
It is difficult to imagine a more vivid survey of ordinary women’s experiences in early modern England than offered by this book. Many familiar aspects of women’s lives are covered – ranging over the demands of service, work, and marriage; female responses to childbirth and various forms of hardship; women’s involvement in disputes over the reputations of individuals and communities; their recreational pursuits and political and religious identities – with an impressive array of detail amalgamated from court records and popular literature. Besides the density of archival work underpinning it, the novelty of Capp’s study lies in the interpretative framework it adopts rather than the particular topics it covers. The focus is on women’s agency in the face of patriarchal control, and the explanatory model is adopted from James C. Scott’s Domination and the arts of resistance: hidden transcripts (New Haven, 1990) – a work that is currently exercising considerable influence amongst social historians of the early modern period. Patriarchy is cast as the ‘public transcript’ which women accommodated, negotiated, evaded, or resisted with a variety of strategies ranging from the coercive to the subversive. Capp is less interested in the ways which patriarchy subordinated women than in their creative responses to it, and he thus seeks to celebrate women’s agency rather than merely to censure their victimhood. However, he is also mindful of the ways in which the strategies adopted by women could also create or compound divisions between them rather than foster female solidarity. As a consequence, this book makes an important contribution to current trends in gender history (as well as social history) by viewing women as agents rather than as victims and also by emphasizing ways in which gendered identities were contingent upon divisions within each sex as well as between them.

Despite the repeated caution that female bonds could be judgemental and divisive, the bulk of Capp’s analysis explores ways in which they were supportive and cohesive in mitigation of patriarchal inequities. Women’s ‘gossips’, or close friends and neighbours, provided vital networks of sociability, exchange, support, and relief enabling women to offset the disadvantages of their gender. The threats posed by an abusive or thriftless husband, by a male sexual aggressor, or by a slanderous insult could all be countered through the support of gossips. In addition, such networks were constitutive of women’s political identities in early modern England, as they established women’s authority in the moral policing of their communities in relation to both local and national affairs. In one of the most persuasive sections of the book, Capp argues that this provides an important context for understanding the political activity of women during the civil wars and interregnum which he suggests stemmed from more deeply rooted traditions of political consciousness, rather than erupting as an anomaly in a period of exceptional upheaval. The extent to which such networks constituted a female subculture, however, is debatable, and Capp introduces frequent reminders of their limits. Family loyalties frequently over- rode ties to
other women, to the extent that wives with adulterous husbands often laid the blame firmly with other women, side-stepping the issue of male culpability in order to save their marriages. Other divisions also disrupted female solidarities, particularly the social distinctions between the respectable and the disorderly poor and the hierarchy according married women far more authority than their single counterparts.

While the many positive functions performed by gossips’ networks are outlined here, the exact membership of such networks remains hazy, and so it is difficult to establish either the depth of such bonds or their divisive potential. Some analysis of the relationships between women serving as witnesses for other women in defamation suits (covered at length in the book) might have provided further elucidation. The many wills left by women may also contain clues about the nature of female ties and their material expression in early modern England in the light of the claims made by Capp. The divisions among women were often a function of age, social status, and marital status, and it is possible that such differences were at times more important than those produced by gender. It is not always clear to what degree some of the ‘weapons of the weak’ explored here – such as the strategies adopted by servants in response to abusive employers – were gender-specific, gender-related, or primarily a product of age and social position. In turn the impact of specifically female negotiation and resistance remains blurred. Some of the strategies adopted by women (such as running away from a violent husband or employer) may have made little difference to their material or emotional well-being. It is also possible that some women were instrumental in creating the ‘public transcript’ of patriarchal norms, adding to the complexity of women’s agency which was not necessarily exclusively derived from defensive strategies of negotiation. Scott’s interpretative framework ultimately seems inadequate for probing the parameters of women’s agency since it presupposes a dichotomous relationship between dominant males and subordinate females. This does not match the complexity suggested by the rich case material so compellingly presented by Capp – and his finest achievement is in bringing such evidence to light.
Turner makes three important points, each of them undermining the narrative of the *Apologia*. The first responds to Newman’s own account of his struggles to remain within the Church of England, which suggests a seamless path to Rome based on historical and theological discernment. Turner’s own reading of Newman’s sermons and pamphlets, contributions to *The tracts for the times* and *The lives of the saints* series, and personal correspondence convinces him that Newman was a bundle of contradictions, emotionally vulnerable, conflicted at almost every step of the way, and contradicting himself at every turn. Furthermore, in his impassioned ecclesiastical and academic rhetoric, Newman was a dirty fighter, consistently misrepresenting his opponents’ views and battling straw men. Turner portrays Newman’s rhetoric as in turn malicious, dishonest, misanthropic, angry, destructive, narcissistic, or misogynist.

Turner links the defects, and the contradictions, of Newman’s rhetorical twists and turns to the inner turmoil of his emotional life, about which there is a large body of evidence. Newman had tumultuous relationships with his family, and later with the younger Tractarian clergymen who gathered around him at his semi-monastic retreat at Littlemore. Turner admits that he is speculating on the significance of these conflicts, and his speculations are at times unpersuasive, but they are usually interesting.

The second major revisionist point concerns Newman’s portrayal of ‘the enemy’ in the 1830s and 1840s. The Tractarians were a self-consciously embattled minority, striking out first against government interference in the church, then against religious Dissent, and then more broadly at ‘heresy’ everywhere in Britain. In the *Apologia*, Newman portrays the enemy of his youth as ‘liberalism’. Turner argues that ‘liberalism’ in the sense understood in the 1860s hardly existed in the 1830s and 1840s, and that Newman was really engaged in a sustained battle with evangelical religion.

If Newman oversimplified by using the word ‘liberalism’, however, Turner oversimplifies by substituting ‘evangelicalism’. Newman himself often used the word ‘evangelicalism’ as a metaphor for the broader ills of modern society. He repeatedly denounced evangelicalism, but even more broadly he was at war with modern England, which he saw as dominated by a sinister amalgam of the evangelical, the Protestant, the rationalist, the Socinian, the erastian, the latitudinarian, and the utilitarian, linked intellectually by biblicism and natural theology. Newman was at war with the patriarchal family, with commercial values, and with everyday honesty in the ordinary sense of the word. Turner admires the early Victorian social and religious consensus, and consequently has little use for Newman’s critique. He portrays Newman as an indecisive, romantic rebel, destructive and ultimately schismatic.

How then does Turner explain Newman’s embrace of the most authoritarian and patriarchal of the major Victorian churches? Turner’s third major point constitutes a new explanation of the reasons for, and the timing of, Newman’s conversion. Though Turner’s speculations on Newman’s emotional life often appear reckless, his account of Newman’s angry desperation in his last years as an Anglican rings true. Turner declines to speculate on Newman’s sexual preference; on his preference for the company of men, and his misogyny, there is no need for speculation. It leaps out from Newman’s writings. Newman repeatedly lamented the unsatisfactory nature of his family relationships, and openly described as a private family the community of admiring but undisciplined young men who joined him in his monastic retreat at Littlemore.

In 1845 his new-found monastic family was in serious danger. They had for years been the target of strident criticism, but in 1845 they were in danger of being declared illegal. By
then Newman saw great danger that a decision of the Court of Arches upholding the episcopal discipline of the Tractarian clergyman Frederick Oakeley would be extended to Littlemore by the newly appointed bishop of Oxford. It oversimplifies Turner’s very complex argument to say that Newman became a Roman Catholic so he could remain a monk surrounded by young male admirers, but it nonetheless gets to the heart of his argument.

Turner’s scepticism about Newman’s claims, and his lack of deference to scholarship on Newman, are the foundation stones of a new narrative of Newman’s path to Rome. Turner’s style is unsettling, and reveals a deep intellectual and emotional engagement with Newman. His commentary shifts unexpectedly from respect for Newman’s abilities, to cautious if often unpersuasive inquiry into his emotional life, to outbursts of dogmatic assertion that reflect distaste for many dimensions of the Tractarian enterprise. Readers who are put off by this or that aspect of Turner’s rhetoric should persevere, for this book is an extraordinary achievement. It does nothing to diminish Newman’s stature and contributes greatly to our understanding of an all-too-human Victorian sage.

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Stafford Cripps had a remarkable and strange career – and was, by all accounts, a remarkable and strange man. The pattern was set by his father, a powerful legal mind and a Tory MP and peer who became lord president of the council in the first Labour government. Cripps himself was a much vaunted lawyer, with an income of around half a million pounds a year in modern terms by 1930. He was recruited to the Labour party in order to be solicitor-general in the second Labour government. A member of the Potter family, one particularly well-known (but hardly influential) Fabian began seeing him as a future prime minister almost immediately. Despite this patrician background, his political views progressed rapidly from a moderate reformism when he joined the party in 1930, to a half-digested, but passionately argued, Marxism in the 1930s. No careerist, he embraced and indeed encouraged the factional conflict that permeated Labour politics in the 1930s. Expelled from the party, he sought work for the government when war broke out and became a roving ambassador, seemingly above party. In the post-war Labour government he made his mark as chancellor of the exchequer, combining Keynesian economics with a more morally determined desire to reduce public consumption. Far from being on the left of the party and a critic of the government, he was one of its inner circle, who befriended the future revisionist champion, Hugh Gaitskell. During the Labour government he earned the label ‘austerity Cripps’. He was a teetotaller, a vegetarian, an austere Christian (and an Anglican to boot) in a Labour party that could tolerate such crimes in working-class socialists, but liked its richer members to be more colourful. Cripps was not one for sexual promiscuity or male banter, like Oswald Mosley. Nor was he one for poisonous gossip, like the old Etonian Hugh Dalton. On the contrary, he showed an almost
suicidal disregard for the culture and traditions of the Labour party. He may have given up his much-loved tobacco on doctor’s orders, but to do so when on holiday suggested a particularly strange and distinctly un-Labour temperament. A man who was financially generous to the party (he founded and co-funded *Tribune* and poured money into his constituency party) he nonetheless created the impression of buying place and favour. Although he became a saintly Labour hero through association with the causes of Indian nationalism and the Soviet Union during the later stages of the Second World War, insiders still saw him as a prig, who had little time for the less intelligent and displayed no patience with party practices. Churchill (allegedly) said of him: ‘There but for the grace of God, goes God.’ True or not, it gives a fair impression of feelings which were prevalent within the parliamentary elite. Yet this fact sits uncomfortably alongside Cripps’s apparent popularity with the people and (at times) with sections of the Labour party rank and file.

Unsurprisingly, Peter Clarke provides us with the most convincing account to date of this complex character and even more complex career. Clarke’s explanation for this is characteristically modest. *The Cripps version*, he states, is the first biography to enjoy unrestricted access to the Cripps family papers. These papers – notably the periodic diaries kept by Cripps, other family members and by those in his team – provide insights into his thoughts and actions that were unavailable to other scholars. This material (which includes an eighty page long Indian diary) certainly adds substantially to our understanding of his role in India and Moscow during the war. As a result, these events are very fully – indeed disproportionately – well documented. The material which Clarke has unearthed also allows for a sympathetic treatment of the subject – it allows for ‘the Cripps version’ of the Cripps story to be told. Since the book is not blind to its subject’s weaknesses, this approach adds to our understanding without descending into hagiography (the fate of the last family-sanctioned biography of Cripps, written in 1957, and the earlier 1949 volume by Eric Estorick).

Yet the insights derived from fresh material are by no means the only – or even the most significant – contribution to a valuable account. Clarke once said (allegedly) that there are ‘no secrets in the archives’ – and it is certainly the way that the material is used, rather than the material itself, that creates some of the book’s best (although not most obvious) features. *The Cripps version* is written with a lightness and a humour that readers of Clarke’s previous work will recognize. It contains insights and ideas whose originality and thoughtfulness are always understated, in sections that eschew historiography in order to get on with the story. Nonetheless, this is biography that intersects with much of the literature on politics and policy in the period from the 1930s to 1950s, and which builds on themes examined in Clarke’s earlier work. In the course of the book we are shown inside the world of the educated moral reformer. We are treated to an account of Cripps’s curious form of ethical socialism – indeed, Cripps and religion is a recurrent theme, and one that adds substantially to our understanding of his career. We are shown how being ‘above party’ could appeal in wartime – both to middle-class centrists or progressives, fellow reformers from Middle England, and to the broader public. We are presented with shrewd asides on the form of ‘consensus’ politics that Cripps developed, and to a sadly brief discussion of Keynesian economics, Cripps, and the policy of the 1945–51 Labour government. Finally, we have an assessment of Cripps as a driven leader (in which Gladstone and Thatcher appear as similar creatures, albeit ones whose values and policies placed them in different parties). In the process, much of the Cripps enigma is explained.

By the end of the book, Cripps, the former Marxist and ally of Bevan, is seen developing
the career of Bevan’s rival, Hugh Gaitskell. A technocrat beloved by the civil service, Cripps built a team around him reminiscent of Gaitskell’s Frognal set. The shift in Cripps’s politics from the 1930s to the 1940s – a shift that has often seemed inexplicable – starts to make sense. Nor does Clarke rely on his past strengths as a scholar to inform his analysis of the Cripps career. There is a splendidly nuanced picture of the way in which ‘austerity Cripps’ was constructed as a public image, both by Cripps and by his opponents. Attention is also paid to the Cripps family, and especially to the role of his wife, Isobell. She appears not just as a source of material on Cripps himself, but as an influence on his outlook and ideals. This, then, is a very ‘modern’ biographical approach.

Clarke does not highlight these features of the book, nor label them as new contributions to our understanding. He makes no broader points about the typicality of the journey that Cripps made, nor about the problems of wealthy men acting within the far more proletarian Labour party. He does not tell us that Labour (and not just Cripps) dismissed public opposition to austerity after 1945, that Cripps was not an isolated figure in this respect, but one who was strangely representative of a mentality within the party. There is some unevenness in the coverage. The extensive treatment of Indian politics seems both disproportionate, given its place in his career, and overly detailed when compared to the rather cursory analysis of the post-war government. But in looking at Cripps so sensitively, and with a clear awareness of the broader context, Clarke’s work will allow others to draw the parallels and to pursue the differences between Cripps and the party and Cripps and other politicians. This is not, then, a conventional political biography. It does not proclaim its originality in ways that help the student (or the reviewer). But it is a crafted work and a superb read, which unpicks and reassembles the enigma that was Stafford Cripps.

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Martin Daunton’s sequel to Trusting Leviathan continues his monumental study of the politics of taxation. The main theme linking the two volumes is the idea of a fiscal constitution. Treasury and Board of Inland Revenue officials in the twentieth century, as in the nineteenth, tried to maintain a sense of balance and fairness between social groups, hoping to remove disputes over taxation from party politics, and to ensure that taxes were paid with a minimum of resentment. Issues of equity and incentives provide Daunton with supplementary themes. Equity pointed to progressive direct taxation, with citizens contributing to the financing of government as nearly as possible in proportion to their means. However, high rates of taxation tempted citizens who could afford tax advisers to resort to various schemes for minimizing their liability. For example, death duties, which had been a major political issue in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, had become almost a voluntary tax by 1979. The scale of taxation grew with the increased role of the state. In 1914 government revenues amounted to no more than 10 per cent of national income. By 1979 the proportion had risen to about 45 per cent. The purposes of taxation also become more complex. So long as economic policy was broadly laissez-faire,
taxation was concerned solely with raising revenue for the government. However, the rise of Labour led to attempts to use taxation to reduce inequalities in the distribution of wealth. More active economic policies, by Conservative as well as by Labour governments, included tax policies designed to curb inflation, or to encourage investment and economic growth.

Normally officials were a constraint on innovation. Few chancellors were well informed or obstinate enough to overrule their advisers, although Winston Churchill and Hugh Dalton did. Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise officials could easily produce technical reasons for not making any change in whatever tax system happened to be in force. Daunton justifies his claim that historical knowledge is required to understand the tax system. As it was normally easier to retain an old tax than to introduce a new one, the system tended to reflect past as well as present circumstances.

The politics of taxation changed over time. Down to the 1960s it was generally assumed that direct taxes bore most heavily on the middle and upper classes, and that indirect taxes were normally regressive. However, inflation tended to bring more wage earners over the income tax threshold because allowances were not index-linked. Thus, whereas in 1965/6 the income tax threshold for a man with a dependent wife and two children was 137.5 per cent of what the family would receive in benefits if the man were unable to work, by 1979 the threshold had fallen to 96.9 per cent. By the 1970s the median voter was likely to pay income tax, at a high marginal rate, and was less willing to vote for public expenditure than politicians had hitherto assumed. Meanwhile, indirect taxation had become less obviously regressive with the introduction in 1942 of purchase tax on the consumption of non-essential goods. Purchase tax was criticized after the war for discouraging production of high quality goods. On the other hand, VAT, which the Conservatives introduced in 1973, taxed value added on an equal basis, and did not constrict consumers’ choice. The main criticism of VAT was that the Conservatives used the additional revenue to reduce the standard rate of income tax and increase earned income relief for higher incomes, while doing nothing to change the income tax threshold.

The Conservatives’ argument that their tax policy was designed to encourage enterprise and economic growth had a long history. As chancellor between 1924 and 1929, Churchill had tried to use taxation to encourage the creation of new wealth through tax concessions on earned, as opposed to rentier, incomes, while relying on death duties to prevent the development of a class of idle rich. As Daunton points out, the term rentier was a social construction that suggested some wealthy person in a parasitic relationship with producers, but holders of the national debt, for example, might be widows or pensioners who were not obviously less deserving than people with earned incomes. Direct taxation reached levels during and after the Second World War that threatened to discourage both business enterprise and workers’ effort: in 1941, in an effort to curb inflation, the standard rate of income tax was set at 10s (50 per cent), and the top marginal rate (income tax plus surtax) at 19s 6d (97.5 per cent), in the pound. Daunton is surely right to ask whether the adverse effect on incentives was part of the explanation for Britain’s poor economic performance in the post-war period. Certainly the Conservatives thought that it was, but even they were slow to reduce direct taxation after 1951 for fear of unleashing inflationary expenditure on the part of the public. As late as 1963/4 the standard rate of income tax was 7s 9d (38.75 per cent), compared with 4s 6d (22.5 per cent) thirty years earlier. From the late 1960s Conservative thought moved away from the post-war consensus, in so far as there had been one, and looked to structural changes in the system of taxation to provide incentives.
Changes of government in the 1960s and 1970s tended to bring about major changes in taxes and, in Daunton’s view, contributed to a loss of legitimacy of the tax system. Daunton has drawn upon a wide range of archival and printed sources to produce a coherent and accessible account of a complex subject. Taxation is – or should be – at the centre of politics, and Just taxes is as important for the study of British history in the twentieth century as Trusting Leviathan is for the nineteenth.

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After the Second World War, the problems that had led to the disruption of the world economy in the 1930s continued to impede international economic progress and delayed the economic integration of western Europe. Since historical research has primarily focused on the European integration process and on the progressive economic dependence of western Europe on American aid, it has often neglected to analyse the bilateral agreements that emerged after 1945 among different European countries. Divergent budgetary policies affected these commercial agreements and often hampered their diplomatic relations which consequently led to far-reaching – and even unexpected – repercussions in post-war political settlements. With further insight needed into the bilateral agreements formed between the end of the war and the creation of the Common Market, this book by Giuseppina Tullio is warmly welcomed by economic historians working on this period.

Offering a genuinely comparative analysis of British and Italian fiscal policies, Tullio investigates how, at the end of the Second World War, the lack of dollar reserves (the only gold-convertible currency) forced western European countries to exercise rigid control over their monetary reserves, often by an increase in bilateral agreements and by imposing rigid quantitative trade regulations. She thus explains how British and Italian trade policies reflected antithetical approaches to the problem of funding reconstruction, whilst maintaining a balanced budget, and how these divergent approaches influenced Anglo-Italian commercial agreements. For whilst London followed the International Monetary Fund’s directives and initiated a policy of fixed exchange rates that overvalued sterling, Rome maintained a more flexible policy of multiple fluctuating exchange rates. The latter quickly led to diplomatic tensions, not only with Britain, but also with the IMF which did not want Italy – a member of the Organization for European Economic Co-operation – to jeopardize parity with the pound through devaluation. From analysing the financial disagreements between the two countries, Tullio thus develops a more comprehensive account of Anglo-Italian fiscal, economic, and diplomatic relations between 1946 and 1954. Her work confirms the argument that the Italian economic ‘take-off’ in the post-war period was mainly due to exports, further boosted by devaluation, which enabled Italy to benefit from commercial relationships with strong-currency countries, such as Britain. More broadly, Tullio speculates as to whether or not a different policy of over-valuing might have achieved better results by ensuring savings on imports. This hypothesis
is, however, not credible insofar as a fluctuating exchange rate policy allowed Italy to minimize the consequences of the ‘currency earthquake’ that occurred between 1947 and 1949. For whilst the lira was excessively devalued during this period in a way that penalized imports, the Italian government’s policy greatly favoured exports, thereby helping to remedy endemic unemployment as well as a problematic balance of payments.

Tullio’s research incorporates a wide range of archival material from the Public Record Office, the Anglo-Italian economic committee, the Archivio dello Stato, the Italian Foreign Ministry, and the archives of the Italian Central Bank. Placing this material alongside journal articles published at the time, Tullio skilfully compares official information with the secret reports of the embassies to their respective governments, thereby producing an original and balanced view of Anglo-Italian economic relations. The book is complemented by an appendix publishing a number of crucial documents discussed.

Perhaps the only weakness of Tullio’s argument is her neglect of the role played by the IMF and by Washington during this period. Although Tullio traces in detail the impact of IMF directives on both British and Italian budgetary policies and on their bilateral agreements, she fails to situate it within the wider context of American diplomatic pressure for the quick economic and political reconstruction and rearmament of western Europe. Insight into such American plans would provide a further key to interpreting both the IMF’s directives and the divergent British and Italian responses. For whilst the British government regarded American political, economic, and military support as an essential precondition for the continent’s reconstruction, the Italian case was compounded by different factors, including the fierce opposition of the Communist party as well as of industrialists who tended to follow pre-war policies based on the formation of cartels with their European counterparts. Notwithstanding, Tullio’s book is a valuable contribution to the study of post-war international economic relations, offering interesting insight into the budgetary policies of two very different, but equally remarkable, participants in post-war reconstruction.

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Covering the ground in twenty-seven essays and an epilogue, this very large volume is the concluding tome in the Cambridge series presenting ‘the history of political thought’ from the ancient Greeks to the present. The first book in the enterprise came out in 1988, and the last to be published, on the nineteenth century, is due out shortly. The chronological markers between the volumes are no surprise (‘Greek and Roman’, ‘Medieval’, ‘1450–1700’, ‘Eighteenth century’, ‘Nineteenth century’, ‘Twentieth century’). While there are acknowledgements along the way to significant ‘others’, the Eurocentricism of the enterprise is self-evident, though not acknowledged in the series title. Surely this is the Cambridge history of western political thought (‘with some consideration of non-Western ideas in that light’)? Non-Western thinkers, politicians and commentators on Western
thought are not a completely unknown entity in this enterprise, but in the twentieth-century volume they are counted as ‘Beyond’, and rate two rather short chapters.

The twentieth-century volume is thus an historical artefact, presenting a grand narrative of political thought in that (self-consciously constructed) era, very much from its own point of view, though this is not to say that critical self-examination and reference to an outside world, in terms of intellectual currents and political movements, never arise. They do. But they are an outside looking in (when they are noticed), and when they are looking elsewhere, they do not appear on the radar. Works of history are of course themselves historical artefacts in this way, but some of them, perhaps controversially, are more questioning, more disturbing, more reformatory and more influential than monumenta such as this. This is by no means to belabour the editors, who have done a superb job producing a Cambridge book. However, an exciting work that moves us on, even in our view of the past (something at which the ‘history of political thought’ has been excellent over the years), it is not.

If it is not taking up some of the challenges that twentieth-century political thought has itself been instrumental in posing about, inter alia, Eurocentrism, universalism, progress, and rationality, then what does the book actually do? The editors identify themselves, and their contributors, explicitly with an ‘ideology’ approach: that is, a thinker-and-thought-in-practice perspective, rather than some more rarefied, abstract, and philosophical view of significance. What happened, and what were the ideas that made it happen, seem to be the guiding questions. While there are gestures to the history of technological and economic ‘development’, and rather fewer to the forces of contingency, chance, and personality in history, the dominant perspective is that of idealist history in a weak sense: who did the intellectualizing, and what was the politicizing (generally though not exclusively at the level of the nation-state)? Of course this is a very interesting and highly defensible perspective, but it would have been desirable to have seen other options reviewed and the relativity of the approach made clear.

The editors explain that the chapters will be shifting between outcomes such as the welfare state, together with its critics and insecurities, movements encompassing numerous ‘isms’ with manifold internal variations and individual thinkers including Keynes, Weber, and Freud who are themselves not perhaps the usual suspects. The chapters are collected in five broad areas, again reflecting a categorial eclecticism: ‘The changing fortunes of liberal democracy’, ‘Varieties of Marxism’, ‘Science, modernism and politics’, ‘New social movements and the politics of difference’, and ‘Beyond Western political thought’. An epilogue by Steven Lukes on ‘The grand dichotomy of the twentieth century’ turns out to be a lively history of, and investigation into, the distinction between ‘left’ and ‘right’.

While there are numerous interesting observations and juxtapositions throughout the work, and ample evidence that all the contributors know whereof they speak, there is a certain sense in which the chapters are prose templates to the bibliography, and that literature survey is the name of the game. Indeed the chapter authors are good guides to what (most of) their colleagues would probably consider sound judgements regarding inclusion, significance, and influence in the nexus between thinkers, movements, and results. However, if you are looking for thinking ‘outside the box’, then be warned: this is a box. A memorializing of consensus appears all along the line, and a requirement to keep controversy in order by making sure that it appears orderly. Was twentieth-century political thought, taken as an ideological spectrum, really that gentlemanly? This is a presentation of intellectual history conceived within, and directed at, an academic setting. It is unlikely to help anyone grind any axes.
Perhaps there are other comments that could be made about the selection of ideologies and outcomes that the twenty-seven chapters comprise, but I will offer one in particular. The dominant ethos is that of the liberal democratic welfare state, which kicks off the volume, and its vicissitudes and rather distant ‘others’ (except for the obligatory 9/11 comment in the introduction). The featured economist is Keynes and communitarians get quite a good press. ‘Free’ marketeers, radical individualists, and rational choice theorists (and policy-advisers) get rather sniffy treatment the few times they are mentioned. In this volume ‘Thatcherism’ is as over as Marxism. Lukes at least raises the issues in his epilogue, but the chapters really do not take up the use of economic methodologies in political thought (both academically and practically) in all that much detail, except Robert E. Goodin very briefly on the end of the welfare state and David Miller and Richard Dagger on the aftermath of utilitarianism. G. A. Cohen makes the (very useful) ‘Biographies’ section, but real ‘ratchos’ will look in vain to find themselves in this Cambridge compendium of ‘brief lives’. This version of twentieth-century political thought is certainly not footnotes to Rawls, but it is very much haunted by his spectre.