that the operas of the time, even those by Giuseppe Verdi (1813-

1901), did not necessarily change Italian society immediately but possibly gave regular Italian citizens a way to engage their critical thinking skills, a sort of precursor to revolutionary thought. With such nuanced material and the niche audience that accompanies it, it is fair to say that this book is not for the faint-of-heart or even the casual reader. Smart knows her audience, and that audience seems to consist of committed musicologists and Italian historians of the future. So, the caveat is that, whoever decides to read this book should have a general background in Italian opera and the desire to understand its finer points. That said, *Waiting for Verdi* is a definite source for everything musicological as it pertains to early and mid-nineteenth century Italian opera and ballet.

One of the concepts the author doggedly lays out is a theory according to which music does not effect rapid change with regard to political events, but rather that opera in Italy had the power to effect, if only slowly, the way people thought about everyday situations. In *Waiting for Verdi*, Smart is determined to prove that new operas allowed viewers to begin to grapple with and integrate ideas that, as the author states, are essential to the "creation of a nation." In these new operas viewers dealt with new themes such as "sympathy, progress, community, tradition." Facing these new views in mid-nineteenth-century revolutionary Europe, one composer, Giuseppe Verdi, came to be emblematic of the Italian struggle to shake of the yoke of Austrian rule and achieve unification. Later in the book, Smart examines contemporaneous critiques and reviews to study even further the evolution of thought on opera at the time. In the works of the critic Stendhal (Marie-Henri Beyle), the author discovers what she sees as a strong argument for allegory in the many popular plays that were being performed all over Italy at the time.

All of these new ideas and the upwelling of nationalism are today grouped together and termed the "Risorgimento," literally the "resurgence," a social, ideological, and political movement that aroused the consciousness of the Italian people and led to a series of political actions that contributed to Italian unification. One of the artists attached to this movement was Verdi. Smart uses Verdi as an example of "Risorgimento personified" in the public sphere but posits that it was not that Verdi had been discovered or was some lightning rod that hit Italy all at once, but that the ideas and themes he represented had been percolating throughout Italy for many years before his rise to fame. Smart suggests that Italians were waiting for something to unite them, so perhaps Italy was "waiting for Verdi." Further adding to this was that "Viva Verdi" became the slogan of the day that represented Italian unification because of its double meaning, namely, "V.E.R.D.I." standing for Vittorio Emmanuelle Re d'Italia, the first king of a unified Italy. The main take-away is that art did not suddenly and out of the blue influence the Italian political movement of the Risorgimento, but it laid the groundwork for the ideas of unification to be more palpable to the public, even leading Italians to represent the movement itself in one concise slogan.

One of the more fascinating aspects of this book is Smart's exploration of the clash between romanticism and classicism. Smart argues that, due to the romanticism of the time which replaced the realistic analysis of the world with individualism and fantasy, people began to become absorbed in art and culture: they began to pay attention. Again, at this juncture, Smart gets into some heavy musicological themes and theory and explores the transformation of ballet in Italy, especially with regard to the works of famous choreographer Salvatore Viganò (1769-1821). Smart touches on the replacement of classical ideals with more individual ideals, such as the breaking up of the unities of Aristotle as outlined in the *Poetics*, and the way Viganò managed to set aside the constraints of these unities in his abstract ballets. The book finally takes us to Paris and to the migration of Italian composers to France in the 1830s, where they caused a sensation, not to mention an influx of talent, and to the dissemination of Italian opera in Paris and its influence on the Romantic composers of the day, particularly Franz Liszt and Frédéric Chopin. These exiles, artists, librettists, singers, and revolutionaries created newspapers that helped stir up national sentiment back home. While Smart seems to veer through many very specific musicological and historiographical concepts, her book is still very entertaining and a must-read for anyone interested in nineteenth-century Italy, opera, and even the Romantic era itself. *Waiting for Verdi* certainly makes a compelling case that studying the history of music and how music interacts with societies in crisis is a worthwhile and rewarding undertaking.

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Sternberg, Giora.

Status Interaction during the Reign of Louis XIV.

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016; first published 2014. 224 pages. ISBN: 9780198754350.

Symbolic expressions of social status surround us as much today as they did seventeenth-century French nobles. What you wear, what you drive, or the events you attend may echo your social status. When we see someone wearing Gucci, we may assume something about this person's place in society: most likely wealthy, most likely accomplished, and some would say, most likely snobbish. Whether someone drives a Prius, a large pick-up truck, a mini-van, or a Lamborghini: an automobile may reflect its driver's social status. Likewise, going to the Opera, the Grammys, a Nascar event, or a comic-book convention may reflect an attendee's social status. Just like clothing, automobiles, and events may reflect our position in society today, dress length, chair design, and letter subscriptions in seventeenth-century France reflected the social status of the nobility. In *Status Interaction during the Reign of Louis XIV*, Giora Sternberg

postulates that the “symbolic expression of social position was an ever-present source of concern and conflict.” (1) Sternberg investigates how French nobles in the seventeenth century interacted with one another and tried to maintain their status, diving deep into the conflicts and concerns caused by the interaction between individuals of different status. Sternberg analyzes one of the most sensitive matters Louis XIV had to deal with in 1679. This matter included negotiations between kings, princes, and other nobles. Louis needed to ensure peace between Spain and France as his niece, Marie-Louise of Orléans, was to marry King Charles II of Spain. He wanted to mediate in this important matter and ensure that no conflict would ensue. Thus, Louis was forced to deal with a complex problem that many still face today, namely, seating arrangements.

Giora Sternberg is an early modern historian who started his studies at Tel Aviv University and went on to earn a DPhil in History from the University of Oxford where he is currently teaching. He has published in multiple journals since 2006, mainly writing on the topic of status, ceremonial records, and dress.

Sternberg starts his book with an in-depth historiographical and conceptual introduction, looking at what normal status interaction and interaction disorder was like during this time period. He states that there was no fixed body of rules when it came to status interaction during the early modern era. There was customary law and room for change and complexity in aristocratic society. The introduction also gives us the basics for the hierarchies at the time and provides us with a deep analysis of these ranks. Sternberg breaks down the ranks from the King to the Children of France, the Princes of the Blood, the foreign princes, and more. Since this may get too complex for some readers, the book’s appendices provide break-downs for these different ranks and graphic representations of hierarchies and bloodlines. The introduction also gives readers insight into the types of sources Sternberg used for this study. He employed a variety of sources from a canon of published texts, accounts by personages (people of rank), manuscripts registers, court paperwork, and private accounts of ceremonial events by aristocrats.

Chapter 1 (“The Marriage of 1679: High Ceremonies as Multifaceted Status Interactions”) takes a detailed look at the marriage of Louis XIV’s niece to the King of Spain. Sternberg takes the reader on a fascinating journey into the hot-button topic of the day, namely, who was to hand the pen to the betrothed to sign the marriage contract. Sternberg shows us why such a seemingly menial task was such a momentous occasion in seventeenth-century France: being able to hand the bride and groom this pen was honorable and reflected extremely well on one’s status. The author paints a picture of the great trouble and drama between different ranks of nobles on the possession of the pen, showing how multifaceted these conflicts could be. Sternberg then analyzes the role (and number of) of *fleur-de-lis* rows on wedding dresses, showing us how truly important this issue was at the time, so much so that Louis XIV had to get involved and register his objection to certain mantles and dresses.

Chapter 2 (“The *affaire des sièges*: The Anatomy of Ceremonial Crisis”) is most notable for its analysis of the typology of seats. For each meeting, seating arrangements were meticulously planned, with status and rank being of the utmost importance. Seating arrangements were relative and would change based on a meeting’s location, type, and attendees. In addition, different types of seats were used. Armchairs were typically reserved for the highest-ranking person in attendance, while other seats were assigned based on rank and gender. Not only were the seating arrangements and the types of seats relative, but when one was allowed to sit and when one had to stand was of importance as well. When the King was present, one was not permitted to sit unless one was of proper rank. This deep analysis shows us how important rank and status were to the aristocracy of seventeenth-century France.

Chapter 3 (“The Battles of the Mantles: Ceremonial Gear and Status Conflict”) and Chapter 4 (“To Wear or Not to Wear? Mantled Visits in the Early Eighteenth Century”) look at the politics of ceremony and dress, focusing on the mantle. The mantle was a loose piece of clothing that was worn over clothing like a cloak or overcoat and could extend onto the floor for many feet, depending on one’s status. The chapters go into detail on the trains of these mantles. A train is the long back part of the mantle and served to further detail the exact rank and status of its wearer bearer. Train lengths were extremely important, and distinctions had to be made perceptible. Trains could not be too short, but should also not be too long, and many hours were spent planning, preparing, and creating these mantles and their associated trains.

Chapter 5 (“The Duality of Service: Between Honor and Humiliation, between Primary and Secondary Functions”) looks at different acts and services that may seem menial to us, but were considered honorable at the time. These were based on routine or ceremony, such as setting the table properly, giving the King the correct tools to wash and wipe his hands, holding the mantles or trains of others (if these mantles or trains were so long that this was required), and even dressing the King. Sternberg looks at the dichotomy of performing such a task as being both status-defining and honorable.

Chapter 6 (“Epistolary Ceremonial: Manuscript Correspondence as Unmediated Status Interaction”) analyzes the importance of address, particularly in letters. Sternberg shows us the proper usage of *Monseigneur* and *Monsieur*. When one was addressed by one’s subordinates, a letter would begin with *Monseigneur*; meanwhile, when one was addressed by one’s peers, the term *Monsieur* would be used. These seemingly minor differences mattered greatly to these nobles. At the end of a letter came the subscription which was an even more evident way for the letter’s author to communicate rank, position, or status. How a letter was subscribed, however, did not just depend on the rank and identity of the author, but also on the rank of the recipient, as well as the nature of the relationship between the author and the recipient.

Sternberg's conclusion looks at the mechanics of status interaction, and how status and rank actually legitimized power. Sternberg paints a vivid picture of how vigilant participants in status interaction had to be. These aristocrats had to remain observant for possible opportunities to increase their status and, at the same time, protect what they had. Toward the end of *Status Interaction*, a compelling argument is made for the study of status interaction as a discipline of its own. Sternberg explains how looking at status and rank can help us understand micro-politics, as studying status interaction "provide[s] an analytic framework of its own for understanding early modern action and agency." (171)

Those interested in war, religion, technology, and history outside of the drama of the royal court may not enjoy this book. However, historians who are interested in court politics, the aristocracy, culture, or early modern history in general will find this book genuinely interesting, informative, and captivating.

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Young, James E.

The Stages of Memory: Reflections on Memorial Art, Loss, and the Spaces Between.

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What is memory and how can it be preserved for future generations? If there is trauma in the memory, should it be preserved? What roles do art, architecture, and monuments play in all this? Lastly, how does the memorialization process differ between cultures and countries? These are the first questions that came to mind when I set out to read James E. Young's *The Stages of Memory: Reflections on Memorial Art, Loss, and the Spaces Between*. It instantly captured my attention and forced me to question what I thought I already knew. Luckily for avid historians or curious readers, Young makes it his mission to help us answer these questions: "Here I would like to explore the ways both the monument and our approach to it have evolved." (14). The question is, "Did he succeed?"

Young's book is organized as a collection of essays in seven chapters, each discussing a variety of subjects including international tragedy, art qualifiers, and counter-memorialization (a relatively new approach to memorials). More specifically, the discussion revolves around the steps or stages that occur for these memorials/monuments to become a reality. Young places himself into the narrative by relaying his contributions to the various memorialization processes addressed in his work. Readers learn that he has made numerous contributions to world-renowned memorials, allowing them to develop an empathetic connection to him, to the process, and to memory in its physical manifestations.

Firstly, I wish to acknowledge Young's excellent introductory approach to all his chapters. Although I am familiar with matters like 9/11 and the Holocaust,

the same cannot be said for Norway's 2011 Utøya massacre and counter-memory. Not to fear, for Young chooses to instill a little knowledge on each subject prior to getting into any analytical discussion. Thus, no reader is left behind. These introductions are sufficiently comprehensive but do not cross the line to become excessively detailed.

Throughout the book, Young offers intriguing insights that retain his readers' attention. For example, during his discussion of the 9/11 memorial process, Young remarks that thousands of memorial submissions were sent to the committee: "By the second stage deadline of June 30, 2003, the LMDC [Lower Manhattan Development Corporation] had received 5,201 eligible submission boards from 63 countries, and from all of the United States except Alaska." (40) This helps readers understand why the memorial process spanned ten years, especially with the complexities behind the discussion. Beyond the simplicity of contrasting committee opinions, there were more sensitive matters. If the space where the towers once stood was left vacant, would it glorify the men behind the attacks? If the choice was to build, what would be built? In the end, the decision was to create a minimalist memorial, consisting of two monuments placed where the towers had once stood, each with a vast void at its center and water cascading down its walls.

To show that memorial complications have no borders, Young includes an analysis of Germany's approach to Holocaust memorials. How can a country dedicate a memorial to the devastation caused by the mass extermination that was caused by the leadership of that very country, especially considering that monuments and grandiose gestures were popular with fascist regimes? According to Young, "In their eyes, the didactic logic of monuments—their demagogical rigidity and certainty of history—continued to recall too closely traits associated with fascism itself." (159) Can Germany do anything to get past that? To ease these concerns, Young presents a newer memorial process known as counter-memorials. This process counters traditional norms associated with memorials, giving the designers a way to "challenge but not negate" the history. Young proves their value in his discussion of Hamburg-Harburg's disappearing monument titled "Monument Against Fascism, War, and Violence and for Peace and Human Rights," designed by Esther Shalev-Gerz and Jochen Gerz. What began as a 12-meter-tall lead column in 1986, now stands evenly with the ground, the top part of the column being all that remains visible. Thus, non-traditional designers found a way to commemorate without the permanence emphasized by fascist predecessors. This is a subject readers outside of academia may not understand, however, Young provides an in-depth, uncomplicated study of its qualities, making it more appealing to those readers.

It is one thing for a book to appeal to an audience of historians. That means it is a successful history book. *The Stages of Memory* goes far beyond this, as it can appeal to a much broader audience, including architects, artists, or "just curious" readers. Those with artistic interests are thrust into the sensitive debate of war

photography and Nazi imagery as an art form. Young cautions readers from jumping to conclusions with regard to the mixed and antagonistic reactions aimed at the 2002 exhibit “Mirroring Evil: Nazi Imagery/Recent Art” in New York City’s Jewish Museum before it had even opened. To express caution is a bold move as Nazism is one of the easiest subjects to condemn. Nevertheless, as Young laments, “suddenly a meticulously conceived and prepared exhibition on Nazi imagery in recent art was officially deemed ‘controversial’ – months before anyone even had a chance to see it.” (142)

Both men and women endured persecution, starvation, torture, and murder. Women faced all of these, plus rape, forced childbirth, and sexual humiliation. These exploitations are visible in Young’s discussion of war photography in *Chapter 3*. Despite the power and educational value found in the memories and photographs, the lack of a viable framework forces them to remain silent. The same can be said of iconic narratives like *The Diary of Anne Frank*. While many associate the content with Anne speaking to us, Young argues that the voice readers encounter belonged to her father Otto (111). Rather than conform to internationally known narratives and ignore the valuable voice found within war photography, Young chooses to go against the current in an attempt to rectify the abovementioned silences.

One may wonder why I place such value on Young’s overall content analysis and presentation of memorial complexities. It raises awareness. For those who wish to pursue a career in the field, Young’s analysis provides insight into what may await them in future. An approach like “hot topic, cool treatment,” which may be necessary to design memorials, is equally beneficial for public historians. Memorials and museums share equal foundations: a place where memory goes to rest. For readers outside of the academic field, *The Stages of Memory* provides a connection and an understanding of the process that could very well lead to empathy and appreciation for the work that goes into these memorials. They are more than a photo opportunity. They have a purpose, a meaning that is worthy of admiration and respect.

Ultimately, *The Stages of Memory* is a well-designed piece of literature that opens readers’ eyes to the steps memory takes as it attempts to assume a physical presence. Young’s analysis goes past the value of memorialization to include the complexities behind the subject and the silences that have appeared. Even though Young successfully discusses the variances of memorialization between cultures, his analysis creates a paradox that presents a unifying factor. Readers come to see that cultures have the same goal, namely, to provide a physical avenue for memory to survive. Most memorials have a connection or link to one another. As Tor Einar Fagerland’s searched for inspiration to memorialize the July 22, 2011, twin attacks in Oslo and Utøya, he looked to American memorials. Young explains that Fagerland’s goal was not to copy but, rather, to learn from the turbulent, emotional trial-and-error process that most memorials face. With that readers uncover that the contrasts found throughout *The Stages of Memory*

are merely one layer. In their most basic forms, all memorials are intertwined. Only a strong piece of literature could have achieved this insight. So, to answer the question asked above, “Yes, James E. Young did most definitely succeed.”

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